An Ocean of Differences

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Summary

When Eren presented as an omega, he was livid.

The merman was as tough as any alpha and he will fight tooth and nail to prove that he deserves his freedom. Enter Levi Ackerman, an infamous alpha who had didn't give omegas any special treatment.

Will two stubborn hearts from different worlds come together as one?

Notes

I just finished "Wait, Captain Levi!" and I'm already writing another ereri fic again! I couldn't help myself since I have some free time and I've been itching to see more mermaid fics in ao3.
The lack of it made me sad so I'm going to try and add this one to the collection. I'm not even embarrassed to admit that I'm listening to Finding Nemo. heh.

Happy reading!
When Eren presented as an omega, he was livid.

Everyone thought that the boy would present as an alpha since Eren Jaeger had been one of the top troublemakers around Shiganshina. A lot of parents would shake their heads whenever the youngest Jaeger and Jean Kristein would be around each other because that was an automatic signal for a fight.

There would be a bloody mix of tails and scraped scales, bruised knuckles and scratches across their torsos and faces. Mikasa would always be the one to swim up to separate the two, not without pointedly making their ears red from pinching.

So it wasn’t a surprise anymore that Eren had been visibly upset when he presented as a lowly
“Eren, being an omega isn’t as bad as you think.” Armin cooed at the sulking brunet merman who protectively curled his gold and green tail around his lower half. Eren was still shaking from the after effects of his presenting and the mild heat that went along with it.

Eren sniffed and peaked from his crossed arms, “You only say that cause you’re an omega too!”

The blond merman snorted and blew an annoyed breath that caused bubbles to ruffle his bangs, “The prejudice against omegas suck, I know. That doesn’t mean you’ll let them hinder you from doing what you want. Didn’t you always dream of exploring the ocean floor? How about meeting the Legion?”

The newly presented omega perked up slightly at the mention of the Legion. Eren had always wanted to live with the infamous pod which comprised of merpeople who were capable of killing the large Titans that loomed the deeper ocean floors. The group had long, dark scaled tails and sharp fangs and claws which sent any sane merman swimming away to safety. Eren wasn’t fazed by their intimidating looks though, he would stare at them with big dreamy teal eyes because the pod were strong hunters who weren’t afraid to go beyond the coral walls.

Armin grinned inwardly at his success, “We should definitely go see them after your mild heat has worn off! That will cheer you up, won’t it Eren?”

The brunet laughed and uncurled himself from his protective position, “Fat chance, Armin. You know how omegas aren’t allowed to swim away from the pod without an alpha or a beta in tow.”

“Okay but when did you ever listen to what you’re told?”

Eren grinned menacingly and remembered all the times he snuck out of the pod to explore for new stones and jewels that he could craft during his spare time. His mother always threw the biggest fit while his father would only smile and shake his head.

‘Curiosity is a difficult thing to handle, Carla,’ is what Grisha Jaeger always said.

“I’m sure you’re very excited to see Captain Levi Ackerman.” Armin teased and swum around in circles to poke at Eren who squirmed and flailed away from his prodding blond friend.

“Stop that! I just admire him, that’s all!” Eren defended as he swatted away Armin’s sky blue and yellow tail that tried to tickle Eren’s side, “He was able to defeat ten Titans in one go! What kind of merman wouldn’t be impressed by that?”

“Oh sweet mother of Neptune, here we go again.” Armin groaned.

Eren’s obsession with the Legion’s captain is quite known in Shiganshina as much as the boy’s unhealthy liking for picking fights. This caused a few eyebrows to rise since Marian merpeople like them usually avoided violent creatures like Legion. It wasn’t surprising since Marian, Rosen, and Sina merpeople resided in warmer waters, having softer and less violent culture while the Legion and Underground stayed in the colder parts of the oceans where Titans were usually spotted. That usually meant blood, gore and death.

“I have to go, Eren,” Armin waved as he edged closer to the mouth of the small cave that Eren secluded himself in, “I need to help grandpa with the research today. I’ll make sure to bring news about Legion if you shut up about the captain next time!”

The teal eyed brunet rolled his eyes at Armin’s bribery but nevertheless waved him off. His mild
heat will wear off in a short span of two days since it wasn’t a real heat. Carla had been meticulously taking care of Eren since the boy presented and it irritated the teenager to no end. He didn’t like being an omega.

Being an omega meant that he couldn’t be a soldier because heats usually got in the way. And if he can’t be a Marian soldier then that meant he couldn’t meet with Legion and he’d never get the chance to meet Levi Ackerman in person. Eren groaned hopelessly as he glared at his beautiful fins that shone brighter now that he was officially an omega.

He didn’t want to be a trophy, he wanted to be free.

On the other side of the reef, where the murky waters brought gloom and despair, Levi Ackerman swam speedily across a wide expanse of sharp jagged corals together with his companions, Isabel Magnolia and Furlan Church. The three had been on a mission to scout for Legion and they were glad to be finally heading home.

Levi’s black tail shone with a few glints of violet and blue as he ducked and dived into a cavern when he spotted a potential predator a few feet from the trio. Isabel, with her bright red hair and dark pink and orange tail, pouted at the sudden change but followed the scowling captain. Furlan laughed when Isabel accidentally ran through a wall of corals.

“You know, Underground merpeople aren’t supposed to be as clumsy in the dark as you are.” Furlan grinned and was answered with a swat of Isabel’s spiky tail.

“Fuck you, Furlan.” She hissed aggressively and scooted near Levi to somehow get him on her side.

Levi impassively glared at the two which effectively shut them up. They were all Underground merpeople but were adopted into Legion after a nasty genocide by the Titans. Being originally part of the Underground, they had impressive night vision and could withstand colder waters. The captain carefully watched a huge predator dart across the ocean floor in search of an unsuspecting prey. Levi’s deadly gray eyes slightly turned into slits as his inner alpha growled at him to protect the younger mer who were right behind him.

“The ugly shit is gone, let’s go.” Levi commanded and the two others followed him without a word.

Legion’s territory was a bit darker than those from Rose, Maria, and Sina. There were spiky rock formations that peppered the dark sand which carpeted the rocky ocean floor, huge caves and holes provided shelter for most of Legion. The most interesting parts of their home were the large sunken ships where the leaders of Legion resided.

“Levi!” A mer squealed in delight as they all but barrelled themselves to a hissing Levi. Hange Zoe was unfazed by the barred fangs and kept hugging the shorter male until they were pulled away by their ponytailed hair.

“Get your filthy shit off me, shitty four eyes!” Levi barked loudly as his clawed hands ripped the excited mer from him. The other seemed unfazed and kept flicking their violet and maroon tail in excitement.

Isabel laughed behind her hand while Furlan looked away innocently. Thankfully, Commander Erwin Smith was able to pry off Hange from Levi before the overly-exited mer lost a limb.

“You three are right on time, Levi!” Erwin’s booming voice greeted, his dark blue and white tail
swishing calmly in a well practiced manner as a show that the alpha is in full control despite Levi’s aggression. This is what got the blond man right on top of the Legion hierarchy.

Levi’s impassive gaze pierced his two idiotic friends as his pointed ears twitched in annoyance, “The titans are still the same, shitwin. They’re ugly, big, and did I mention ugly? There’s not much movement towards us so you can rest your damn fins.”

Erwin nodded a thank you to Levi and the two other mer who were respectfully keeping distance from the banter. Hange easily swam to Isabel and promised sweets if the young red head helped the older mer with research. Isabel nodded excitedly and Furlan bit his cheek from laughing. Levi wasn’t impressed by the interaction and lazily flicked his tail.

“Aww, don’t you think Levi is too grumpy recently, Isabel? Maybe he needs a cute little mate!” Hange cooed.

Levi swore under his breath that he’d massacre the damn squad leader one day for bringing this up again.

Isabel giggled and shook her head, “Big bro isn’t into that though! Have you seen how many omegas and betas he sent home crying?”

“Tsk, don’t count that, Isabel.” Levi clicked his tongue and swam away before anybody poked and prodded him about his lack of love life. The raven haired merman wasn’t interested in bonding with an omega or a beta since he lived a dangerous life. Anybody who got connected to him will eventually get hurt. Levi was barely even keeping Isabel and Furlan safe before the Legion took them in. No, Levi had to make sure that no poor soul would be bound to his eternally cursed ass.

Hange frowned at Levi’s retreating back, “He really needs to get laid, don’t you think?”

Erwin hummed contemplatively but shrugged as he dismissed the younger mer and swam back to his quarters in one of the sunken ships. It was only when the commander was deep into his chambers that Furlan inched towards the squad leader and attempted to question them.

“Why are you so adamant on getting Levi to mate?”

Hange smiled and adjusted the goggles that served as their glasses, “It’s not that I’m prying or anything! Legion just needs to push up the population and Levi’s been turning down every possible suitor. Plus, don’t you think he’s sad?”

Isabel pouted and her spiky ears wiggled agitatedly, “But he has us!”

The squad leader smiled and laughed, “I know that, sweetheart! What I meant to say was being with a mate is different from having to care for little ones like you! I’m sure the small fry loves you two to death but he needs romantic love. Even if he says he’s an Underground merman, he can’t deny the natural pull of instinct to mate and protect.”

Isabel’s green eyes shone brightly as they blinked, maybe she and Furlan can help their big brother get a mate if that will make him happier. Though, she’s a bit hesitant since that would mean competing for attention.

Furlan looked at the squad leader thoughtfully and flicked his dark blue tail from side to side.

“It’s going to take a very special omega to handle him though. Levi is very rough around the edges and he’s been scaring everyone off.” Furlan commented as Isabel went belly up and crossed her arms under her head.
“Is an omega mate really necessary, Hange?” Isabel asked.

The squad leader nodded seriously and loomed over the two, “Levi might not be saying anything to you two because you’re a bit too young but he’s been suffering through ruts for years! A merman who resists his instinct to mate will have to go through rut pains that escalate every year!”

“What!?” Isabel squeaked, “Then we have to find him an omega, quick!”

Furlan snorted and pulled on the beta girl’s red hair, “Don’t be too rash! Where are we supposed to find one when he practically shot down the entire Legion?”

Hange smiled easily and draped their arms around the small family of the equally small captain, “Maybe we’re not looking at the right place! In three days time, we’ll be going up to the warmer waters to scout for titans and collect food. Maybe one of the Rosen, Marian, or Sina mermaids would catch his eye!”

“You mean merman, Hange,” Furlan grinned, “I think Levi’s not too interested in boobs after that fiasco with the omega with curly blonde hair.”

“Gross, Furlan!” Isabel squaked, “I thought we’d never be talking about that again!”

Furlan laughed heartily and swam in spirals as Isabel further screeched her protest. The two were only stopped by highly irritable mothers who shouted at them from the top caves to quiet down. Isabel muttered curses under her breath but allowed herself to be pushed further away into the territory of Levi.

Furlan and Isabel made a series of clicks to ensure that Levi knew that they were approaching. They were answered by a bored clicking which escalated to a feral warning when the shorter male with an undercut noticed that Hange had tagged along.

“Calm down, my little fingerling! I was just escorting the two back home. Also, I kinda need a report about the recent titan searching!” Hange explained and swiftly avoided a barbed tail sent their way.

“Just don’t make a mess or I’ll wipe it with your face.”

“Hey, big brother!” Isabel excitedly squealed as she grabbed a freshly sliced fish in one of their baskets, “Do you have a type?”

“For fuck’s sake,” Levi groaned irritably, “will you leave the mating shit alone? Aren’t you a bit too young for that?”

“Nuh-uh!” Isabel answered back messily and Levi flicked her forehead for spilling a chuck of fish on the table.

“You aren’t going to give this up, are you?” Levi sighed tiredly, dropping the scrub he was using to remove the annoying algae build up that had started residing on his pristine ceiling.

“Nope!” answered Furlan and Hange in chorus which made Isabel laugh.

“Fine!” Levi relented but barred his fangs in a display that showed he wasn’t pleased, “I want them to be able to meet my cleaning standards.”

Hange snorted and banged their head against the table, “What!?”
Isabel choked visibly and Furlan shook his head while muttering how they could swim across the seven seas and never find such a creature. The trio deflated a little since they knew that Levi Ackerman was the biggest clean freak out there and most of the omegas found it such a turn off that the shorter male was so blunt and nitpicky about everything.

“Is that all or do we still have hope?” Isabel whined pitifully.

Levi smirked and picked up the scrub to return to cleaning, “I like tall people.”

The squad leader and Isabel whooped noisily and began chattering about how that was at least one possible criteria that they could find. Furlan just scratched his dark blond hair in amusement but internally gave up hope that there was ever a rare tall creature who cleaned as well as Levi.

Unknown to them, in the warmer waters of Shiganshina, where the dazzling summer light poured like golden curtains across the reef, there was a fuming omega who relentlessly picked at and cleaned his cave until his hands were rubbed raw. Perhaps, if given the proper time, the two unlikely mermen would be able to find themselves in the same waters.
It was a bright sunny day in the reef of Shiganshina where everyone was up early. The golden rays of the sun soothingly draped over the cluster of corals where the younger pups squealed in delight as they playfully chased a school of fish. Merchant mermen expertly evaded the speeding children while trying to get to their place of destination.

Unfortunately for Eren, the distressed school of fish took refuge in his small cave and effectively slapped the sleeping brunet awake with a sputter.

“Fuck! What the fuck!” Eren shrieked when tiny sharp tail fins smacked his tired face. Bouts of squeals and laughter from the pups outside his beloved alcove signaled the teal eyed merman that the kids were up to no good again.

“Aha!” Eren growled playfully as he pushed himself outside his cave, a curtain of carefully stitched together seaweed floating dramatically as he eyed the pups.

The younger ones gasped and slapped their pudgy hands against their mouths in an attempt to suppress their laughter. Eren had been their favorite playmate ever since they could swim away from their mothers’ protective nest and they were rather put out when they’ve been told that Eren couldn’t play with them for two days because of his presenting.

To the amusement of the other residents of Shiganshina, a mix of brightly colored tails scrambled to get away from the Jaegers’ territory. The pups laughed and clicked their tongues in an attempt to make Eren chase them in a friendly game of hunt. Even after the tiring fiasco of going through a
heat, Eren’s relentless stamina helped him push through the reef and swim effortlessly to playfully bite on the pups’ tails.

“Come here you little guppies!” Eren chuckled and jokingly barred his teeth that sent more of them squealing. The brunet was only stopped by Mikasa’s firm hand and permanently stoic face. Eren huffed and watched the pups cower into a corner.

“What’s the deal, Mikasa?” The raven haired girl’s glare intensified and wordlessly shook her head. Mikasa unwrapped a red scarf from her neck and proceed to cover Eren with it, making the omega hiss and try to claw out in retaliation.

“You can’t just—“

“You smell like heat, Eren. There are alphas who are looking at you like you’re going to be served for breakfast.”

Eren looked around and there were indeed some filthy alphas who were eyeing him intently. Gods, the boy really hated being omega; the mere branding of it limited what he could do. It was so unfair that his adoptive sister, Mikasa, presented as an alpha while he got stuck with being the submissive one.

The alpha mermaid eyed her brother protectively as her crimson tail swished from side to side to unsettle the sand and disperse the lingering scent of her brother’s heat. The pups have been long gone now and Eren mourned the loss of his ‘prey’.

Eren was about to hiss angrily at Mikasa when Armin’s voice startled the two from their heated glares. The blond merman politely swam past a cluster of mothers who were searching for their naughty pups. Armin chuckled at the sight and excitedly embraced his two friends when he finally reached them.

“Why are you in Mikasa’s scarf, Eren?”

“Because someone is overprotective!” Eren hissed and scowled, pelvic fins stretching in warning.

Armin looked nervously between the two and slapped his hands together, “Well, uh- since Eren’s heat is over, I have a big surprise for him!”

Eren blinked curiously at Armin as he unravelled the suffocating scarf away from his face. The omega in him was itching and screaming that the scent on him was wrong and he really needed to scrub himself against some moss or stone after this, “What is it?”

“Legion is resurfacing and they’ll be resting near Shiganshina, today!”

The brunet’s teal eyes widened with glee as he let out a series of noises and clicks to express his excitement. Meanwhile, Mikasa growled threateningly and non-verbally told Armin what a stupid idea it was to tell Eren that his favorite pod was coming to visit.

“I can’t believe this! I’ve only seen them in passing when I was a pup! This is the greatest day of my life. I’ll finally get to see Captain Le—“

“No.”

Eren turned so fast he almost suffered a whiplash, “No? What do you mean no?”

Mikasa pushed herself in front of her equally outraged brother, “Do you think it’s a good idea to go
out there, with Legion nonetheless, after you just presented? They’ll maul you, Eren!”

The brunet scoffed and pushed his sister away roughly. How dare she think so lowly of the Legion? The pod was their line of defense and offense against the Titans and this is the kind of thanks they get? Eren didn’t care for his sister’s indignant protests; he was going to see the pod even if he loses a fin for it.

“If you hate them so much then don’t go,” Eren growled lowly, “just because I’m an omega doesn’t mean I couldn’t do what I always dreamed of. I don’t need you hovering over me, damn it!”

The raven haired girl was about to retort when Armin intervened and made cooing noises to placate the alpha. Eren looked on with a disgusted look, cursing the fact that omegas had to stoop so low and bow their heads just to let the alphas get the upper hand. With that in mind, Eren rebelliously refused to lower his head and present his neck in submission.

No one will break him.

“I could just scrub Eren with seaweed so his scent will be muted, okay?” Armin suggested gently, “He’s still our stubborn friend, Mikasa. We can’t possibly deprive him of this rare chance. You can come with us if that would make you feel better.”

“Armin, you traitor!” Eren whined and thrashed his tail.

“Okay.”

The light from the upper waters were as annoying as Levi remembered. It wasn’t like he swam frequently to the warmer waters but he had the unfortunate chance several years ago, when Erwin decided to tag him along for the annual migration. Needless to say, it took the entire Legion to stop Levi from lashing out because of the painful light.

“I’m so excited! We finally get to stay near Shigcan— sina?” Isabel chattered unsurely, still unaccustomed to the weird names and languages used by Marian merpeople.

“It’s Shiganshina.” Furlan corrected and ruffled Isabel’s hair who complained loudly. Even Hange was at the top of their spirits while the cluster of Legion merpeople swam up and over the fluorescent corals that led to the connected area of coral reefs and kelp forests that was Shiganshina.

Levi grunted in displeasure as his gills irritably opened and closed, “Fuck, it’s too damn hot in this shithole.”

“Levi, language please.” Erwin scolded him which everyone knew didn’t have much of an effect.

Isabel swam up to the superiors and permanently resided near her big brother figure, “Aren’t you excited to swim around a new territory, big bro? This is like our biggest dream when we were back in the trenches of the Underground!”

The shorter brooding male cracked a smile at the memory. This was Isabel and Furlan’s first time to accompany the older mer of the Legion in their annual migration and the two pup-like mer had been vibrating with excitement. The darkness of the trenches is now but a distant memory but the promises they made were still freshly branded in their minds.
“I’ve seen this place a lot of times, kid.” Levi answered as he ducked a rather stupid group of fish that didn’t know how to hide, “It wouldn’t hurt if it wasn’t so damn hot too. The temperature wasn’t this bad for the last two years.”

“Oh, I’m sorry for being hot, Levi!” Hange winked.

Levi hissed and grumbled audibly, “Ugh, fucking disgusting. Only sea anemone would be attracted to you.”

The squad leader laughed boisterously at the image and almost bumped Moblit, their assistant mer, to a highly agitated puffer fish which looked like it wanted to murder the two merpeople for being too loud and obnoxious.

A series of clicks and trills from their commander signalled the group that they were near the lip of the Shiganshina territory. The younger Legion mer held their breath as they rose upwards and caught a first glance of the wide expanse of brightly colored coral reef.

There were patches of coral polyps that swayed easily with the current, seahorses were busy zipping through lines of Copper-band butterfly fish which were lazily swimming over beautifully colored sea slugs and sponges. A turtle was being accompanied by an array of different species of fish as they all headed towards the direction of the kelp forest, south of Shiganshina and border of Trost.

“It’s so pretty!” Isabel squealed and swam through her older superiors in a dizzying speed. Commander Erwin clicked his tongue and was quick to stop the girl from disturbing the peaceful morning routine of the local residents.

“Not so fast,” Erwin reprimanded, “We have to announce our presence to the heads of Shiganshina first.”

Isabel visibly pouted when she was handed over to an unimpressed Levi who flicked the younger mer with a tail. Fortunately, meeting with the mer residents of Shiganshina didn’t take too long as there was already a growing line of curious watchers who gawked at the foreigners. Levi hated this part because he felt like he was on display for everyone to judge, and it made his dark colored scales itch.

Most of the Legion didn’t pay attention to the curious on-lookers; Levi’s perpetual scowl was enough to drive them away without much trouble. It was only when a fast blur of gold and green zoomed past their line did the family of Levi turn their heads. Even Isabel was shocked that Levi’s attention was caught.

“What was that?” Furlan asked as he saw a tip of a shiny gold tail duck into a corner.

Out of a stack of algae covered rock pillar, a brunet omega peeked at the group with large turquoise colored eyes framed with thick lashes. His skin was blessed with the color of light caramel, slightly peppered with light scars and scratches. The omega’s tail shone an attractive color of gold that wasn’t too bright unlike Sina merpeople. The appendage was lightly touched with green tints that complemented the boy’s soft eyes.

He was gorgeous.

Levi was suddenly taken aback by the spark of attraction that bubbled inside him when the young omega smiled easily at him. The beautiful smile turned into a grin accompanied by a strong wave of his hand that was definitely for Levi to see.
“Big brother has a fan!” Isabel shouted excitedly and caused the aloof captain to swim away.

Furlan snorted at the confused looking Isabel, “You are now, officially the princess of cockblock.”

“What did I do!?”

Eren’s mood hadn’t been dampened despite that fact that Mikasa ratted him out to his mother. The encounter led to a serious pinching of the ear and an hour and a half worth of lecture about staying away from the Legion. Unfortunately, none of her words reached his head when it was full of the image of the captain of the Legion.

The brunet had always admired the man ever since the war stories about him reached the shores of Shiganshina. Levi was portrayed as a brutal and unforgiving merman who killed Titans without hesitation. Eren always dreamed to be like him and the turquoise eyed boy was elated that he finally got to see the captain in the flesh.

Levi wasn’t the dreamy type of guy that could make Marian mermaids swoon. He was short and scowled more than necessary but his beautiful face wasn’t distorted by it at all. The raven’s black hair swallowed the light just like his dangerous looking tail which was devoid of extra fins that Eren had. The guy even sported an undercut which made him look a lot more intimidating, that Eren was sure the other alphas of the warm waters would shit themselves.

The boy had been lost in his thoughts of becoming like his idol soldier when a series of distressed trills and shouts woke him from his inner stupor. The omega growled and inched carefully towards the source of the sound.

Shiganshina was not only a huge coral reef but it also housed what humans used to call as abandoned villages. Although, what was only left of the poor village were ruins that barely held themselves together against the current. There were only four houses and a church left, which was usually the dwelling place of the nastier alphas of Shiganshina.

Eren’s veins began to pump with nervous energy as he rounded a corner and spotted a red haired beta mermaid surrounded by filthy aggressive alphas. The smell of the group trying to impose their dominance on the poor girl made the brunet gag.

“What the fuck are you doing?” Eren growled and flared his fins to make himself look bigger.

One of the taller alphas sneered, “Well, if it isn’t the newly presented bitch. Go away, Jaeger. This is none of your business.”

The brunet hissed threateningly as his fangs elongated in preparation for a fight, “Get your hands off of her or I will tear your face apart!”

Noticing the distracted look of the alphas, the beta girl slammed her tail harshly against the alpha who pinned her down. It was a flurry of fins and sharp claws as Eren joined the fray and slashed through the alpha who retaliated against the girl. The brunet was blind with rage as he felt one of the bastards punch his ribs.

“How don’t pass out on me, kid!” the beta shouted as she trapped an alpha into a chokehold.

Eren relentlessly clawed at the two of the alphas who were already bleeding, only one of them were stuck with the beta girl who elbowed the dark haired thug through the nose. One of the alphas
that Eren fought had already escaped when a shriek from the girl caught Eren’s attention.

“Get your shitty hands off me!” she screamed as her pink and orange tail trashed violently, sand and rock sediments clouding the waters.

The brunet was about to help the girl when the alpha he was fighting had sunk his clawed hands into Eren’s chocolate brown hair. The omega screamed in pain as he tried to pry off the hold on him. With the last ounce of his strength, Eren rammed his pointed tail against the alpha who trapped the beta girl.

“ISABEL!” a distinct shout from a distance echoed, violent and aggressive tone coating every syllable.

The injured alphas didn’t stand a chance as Levi and Furlan slammed them against the cobblestone walls. Both their pheromones reeked of aggression and a promise of death, should the foolish Marian alphas continue their stupidity. Fortunately, the two got too intimidated by the Legion alpha and beta that they scrambled away without a word.

“Hey, kid! Snap out of it!” Isabel cried as she cradled a heavily bruised omega in her arms.

Eren tiredly blinked and saw the face of the girl he had tried to save. He recognized her as one of the Legion mermaids who had just arrived in Shiganshina. The brunet smiled crookedly and retracted his sharp fangs and claws.

“Sorry.” Eren wheezed as the red head tried to maneuver him in a more comfortable position.

“Those were some pretty impressive moves!” Isabel cheered with a bruised smile, “I’m Isabel! What’s your name, omega?”

Eren smiled back and held out his hand which the red head enthusiastically shook, “My name’s... Eren.”

“No offense, Eren,” Furlan laughed as he inched towards the two, “but that was pretty suicidal. Why didn’t you ask for help?”

The brunet scowled and shook his head, “I don’t need help to rip them a new one. I’ll kill them all if I have to!”

Levi eyed the scarred omega and a flash of interest lit his usually dim grey eyes, “Hoh? Not bad.”

It was only then that Eren realized that it was Captain Levi Ackerman himself who was right in front of him. The omega flailed and babbled incoherent words as he tried to sit up and make himself more presentable. Isabel laughed at the attempt since Eren had been wincing the entire time because of his injuries.

“It’s a shame that they bit you like that,” Isabel pouted petulantly, “You have such a pretty tail!”

Eren blinked and looked at his golden tail to find that there was indeed a bite mark near his hip. The brunet sighed as he ran his tan fingers across the injury to remove the wobbly scales that were now useless.

Furlan could have sworn that Levi’s eyes darkened momentarily when they all eyed the new scar on the omega’s tail. Looks like their captain was finally showing some interest but one could never be too sure. The kid definitely had some pretty eyes and height on him but they didn’t know if he could clean well.
Wait why was he thinking about matchmaking at a time like this?

“Can you swim or is your tail too banged up?” Furlan asked as he stooped down and helped Isabel get up.

The stubborn omega refused any type of help but it was clear that Eren was too injured to properly swim back home. Levi released an irritated sigh as he pinched the bridge of his nose.

“You look like a complete idiot,” Levi bluntly commented, “extend your arm before I drag you by the tail.”

Eren blinked in confusion until he felt the captain scoop him up from the harsh sand, carrying the omega effortlessly. The boy was about to protest but one look from the raven haired alpha made him shut up.

“We’re getting your troublesome ass home, kid. Legion doesn’t need rumors going around that we beat you up.”

Furlan and Isabel gapped stupidly at the scene as Eren described the way back to the Jaeger territory. They’ve never seen the grumpy alpha voluntarily carry any injured mer especially when they’re covered with filth like Eren. Perhaps it was only done once and they were severely wounded pups during that time.

Eren, on the other hand, felt like he was melting in the arms of his hero. The merman’s alabaster skin, though heavily scarred, was smooth and soothing against his tan one. It was obvious that the captain went through hell just by the feel of the calloused fingers that cradled Eren gently. It appeared that the trip back to the Jaegers wouldn’t take too long but Eren had been already lulled into a calm light slumber by the protective scent of the Legion captain.

The brunet was unconsciously cooing and rubbing his face near the captain’s scent gland when a growl startled Eren awake. The omega was about to apologize profusely when a loud roar chilled his blood. There were a lot of panicking mer who were scrambling to get away as chunks of coral dropped from the skies.

“What is going on here?” Levi questioned as he expertly avoided the crowd and the falling debris. Isabel and Furlan yelped and swam past what looked like a huge pillar that crushed the reef along with the sponges and other marine life that resided in the unfortunate place. Eren looked helplessly as his neighbors scrambled to get to safety.

“Jean!” Eren screamed when he saw Kristein swimming away with his omega mate, Marco.

The boy with the two toned hair gasped and pulled his mate along with him, “Shit! What the fuck are you doing here, Eren? Why aren’t you with your mother and Mikasa!?”

“Quit yelling at me, seahorse!” Eren squeaked, still helpless in the arms of the indifferent captain, “Tell me what’s going on! Why’s everyone evacuating?”

“The titans!” Marco answered frantically as he held on desperately to Jean. Levi visibly stiffened at the answer in sync with Furlan and Isabel who were watching from the sidelines.

“Shiganshina has been breached along with Trost! We need to get out of here!”

Eren’s eyes widened as he wiggled out of Levi’s hold, “No! My mother and Mikasa are still out there!”
Jean sneered and grabbed the omega by the wrist, “Mikasa probably brought your mom to safety, dumbass! You can’t possibly go— Shit! EREN! DON’T!”

The alpha was too late and Eren had already swam away from the group with Levi and the two other Legion mers in tow. The captain cursed inwardly at his luck of finding a stubborn omega who wanted to risk himself getting killed by directly going to the Titan hunting ground.

“Furlan, go back to the camp and bring Isabel with you!” Levi commanded as he trained his eye on Eren who was swimming with difficulty.

“No way, big brother!” Isabel protested, “We’re not leaving you, and Eren saved my ass so I won’t leave him to die in the hands of those ugly titans!”

The captain could argue no longer when a steep hill came into view. The omega openly sobbed as he took in the ruined state of his home. Levi’s inner alpha growled and hissed at him for failing to protect the omega, which the captain duly ignored. Eren was a stranger and didn’t want help so why should he give a shit?

“Mom! Mikasa!” Eren wailed heavily.

Levi and the others watched in horror as a mother who had pale yellow and orange tail thrashed and tried to claw her way out of the heavy boulders and crushed corals that pinned her tail to the ocean floor. A young alpha mermaid was desperately trying to loosen the debris but to no avail.

“Eren! You’re alive!” Mikasa cried in relief as the injured omega slipped his fingers under the corals and tried to pull them up with all his strength. Furlan and Isabel dove into the scene and tried to pull Eren’s mother out of the mess. She’d surely suffer a permanent injury after this but the mers couldn’t care less. Their mission was to get her out of there alive and fast.

Levi, on the other hand, positioned himself protectively in front the struggling younger mers. A grinning Titan female was headed towards their way, clearly smelling the distress and the amount of blood spilling from both Jaegers and Isabel.

The Titan’s grin was full of spiky teeth that crisscrossed across its horrendous face. Titans’ usual form was an odd combination of a giant angler fish and a mauled mermaid. They were terrifying creatures that ranged from slow moving to aberrant ones that could surpass Levi’s speed. The captain hissed his threat as the glowing eyes of the Titan eyed the trapped mermaid.

There was clearly no time and Levi had to engage the ugly looking creature before it could have the chance to snack on the group. In a blink of an eye, Levi’s claws extended and oozed with black poison, sharp spiky fins that were connected to his jaw were released in a threatening display, and his dorsal fins which stretched up to his spine had quivered in anticipation.

The female titan swooped down with its open mouth, eliciting a terrified scream from Eren’s mother. Levi swung himself forward and buried his claws into the titan’s throat, pushing it away to expose its vulnerable nape. The creature focused its attack on Levi as it opened its toothy mouth again and tried to swallow the captain in one bite.

Furlan moved fast and cut its massive bony tail alongside with Isabel, leaving the captain with a clean opportunity to strike the creature down. The titan fell within minutes but another hoard was coming. This time, an aggressive looking male titan had spotted them.

Levi and Furlan weren’t fast enough for the aberrant.

Mikasa cried silently as she threw herself in front of Carla in a desperate attempt to protect her
adoptive mother.

It was too late.

The titan’s large jaws had opened and there was no chance they’d get out alive.

Until Eren’s scream erupted from the rubble.

“FUCKING DIE ALREADY!”

The group gasped in awe as Eren’s body contorted and transformed into a dangerous looking creature. His eyes were sunken and there were scratch marks that ran down from his eyes to his cheeks, fangs had dangerously sharpened and extended into an eerie grin. The way the omega’s lips all but melted and deformed reminded the mers of the same titan they are currently facing.

Eren roared, similar to that of a powerful titan, and swung his whole body against the giant. The aberrant hissed menacingly and tried to regain its balance but Eren’s smaller mer body had the advantage of speed, allowing the brunet to ram into the titan again and rip open the protective shell that guarded its nape.

Mikasa watched in barely masked horror as the omega opened its fanged mouth and sunk his teeth unto the pale flesh of the titan’s neck.

The creature soundlessly fell to the ground together with the extremely exhausted Eren who was morphing back to his original form. The group remained stunned except for Levi who darted across the ocean floor and caught the omega in his arms.

This was the second time this day that the captain had to catch Eren.

‘This weird brat better not get used to this.’ Levi muttered in his head as he observed the bruised Marian omega with interest.

Chapter End Notes

Gotta love how Levi wasn’t frozen in his seat after everything that happened.

So how was it? That was definitely an adventure to write since a lot of things happened in this chapter.
I especially enjoyed researching about marine life just to write this.
(PS. it’s ‘pups’ just like how baby dolphins are called. I figured it’s more fitting since they’re mammals)

Also, I wrote this long chapter because I’ll be gone for at least a week since ya know... /finals/.

See you in the next chapter!
Chapter Summary

"For some, it was the day that the merfolk received a grim reminder of the fear and shame of being caged, waiting to be eaten on a whim by the titans but for Legion and the captain, it was the day that they received the greatest weapon that will change their lives and thaw the cold heart of an untouchable Ackerman."

Chapter Notes

I'm still not done with my final exams but I found some free time to finish this chapter. Honestly, this was written before exams started so I just finished it today because I felt so bad for leaving this hanging for a long while.

This chapter is just a transition chapter that I wanted to get over with. I'm not entirely too excited because this is nothing compared to the following chapters I already drafted!

Hence, please bear with my crappy writing for now. It will get better once Eren is far faaar away.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

When Eren woke up, it was dark and the cold seeped through his battered limbs and bones. The taste of copper and bile clung to his mouth like putrid acid that burned the back of his throat. The boy’s head swum in different colors and images; sounds turning into eerie shadows that reminded him of his night terrors when he had been told of the existence of titans when he was but a small pup.

Eren just wanted to curl up on his mother’s lap and ignore everything, his throbbing head refusing to acknowledge where he was or why he was there. The omega thought that if he ignored it long enough, then all of them would go away. Unfortunately, the phantom grip of pain clung to him determinedly; his wrists ached from what felt like icy clutches that threatened to slice through him.

He was in so much pain and a pitiful groan from the back of his throat was all he could afford.

Commander Erwin and Captain Levi looked at the chained merman with impassive faces, though their hearts were about ready to burst into turmoil. The attack on Trost and Shiganshina had been unforgiving, leaving many mer families permanently traumatized and homeless.

“He’s surely an odd one, isn’t he?” Erwin muttered to himself and Levi in the cold space of an old cellar of the sunken church. Violence and unforgiving circumstances have been constant friends for the two Legion mermen but seeing a young omega merman chained to the wall of a crumbling house of God left a bitter taste in their mouths.

Levi simply made a hum to indicate that he was in agreement.
“They’ll kill him, you know,” Levi finally ground out when the repetitive waves of the ocean started to grate on his nerves, “He’s one of those things and they won’t like it.”

The commander sighed heavily and scrubbed a calloused hand across his face. It was no question now that Eren Jaeger is a titan shifter; the creatures which merpeople deemed as monsters, demons even, that lurked the waters and signalled an unfortunate omen.

Titan shifters are made through forced infection of pitiful mermaids or mermen who were bitten by titans. The bastard breed was incapable of producing young themselves so they put the burden on unwilling fertile carrier merpeople. The children will become either a titan shifter or a full blown titan when they grow old. It was a disgusting practice but the Titans weren’t exactly known for being civilized. They were mindless predators and survival was all that mattered.

Erwin, for the first time in his life, was lost for words. Fortunately, it was that time that Eren decided to wake up and the two alphas had finally been woken from their quiet brooding. The omega groaned and whimpered, turning Levi into a mess of confusion, anger and a platter of emotions that he did not recognize.

The captain really did not like this kid’s effect on him.

“So you finally decided to wake up.” Levi commented with a bored tone as he crossed his arms in front of his chest, a defensive position that irked the raven haired man because it was a blatant admission that he was not comfortable with the omega that had been pulling his fins over his head since the moment his turquoise eyes drowned Levi.

Erwin, on the other hand, had been kinder albeit direct to the point when talking to Eren. The commander’s tail swished in gentle motions to indicate his lack of intent to hurt the smaller omega who was unconsciously stretching his dorsal and pectoral fins as a sign of agitation. Eren looked fearful and unsure, making Levi just want to punch something because it was making the shorter merman restless.

“Eren, I want to know what you want to do. Your situation is very delicate and you’re teetering between life and death.” The commander asked with a firm tone, “I’m afraid that you are tied to the titans now and your pod won’t be very welcoming.”

The blond Legion merman had been careful in explaining the situation clearly and without sugar coating. Eren was shocked but he knew what being a titan shifter meant. His death was clearly spelled out from the time he was conceived but the spitfire within him refused to surrender. The pleading questions that were screaming in his head were drowned out by the rush of anger that prickled his skin.

A flash of dangerous intent coated the omega’s eyes, a grin splitting his face that would send the murderers of the Underground swimming away.

“I want to join the Legion. I’ll kill them all for what they did to me and my family.” Eren declared; poison and the promise of death coating his deranged ill intent.

Levi was once again left breathless by the omega. It wasn’t that he put omegas in a different light compared to betas or alphas, but warm water merpeople have been known for confining their omegas into certain roles. They were always content with staying with a mate and giving them pups when they wished. Eren was different; the danger that was vibrating in the boy’s chest was as dangerous as any alpha Levi ever encountered.

‘Not bad.’ Levi thought to himself a second time during this godforsaken trip as he swam closer to
the murderous omega.

“Erwin, I’m taking full responsibility for him.”

The commander was almost on the verge of sputtering. The captain would have laughed were it not for the seriousness of the situation. Eren will be seen as a threat by Shiganshina and the boy’s death would not be protested. Call it intuition but Levi was sure that the kid’s disposal would certainly be a shame. An omega with such fierceness despite a caged upbringing piqued the cold captain’s interest. His inner alpha howled and demanded that Levi take the boy, for what reason, he doesn’t really know or understand.

“It’s not that I trust him. If he goes berserk then I will not hesitate to kill him on the spot,” Levi declared coldly, freezing the omega in front of him in a mix of fear and awe, “I doubt anyone will object. There’s no one better suited for this, after all.”

‘No alpha better suited to claim an intriguing omega’ Levi’s alpha growled.

Erwin spared a calculating look at his subordinate. There was definitely a strange pull going on between the captain and the slightly quivering Marian omega. It was a dangerous thread that prickled the commander’s skin. The two held such raw power that Erwin was tempted enough to tap into the connection.

Levi was right. Taking in the omega would be to the Legion’s advantage since the power of titan shifters could effectively push back the Titans more and therefore gain territory. However, warm water mers weren’t exactly welcoming to the idea of shifters simply swimming around in the ocean. The painful irony is that despite their insistence that they’re more civilized and less violent, they had a tradition of killing titan shifters and Titan children without hesitation.

The hypocrisy of it all made the commander laugh bitterly.

With a terse nod, Erwin agreed to take Eren in just like how he practically adopted Levi, Isabel, and Furlan into the pod. There would be a lot of obstacles to face before they could reach an agreement with the Marians but that is simply the price to be paid for acquiring a rarity like Eren.

It took another day before Eren’s trial began.

The omega didn’t even have the luxury of melting into the embrace of his family before he was dragged out of his makeshift prison and was forced to face the elder Marians.

Even Legion was present.

A cold shiver ran down Eren’s spine as he spotted Mikasa, Armin, and his mother just by the edge of where the old pruned Marians sat. His mother was visibly unwell and shaking but her expression matched Eren’s stubborn determination. Apparently, it’s not only his mother’s face that Eren has acquired.

The trial was boring at most as the elder mers droned on about the history of Titan and their practice of infecting merpeople to carry their young. Eren muted the history lesson as he assessed just how tight the shackles on his wrists were. The boy cursed at the fact that he had been tied to a crusty anchor that was digging into his sensitive tail.

How barbaric.
“The boy should be sentenced to death!” an adult merman bellowed from his place. Eren recognized the bastard as a neighbor who was all smiles and helpful when he was a pup; now, the man practically begged for Eren’s death.

“You fucking cheap bastard!” Eren yelled angrily as he tugged at his restraints and barred his fangs. The Marians exploded into deep murmurs and Carla looked helplessly at her son who was trying to fight off an entire reef of merpeople.

Mikasa looked murderous as she heard the once kind older mers suddenly turn against Eren and agreed that the young omega should be killed. Even Armin felt nauseous from the hateful suggestions coming from every direction. Legion remained cold and distant regarding the issue but Erwin’s icy blue eyes reflected a plan being brought up.

Levi suppressed a growl as he dug his clawed fingers against his crossed arms, “You’d better be thinking of some explosive shit, Erwin, or we’ll lose the shitty brat.”

Erwin smirked and hummed to himself, even Hange was starting to get impatient and was itching to storm over and grab the interesting shifter. Legion knew that the trial was most likely just a show and they would most certainly kill Eren anyway. They had to convince the narrow-minded pod that killing Eren isn’t beneficial.

The commander finally relented to the conclusion made up in his head and hummed a deep tone that only Legion could recognize. The Marians were too deep in their conversations that they failed to notice the entire deep-sea pod snap at attention. Erwin’s trills were too deep for warm water mer to recognize and Levi was relieved for this little party trick.

The instruction was clear.

*Control Eren and take him. Intimidate the Marians. Instill fear and convince them that Eren could be used to defend themselves against Titan.*

Levi immediately sprung into action after the instruction has been relayed. The Marians suffered a whiplash as the captain sped into a flurry of bubbles and whipped his powerful tail against Eren’s upper half. The boy practically bent into two as his face slammed against the prickly sand.

“EREN!” Mikasa shouted, smelling strongly of the stench of aggressive hormones while glaring at Levi with utmost contempt.

The captain remained unfazed and continued to slam Eren against the ocean floor and the anchor he was attached to. The omega gasped and shook from pain as he felt Levi’s tail ram into his ribs. Blood clouded the place where Eren sat and Levi had to physically stop himself from feeling emotions. The alpha had no choice; he had to protect Eren and violence is the only tool of a soldier.

It was then that Erwin stepped in with cool confidence, dark blue and white tail propelling the imposing commander to where the elder Marians sat. Levi trusted that Erwin could spin enough flowery words to convince the self-righteous pod to give up Eren.

Levi breathed in deep and was distressed to find himself entirely coated with the smell of the omega’s blood and pain. It didn’t help that Eren’s mother looked at him in the eye with such fierceness. The raven haired captain almost flinched with shame but what he found in those pools of honey-brown eyes had him pinned.

‘Please protect my son. I know this is necessary and I am helpless. I trust you.’

“Mom... I’m sorry. Don’t look.” Eren whimpered, shaking from his intense sobs.
The alpha felt like a complete ass but forced his face not to show his true emotions. The scene painfully reminded him of his little time with his own mother. Kuchel was the same as Carla, both helpless in protecting their sons but would do anything to keep them safe and loved. And Eren did not let this love go to waste. The boy returned his mother’s affections and was more worried about her than he is for himself.

If anything, Levi’s respect for Eren heightened. They both shared the same deep feelings that death could not intimidate.

The conversation between the leaders of Shiganshina and Erwin continued, a verbal battle that went back and forth with the tall blond merman obviously winning. Levi hated this part and usually stayed out of sight so he busied himself with the young omega below him. Eren was still shaking, his head was bowed submissively for the first time and Levi’s alpha disliked the reason why.

Without thinking much, Levi buried his clawed fingers into Eren’s chocolate brown hair. The omega whimpered slightly but was replaced with a soothing mewl when Levi retracted the claws and tenderly comforted the mer with gentle strokes of his fingers. Levi made it look like he was dragging Eren’s head up but it was actually a comforting mechanism he learned whenever Isabel got too upset.

“Are you suggesting this be considered as a form of banishment, Smith?”

Their attentions were brought back once again to the ugly trial. Commander Erwin smiled professionally and nodded at the battered figure of Eren, “You wish to execute the boy, do you not? Eren Jaeger’s banishment to Legion will most likely result to that but with the added advantage of learning more about titans and shifters. It would be to our advantage if he is handed over to us.”

The leaders seemed a little hesitant which caused Eren’s mother to look worriedly.

Even if Carla did not originally want Eren to go anywhere near Legion, the pod was the only thing that could save her son from certain death at this very hour. Erwin merely glanced at the woman’s emotional turmoil and shifted his cold gaze to the crowd.

“To our knowledge, we’ve been particularly known for our violent nature. We are here to assure you that Eren Jaeger will not be able to set his fins on this reef without being executed by Captain Levi Ackerman. You will all be safe from him.”

Needless to say, Erwin finally won the battle. The Marians sagged in relief that the boy would be sent to the darkest depths of the ocean, far away from their young and loved ones. The elders nodded firmly and agreed to hand over Eren until the boy’s dying days.

Levi released a breath through his gills and watched Isabel sag in relief next to Furlan. Damn, he really didn’t want the red head to see him do that to the omega who saved her ass.

Levi was finally forced to let go of the boy’s soft locks when his family rushed towards him. The boy blinked awake from the comforting scent unconsciously caused by Levi to see Mikasa and Armin helping his mother swim towards him.

“You’ve got a few minutes to say goodbye, Eren.” Levi muttered quietly as he swam away to an expectant Hange, Isabel and Furlan.

“Eren!” Carla cried as she threw herself to her son. Her dull tail hung limply behind her, a permanent injury that had rendered her completely useless in swimming. Eren sobbed in relief as he
was blanketed by his family’s familiar scent.

“I’m so sorry I haven’t told you. We were only trying to protect you for so long. Your father—“

“Did he know about this?” Eren hissed through his swollen mouth and half closed eyelid. There was a bit of anger and bitterness in his tone since Grisha Jaeger had all but left them for years without a single word.

“He left to find a cure for the both of us, sweetheart.” Carla cooed and brushed Eren’s bangs away, “Your father knew about our predicament so he tried to stop it before it came out. I’m so sorry.”

Eren’s lower lip wobbled as his emotions tore against his chest. Mikasa and Armin tried their best to soothe their friend but they all knew it was pointless. Eren was to be sent far away and they might never see each other again.

“I’ll rip that shorty to shreds.” Mikasa growled when they finally separated from their tight group hug. Whatever tension that burdened them was swept away by their laughter over Mikasa’s aggression and hatred against Levi. Armin stifled his laughter behind a closed fist while Carla and Eren sagged against each other, shaking their heads at Mikasa’s attitude.

“I might not like their methods,” Carla added as she soothed the aching bound wrists of her son, “but the captain saved Eren’s life with his stunt. This is so much better than watching my baby get killed. At least, Eren would get a chance to live longer.”

“I’m not a baby!” Eren protested half-heartedly.

Their reunion was cut short by a Legion mer with messy ponytail and goggled eyes who is practically brimming with positive energy. Armin gapped openly and muttered a ‘Squad Leader Hange’ before he all but stumbled to them and babbled about his admiration for the mer’s extensive research.

“Aw! You’re such a smart cutie!” Hange cooed good-naturedly as they patted the omega, “I wish I could keep you but Eren’s already in the list so you’ll have to wait.”

“Excuse me, Squad leader,” Mikasa asked coldly and with intent, “Am I allowed to speak with Captain Ackerman privately?”

Hange blinked in surprise but nodded to the alpha mermaid. The girl reminded her so much of her grumpy short friend that she was briefly confused if the mermaid was Levi’s sister or something. The squad leader was about to question her but the crimson tailed alpha had already left without a proper goodbye.

“I’m so sorry for her,” Armin apologized sweetly, “It’s just a really tough day and we’re all stressed out by this.”

“It’s no problem, fishcake! It’s fine. We all get it.” Hange smiled sincerely and moved to the injured omega who was still chained to the anchor. The squad leader sat quietly near Eren and his mother and explained as much as they can to the two. Carla nodded grimly while she let the other mer heal her son with bottles of pressed plants and crushed corals.

“Sorry about this, kiddo.” Hange apologized in advance, “It’s going to sting like a jellyfish but it will help you heal faster. I can’t take off the shackles yet because everyone’s still a bit stir crazy. I’m sure you understand.”

Eren nodded a polite ‘yes’ before hissing uncontrollably upon contact with the concoction. The
greenish liquid was smeared over his open cuts and bruises, leaving Carla with nothing to do but croon softly against Eren’s soft hair. Armin sighed sadly at the scene and shifted his gaze to Mikasa to make sure that the alpha mermaid wasn’t causing too much trouble.

Against his better judgment, Armin swam closer to the escalating argument. The captain looked bored and hardly impressed by Mikasa’s threats but the beta mermaid and merman behind him were slightly getting irked.

“I guess Levi found his match when it comes to aggression,” crooned a deep voice that startled Armin.

The blond omega blushed deeply when he turned around and saw himself face to face with the commander of Legion. Armin stuttered and flailed, making the imposing commander burst into soft laughter.

“I-I’m sorry! You’re Commander Erwin Smith, right?” Armin asked excitedly though he already knew the answer.

Erwin simply smiled and let the omega babble whatever it is that is stuck in his poor stuttering heart. Eventually, Armin was able to recover and state his concerns regarding Eren. The commander was deeply impressed. Armin was a well-versed omega and knew of not only factual matters but also the implications of the gamble made by the commander with the elders. The young omega was not simply very good to look at but also had a brain and heart to go with him.

Erwin was a bit concerned that he was getting a little distracted.

“What I just wanted to say is... are we going to be allowed to visit Eren?” Armin asked with a slight firmness in his voice, “Obviously, not anytime soon. My concern is that the change in the environment could physically and emotionally cripple him. I’m sure Legion doesn’t truly want someone as advantageous as Eren to wither away quickly.”

Erwin, despite himself, laughed once again and shook his head, “Ah, you truly have this worked out in your head. You have nothing to worry about. We aren’t as barbaric as warm water mer think we are and Eren’s health and safety will be part of our priority. You may visit your friend but I suggest you do it after the moon has passed the skies and preferably without the attention of your pod.”

Armin grinned and nodded at the answer which Erwin found to be really... cute? Does he even use that word anymore?

“Oh, and may I know the name of the intelligent omega I’m talking to?” the commander smiled sweetly, just enough to mess with Armin and make the other blond blush into a crimson shade.

“A-Armin Arlert, sir! I’m so sorry! That was so rude of me!”

“It’s no prob—“

“Oi, shitwin!”

The two blue tailed mers blinked and glanced at a highly irritated Levi whose stormy gray eyes darkened with displeasure. Armin gulped and swum unconsciously behind the taller blond to hide from Levi’s murderous gaze.

“Stop flirting. We need to get out of here before I lose my goddamn mind with possessive alpha brats.”
Armin flinched and internally reprimanded Mikasa for annoying a captain that was known for killing titans single-handedly. Does having a death wish run in the Jaeger family?

The commander quirked a thick brow but relented to Levi’s wishes. Armin visibly saddened at the news that Eren would be transferred within the day and he could not imagine Mikasa’s reaction regarding this. Erwin felt slightly apologetic but assured Eren’s family that the boy would be in good hands.

“Eren, are you sure you really want to go with them?” Mikasa asked for the nth time but Eren firmly held her gaze.

“I won’t hide if that’s what you’re asking. I’ll kill every single one of the titans.”

For some, it was the day that the merfolk received a grim reminder of the fear and shame of being caged, waiting to be eaten on a whim by the titans but for Legion and the captain, it was the day that they received the greatest weapon that will change their lives and thaw the cold heart of an untouchable Ackerman.

Chapter End Notes

Comments, kudos, violent reactions?

This was mostly based on canon but we're diverting from that from here.

Thank you for the extra love, my guppies!
Eren didn’t know what home felt like.

For some, it might be odd that one does not know the calming warmth of a familiar embrace or the sweet gestures of comfort and assurances of love. However, Eren didn’t know anything else beyond the security of his home so he didn’t really have much to compare with. As far as the omega was concerned, the sun was always bright, his family was always by his side, and the world kept turning.

That is until the youngest Jaeger was forcefully banished from his own home.

The ocean was fairly quiet when the sun had began to set in the horizon, leaving the reef of Shiganshina in a curtain of bloody orange hue that seemed fitting for what was left of the desolate area. A grim sort of mood plagued the merpeople who tried to retrieve whatever they could from the rubbles of their homes. Not a lot of neighbors raised their heads to greet one another.

It was a silent affair.

The silence was only broken when a line of burly Legion mermen passed through the main pathway, bringing with them a dishevelled Eren whose wrists were still bound by iron shackles.

Eren could barely remember the warm press of his family’s lips against his cheeks, the grounding embrace that firmly clamped his remaining sanity, when the long lines of sneers and wary faces greeted him through what was left of the reef. The omega couldn’t blame them for their resentment. It was fairly placed. Unfortunately, the betrayal still stung deeply and the omega’s rage remained unquelled.

Levi, on the other hand, struggled to keep his composure and avoided piercing each Marian with his deathly glare as they swam past the mers. Their filthy attitudes were annoying and Eren’s distressed scent was making his skin itch irritably. Why can’t the damn kid control his emotions?
“Levi! We’re all packed and ready to go!” Hange shouted from a distance, waving their violet and maroon tail like an upside down lunatic. The researcher really gave no shit about social cues and keeping quiet.

Eren was once again greeted by deep frowns when he finally reached the cluster of Legion waiting for their commander’s cue for them to leave the reef. Most of the dark tailed mer eyed the omega with complete distrust and irritation, mainly because what was meant to be their trip for food and better connections led to a bloody fight and barely filled fish nets. The brunet wanted to apologize but he knew that wouldn’t really solve the problem.

“Cut the crap, guys!” a female voice boomed, “Leave him alone. What a bunch of nasty fuckers.”

Eren blinked from his brooding and was pleased to see Isabel swimming towards him and pushing away the other Legion mers who gave Eren dirty looks.

“I-Isabel?”

“Hey, kid! It’s nice to see you again— erm, well not in this state!” Isabel greeted with a cheeky grin. Eren is silently glad that at least one mer remained unfazed by his current predicament. The girl is certainly something else.

“Isn’t this great? It’s like having an extended sleepover!” Isabel yelled excitedly and swum around in circles which left Eren dizzy. The brunet didn’t really know that it’s a cold water mers’ signal to others to stay away.

Eren laughed at the energetic mermaid, “It would be more fun if everyone didn’t look like they want to kill me on the spot.”

The red headed beta abruptly stopped and pouted. She made sure to pinch Eren’s uninjured part of his cheek and reprimand him about being intimidated by Legion.

“No one here’s going to attempt to harm you, Eren,” Isabel assured the omega, “if they did then they’d face the wrath of big brother Levi and then they would all be flat dead on their assess before they knew what hit them!”

“Huh? Big brothe—“

“Legion! Prepare to depart!”

Isabel blinked and was about to answer Eren but thought better of it. The mermaid grabbed the brunet and made sure that he wasn’t lagging behind as Legion made their way out of the reef of Shiganshina. It was a little jarring for Eren since the pod was a little faster than Marians and it didn’t help that Eren is heavily injured.

Eren remained politely quiet throughout the trip as Isabel picked random moments to fill in the bruised omega with minor details about life as a deep sea mer. He was about to ask her if she was blood related with Levi but opted to keep it to himself as his mouth still stung inside and he didn’t really want to agitate the other Legion mers swimming closely.

It was odd, really. Most of Legion were huge and packed with muscles covered with scar peppered skins. Their tails were dark and intimidating; most of it looked like it could strangle a full grown mer to death without much effort. It was so different from what Levi, Isabel, and Furlan looked like.

Eren spared a glance behind him and jolted in surprise as he was met with the cool gaze of Levi’s
icy grey eyes. The omega squawked in embarrassment and averted his gaze but Levi’s piercing stare still burned a hole at the back of Eren’s head.

Saying that Levi is a dangerous sort of beauty was pretty much accurate with how he just naturally stuck out from the rest of Legion. The captain’s mysterious aura partnered with inky black hair and tail was the definition of elegance compared to the hulking scarred men of Legion who moved with little to no grace. The merman could pass off as royalty and Eren mentally slapped himself for creating such an attractive image of the captain in his mind. Maybe Eren hit his head too hard?

“Isabel!” Furlan hissed as he ducked and dove through the neat lines of other older mers, “What the hell are you still doing there!? Get your scaly ass back to the rear line. Levi’s going to be pissed!”

The red head glared at the blond, “I’m not doing anything wrong! I can keep better track of him if I’m right beside the guy, okay? Sheesh! Besides, big bro can see me from where he is right now. It’s no problem!”

“Why are you so stubborn?” Furlan sighed and took a glance at the battered omega at Isabel’s side, “just don’t do anything stupid, okay? It’s not my fault if Levi makes you do extra chores later.”

Isabel stuck out her tongue and continued to babble a lot of nonsense to Eren. The omega politely nodded to everything she was saying but noticed that the blond headed Furlan did not move back to the rear line where he was originally assigned to. The red headed beta also seemed to notice the blond’s hesitation and teased him to no end until Furlan finally became part of the duo turned trio.

It was only when Eren wobbled that he noticed that it was finally getting too dark and the natural blanket of darkness of the cold night didn’t help the poor warm water omega get his bearings together. The uncertainty brought about by the ominous void forced Eren’s instincts to kick in. The golden tailed omega chittered and cooed while the beta mers beside him were at lost at what to do.

The alpha mers sneered, though some of them were controlled enough to just glance warily. Luckily, Hange noticed the distressed sound and was pulled away from their useless attempt at being friends with whales just moments ago.

“Hey, sweetie. Are you okay?” Hange cooed as they swam to the cluster where Eren was being held, “Holy Neptune! You’re half transformed! That’s amazing! Moblit can you see this!?”

“S-Sorry! It just slipped out!” Eren defended himself quickly and straightened himself out. Levi watched closely as he emitted a scent of warning against the other Legion who were already making a move for their sheathed weapons of shark teeth and barbed daggers.

“Calm the fuck down.” Levi commanded with a firm tone and Eren worriedly looked at the raven merman behind him.

The omega had a thousand explanations and apologies ready to slip from his tongue when he noticed that he wasn’t the one being reprimanded. Eren’s huge turquoise eyes took in the growling alphas who were poised to strike. Levi stood in between the omega and the unstable war freaks.

“Captain! Stay away from him!” A young alpha bellowed as he barred his fangs.

“No, you stay away from him.” Levi countered and stood his ground. A lot of alphas and betas were in a state of panic now, too much noise and harsh questioning that brought a heavy tension where Eren was once again fighting for his life.

The omega panicked as he tried to control his instincts, immediately clawing and wiping at his face.
which he knew and felt had marks of a Titan transformation. He was getting desperate in his attempt to free himself of the sudden forced change that he did not notice Hange’s shrill voice and excited chittering.

“You’re so amazing, Eren! Let me touch you— Ouch! You’re scalding hot! It’s so damn hot!” Hange cried out in tears with excitement and sheer happiness that the other alphas started to back down at the oddity.

“Squad leader! You’re being too reckless!” Moblit fretted as Hange continued to squeal and practically sing praises in their high-pitched voice.

The raven haired captain eyed the interaction and was pleased that the rest of the group had scattered away from the scene. Hange was still making a lot of noise and commotion but Levi knew what was truly going on. A quick spark of something dangerous and protective glinted in the squad leader’s eyes when they made eye contact with the shorter mer.

‘I got this. Get the others to fall back in line.’ Hange’s molten brown eyes commanded and Levi nodded with thanks. The freak was not something the captain could fully understand but Hange was the type of mer that Levi could trust with his life... well, mostly if it didn’t involve dirt.

Eren released a relieved sigh when Hange bodily took him away, a calm padded hand right above his nape as a sign that the omega was directly under the squad leader’s protection. Even Isabel and Furlan maintained a respectable distance as they helped Levi pass the message that all was clear.

“Sorry if they’re a little jumpy, kiddo,” Hange apologized with a calming smile, “They all have boring sticks up their asses so they don’t know how to adjust to fun.”

The omega smiled a bit and felt his face sizzle back to its original form. Hange was once again set off to another tirade of babbling which was only stopped when Levi wacked the researcher mer with a heavy tail. The captain was scowling more and was clearly displeased with the commotion earlier.

“You should definitely stay with me, Eren! We’ll have lots of fun and oh! The experiments will be endless! We could find out what’s going on in your blood then we’ll pick apart your—“

“Oh, shitty glasses. Who gave you the authority to handle the brat on your own?”

“Huh?” Hange blinked a bit distractedly, “Didn’t we get him so we can find out more about Titan?”

Levi quirked an unimpressed brow, “The kid is under my custody. If we were to leave him to you, he’d be dead by morning. Don’t even try to argue.”

“Aww! No fair!” Hange whined and flailed in a fake tantrum, “Though maybe it’s for the best because Levi’s territory is clearly near the warmer spot in Legion. Well, if you consider warm as freezing your butt off in winter.”

“Will it really be that cold?” Eren asked nervously as his wary glossed eyes landed on Levi’s.

The captain bristled and felt his stomach twist and turn at the look. What the hell? Was he getting sick all of a sudden?

“Crappy temperature is better than getting dissected by mer like them.” Levi grumbled as he pointed an accusing finger at the squad leader.
“Hey! That’s not nice!” Hange pouted which did not earn much reaction from the impassive captain.

If there’s one thing that Eren learned from going to Legion, it’s that the Marians are paranoid fishfolk who did not appreciate beauty outside of their reef.

The omega gasped in raw admiration as lines of bioluminescent corals lighted up the pathway to the mouth of a staggeringly huge cave that served as the entrance to Legion’s territory. It was a bit too dark, Eren’s eyes not being used to such depth of the ocean, but the glittering black sand and rough jagged rock formations did not fail to amaze the warm water mer. Normally, it should be intimidating but Eren had very questionable tastes for a Marian.

“It’s beautiful.” Eren whispered quietly through his swollen mouth.

The rest of Legion was quick to disperse after Erwin had given them specific instructions regarding their supplies and the current situation that is a shackled Eren. The omega was once again hit by the reality that he doesn’t belong in their place and the crippling loneliness that comes with this has begun to fester deep.

“Come on, brat. We don’t have all night.” Levi boredly commanded as he weaved through the crowd that was thinning rapidly, Isabel and Furlan tailing right behind him.

The omega gulped audibly but refused to let his fear swallow him whole. With a determined push of his tail, Eren quickly followed the trio to the deeper parts of their territory where the old sunken ships were found. Just right below the hulking vessels rested an opening where Levi had slipped in together with Furlan.

Isabel had waited patiently just outside, making sure that a stray giant isopod was slapped away before it could terrify Eren. Though that’s a little bit too late since the omega had already seen the monstrosity and it didn’t help that it flew straight to Hange’s startled face.

“How are you liking Krolva so far, Eren? Isn’t it fantastic!” Hange squealed and flailed their hands all over the confused omega.

“Uh, excuse me?”

“Krolva! You know, the very place where you’re swimming right now?” Hange explained again but Eren just blinked at them, “Oh sorry! It’s just a rough translation of what our territory is called. You guys won’t really understand half of the sounds if we pronounce it properly.”

Eren laughed a bit nervously and scratched the back of his head, “Sorry, we just generally call it
the depths. No one really bothers to know the details because they’re too scared to talk about it.”

The squad leader hummed as they processed the information while Isabel visibly pouted at the boringness of it all. Hange was about to explode to another series of fast-paced questioning when a grumpy raven head had popped out of the ship’s window to yell at them.

“Hange, get the fuck out of my territory. You’re too damn noisy. And you, Isabel, get in here so I could clean you. You’re not sleeping in here with all that warm water filth.”

“But big brother—” Isabel whined but was cut off by Levi’s angry frown. The mermaid yelped and slinked through the opening before the elder mer could get any angrier.

The raven haired captain seemed slightly pleased and eyed Hange and Eren who were still staring stupidly at him. Seriously? Did he have to babysit overgrown pups now?

“Did your constant yelling turn you deaf, four eyes? I said get out. Make sure Eren gets in here too or I’ll have to drag him by the tail.” Levi grumbled moodily and slammed the rusty window closed.

The squad leader laughed loudly as they held their toned stomach from too much pain of laughing, “Don’t let him get to you, Eren! He’s usually an unpleasant mer but it’s just one of his quirks. His temper is as short as he is!”

Somewhere within the ship there was a loud threat of “I heard that, Hange! You’ll be scattered all over the fucking ocean when I’m done with you.”

“That actually means ‘I love you’ in Levi speak.” Hange smiled cheekily at the amused Eren. With those last few words, Hange ruffled Eren’s chocolate brown hair and bid him a goodnight. The squad leader made sure to tell the omega that if he suddenly felt anything wrong or felt sick because of the change in temperature, to make sure to come to them first.

Eren nodded a firm thanks and made his way into the captain’s home. The boy was greeted with the image of a highly irritable and squirming Isabel who was being cleaned thoroughly by a serious looking Levi. The captain’s face was akin to a soldier mer killing through rows of filthy titans rather than cleaning a younger member of the family. Furlan looked unfazed and just shrugged like it was normal.

“Let me get those ridiculous shackles off your wrist, Eren.” Furlan offered and the omega sighed in relief that he won’t have to bear with the icy iron any longer.

The metal was melted and torn into half by Furlan’s extended claws which oozed a bit of black poison. It was an interesting sight to see. The beta blond took the wasted metal and swam to the backside of the ship, seemingly to throw away the offending item that Levi had been side-eyeing since it was taken off Eren’s heavily bruised wrists.

Cleanliness must be an important matter to the captain, Eren thought. The ship, although bearing marks of its age, is unbelievably clean with no spots of stray moss or algae. There were trinkets of human stuff that Eren didn’t even know the names of but they were neatly arranged in perfect lines on the table tops. Shiganshina had a fair share of human possessions but most would shy away from them as they had a dislike for the two-legged creatures on shore.

“Are you done ogling?” Levi asked as he let the red headed beta swim away from his harsh cleaning, “You’re up next because you’re fucking filthy. When was the last time you scrubbed yourself clean?”

Eren blushed deeply and frowned, “I was busy trying to save my life for the past few days!”
“Tsk. Stop making excuses and get your ass seated.”

The omega bit the inside of his abused cheek and made his way towards the captain. It wasn’t that Levi’s attitude was rubbing off him wrong. Strangely enough, the reality of Levi being an imperfect, foul-mouthed, and unreasonably short mer had been a comfort to Eren. It only means that the merman is not some unreachable god-sent creature and he was just as bad as Eren when it comes to cursing.

What prickled his skin was that he seemed inadequate and was unlikely to impress the older mer. His inner omega whimpered at prospect of being unimportant to the Levi and it jolted Eren violently back to reality. The boy swiped his tongue over his split lip and reprimanded himself for his hero worship. The captain was an important person who was tasked to kill him if the brunet fucks up. Of course the raven wouldn’t want to see Eren as anything but a tool and this saddened the boy.

“Stop thinking unnecessary thoughts,” Levi calmly warned as he threaded his clawed fingers through the slightly matted chocolate locks, “You’ve been reeking of distress all day. Don’t you get tired of it?”

Eren blinked and nodded as he allowed the captain to clean him thoroughly. The cuts throughout his body stung like mad but the boy kept himself from yelping as the smooth and sticky liquid of a cleaning agent was smeared through his hair and skin. Levi’s touches were surprisingly gentle and precise as they avoided the deeper cuts which was slightly sizzling closed.

‘*Huh. That’s a strange development.*’ Levi thought to himself as he scrubbed the back of Eren’s ear vigorously. The boy squeaked and almost tumbled off, causing Levi to bite back a laugh at the ridiculousness of it.

It took some time to finally get most of the grime off Eren’s skin. At some point, the captain had opened the windows to let the slightly clouded water out and then he was back at picking on the dirt that was stubbornly attached to the omega. By the time the brunet was deemed clean, Levi’s arms were sore and Eren was a bit dazed by the scrubbing.

If anything, Levi should be pleased that the new forced addition to his home is free from filth but all that it caused was the removal of the blanket of stench that covered Eren’s delicious natural scent. Without dirt blocking the omega’s scent gland, the potent allure of a beautiful and ripe omega had burned through Levi’s sensitive nose and gills.

“Captain?” Eren asked innocently, “Are you okay?”

Fuck if Levi was okay. The raven’s heart was beating fast and his normally cool grey eyes had been swallowed by inky black with just a ring of the natural grey fighting to keep present. What the hell was going on? Usually an omega’s heat scent would send Levi swimming to the other side of the ocean because of its sickly sweet stench that made bile claw through the captain’s throat. No mer in the whole ocean had made Levi react this way and it was scaring the crap out of the older mer.

“Fuck...” Levi mumbled through clenched teeth, “You’re clean. Get out of my sight and get Furlan to take you downstairs.”

“But—“

“Furlan!”
The beta mer swam fast to Levi and was confused by the mix of aggressive and fearful scent being emitted by Levi. There was no apparent sign of danger anywhere and Eren didn’t look like he transformed.

“What’s wro—”


Furlan glanced warily at the two one more time before he coaxed Eren to follow him. The omega was about to protest but one look from the blond beta made him swallow whatever it is he was going to say. The captain was acting strangely and the two younger mers did not want to make the situation any worse. Thankfully, Levi did not make any sort of commotion once the two disappeared to the lower deck.

“The hell is wrong with him?” Eren complained moodily as he followed Furlan to the deeper parts of the ship, occasionally bumping into planks which had fallen from the caved in upper floors. Gods, Eren really did hate that he was almost blind in this part of the ocean.

“Not sure,” Furlan answered as he pushed open a bolted door that led to the rarely used prison cells, “He’s usually moody but I’ve never seen him so out of it before. Whatever it is, he’ll probably get over it in a few minutes.”

Eren frowned at the dismissive answer but nonetheless kept swimming forward until they reached what was to be the omega’s new permanent home. It was a horrible place to sleep in, of course. The iron bars of several rows of cells had all but degraded into rusty steel, the wooden floorboards creaked and moaned every time the current’s pressure changed, there was even a cell which didn’t have a proper floor and had opened to a dip of closely packed rocks covered in soft moss and algae.

“Sorry about this, kid.” Furlan apologized sincerely as he eyed the hesitant omega. It was really ridiculous that a young kid like Eren had to go through so much because he was born different. Furlan had to admit though, at first he was extremely wary of the mer but the brunet’s careful interaction and warmness towards Isabel had made Furlan melt a bit. Unfortunately, Furlan held no position to help Isabel’s savior; Eren had to handle this one on his own.

The brunet only nodded with a determined flicker in his eyes, heading towards the cell which floors had opened to the bed of rocks covered with moss. Furlan quirked a quizzical brow at the choice but Eren explained that he used to like sleeping on soft moss when he was back in Shiganshina. The beta nodded and had closed the iron cell with a distant wish of goodnight.

With the last sound of Furlan’s fins weaving its way upstairs, Eren finally let out a silent sob. The boy curled his injured tail around himself as he struggled to keep his noises low. It was cruel, unfair, and it bit through his spirit in harsh waves. He missed the warmth of his family, the gentle laughters, and the sweet kisses of goodnight from his mother.

Eren should have never taken all of those things for granted.

It was ironic, really. The omega only knew of what home really is like when he is forced to sleep on a cold ocean floor, helpless and hated as an outcast by every mer within the vicinity. At least, for now, Eren knew what home is...

...but unfortunately, it’s too late for him to thank the people who had given him that warmth.

So the boy grieved until his tears had hardened into small crystals of pearl, a sign of a mer’s true grief and despair.
He didn’t even know that up in the captain’s quarters, a middle aged mer had been rubbing his forehead in agitation. Levi had been restless and tense since the trip to Shiganshina and he’d been much worse since he got a huge helping of Eren’s beautiful scent. The captain’s mouth watered and his fangs had unconsciously elongated for a bonding mark.

“Fuck, stop it!” Levi hissed to himself as he forced the fangs to retract. It was horribly embarrassing that he was losing control over his body like some pathetic teenager. Hange would surely have a field day with him since they had all but dubbed the captain as ‘the guy who scares everyone even microscopic germs’.

Fat luck now that Levi felt sick as fuck and the raven had the urge to slam himself against the nearest surface. He didn’t understand why his body was heating up and sizzling with nerves that threatened to take over his common sense.

He was going to have to ask Hange about this sickness tomorrow morning.
Mornings in the humble abode of the captain of Legion mostly consisted of ingrained routines that involved cleaning, eating, exercising, and more cleaning. Really, cleaning is mostly the exercise they do but Isabel and Furlan had learned long ago not to complain about the domestic chore.

The captain would wake up earlier than most merfolk, his terrible incapability to sleep more than two hours dragging him off his chambers and nagging him to clean the impeccably clean deck even if it meant wearing it out more. Two hours after that Furlan will be heard reprimanding Isabel for sleeping in again then the routine of grabbing breakfast and following Levi’s lead to cleaning or training will be obediently done like clockwork.

Unfortunately, this isn’t a normal day for the three deep sea creatures so the rigid routine was fantastically broken as Isabel shrieked high-pitched ‘good morning’s and ‘wake up’s to one groggy titan shifter.

“Wake up! Wake up! It’s morning, Eren!” the red headed mermaid demanded as she flopped and bounced around what she saw as a hastily made nest in the prison deck. Eren groaned moodily and tried to flick her away but to no avail.

“You’re not feeling sick, are you?” Isabel questioned curiously as she eyed the omega who had sat up and was rubbing his tired eyes.

Eren quirked a tiny smile, “No, I’m just really exhausted and cold.”

The mermaid blinked and let out a small ‘oh’ when something sparkly and shiny caught her eye. Eren’s reflexes kicked in like a wall to the face when he saw the curious beta mermaid try to reach out to something, causing Eren’s golden tail to swat and curl protectively over the offensive objects. Isabel frowned at the action but didn’t question it, thinking Eren might be that type of omega who gets all territorial over their nest.
“Come on, weirdo. Let’s get something in your stomach before it burns a hole in you!”

Eren watched the girl glide through the water and propel herself upstairs, a heavy rock of guilt sitting uncomfortably in his stomach. The boy uncurled his tail and frowned at the little pieces of pearls that reminded him of his shameful moment of weakness.

The pearls were coated with the thick color of white and a tinge of red and blue, some had taken the shape of a perfect circle will others were odd oblongs or completely disfigured. Each piece of eyesores shone bashfully under what little light came through the thick blanket of darkness that surrounded Krolva. Eren hissed at the pearls and swatted them away with his trembling clawed hands until they sank into the open cracks and crannies of the packed boulders of his nest.

No more weakness.

Eren followed his nose to where the smell of freshly caught shrimp and a day old sliced tuna fish permeated the waters. The boy’s stomach growled fiercely at the enticing promise of solid food that Eren had found himself speedily going upwards to a neat kitchen.

“G-Good morning, captain!” Eren squeaked when his eyes landed on Levi who was too preoccupied with beheading a dead fish.

“Mornin’, brat.” Levi answered back without looking, shucking the headless fish into a slightly chipped brown jar just to the left of the sink that hasn’t been working since the dreadful sinking of the vessel.

Eren fidgeted a bit, unsure of whether or not he’s welcome to stay in the kitchen at all. The alpha captain sighed and frowned as he told the boy to sit down and stop vibrating all over the place. Eren yelped and went for the nearest chair at the edge of a dinner table. Isabel noisily went inside the kitchen and chatted up a storm until Furlan had to interrupt.

“Levi, Commander Erwin and Squad Leader Hange are asking for Eren. We’ll have to surrender him to them later.”

Levi crinkled his nose at the idea of having to face the annoying duo this early in the morning when all of a sudden a loud bang shook and rattled the heavy bolted door. Isabel tried to hide a laugh as Furlan hid his embarrassed face behind his clawed hands.

The loud banging upset their dinner table once again until Isabel swam to the nearest working window and shouted for their visitor to just pass through the opening if they’re being so impatient. Levi’s scowl deepened as Hange made their way inside Levi’s kitchen, floating around like the murderous glare of their shorter friend wasn’t directed at them.

“Good morning, Squad Levi!” the mer practically shouted at their ears, earning a wince from Eren who was just inhaling the served fish not too long ago.

Isabel and Furlan saluted the menace but Levi just remained neutral at the side with crossed arms. Eren is quite amazed how the two leaders of Legion could work together when they’re practically the opposite of each other. Hange’s energy was a force to be reckoned with while Levi’s icy gaze could practically make a grown alpha weep and grovel for mercy.

“Must you be so insufferable this early in the morning?” Levi groaned, whipping a slap behind Hange’s head when the officer was too busy ignoring the captain.

“Can’t help it, small fry! Today is the first day we’ll get to know more about our cute resident shifter!” Hange cooed in a baby voice while they dove straight to a terrified Eren who was trying to
squirm away from the unwelcome prodding.

The captain let out a loud ‘tsk’ and slammed his hand on the table, “You can cream yourself after we have some decent breakfast. Go busy yourself or shit for all I care, just don’t make another sound because my head is cracking into two, shitty four eyes.”

Hange grinned and nodded but quickly forgot that they’re not to make another sound when the squad leader practically screeched, babbling about how Eren’s wounds had almost healed and didn’t even have traces of scars. Isabel whistled lowly in appreciation of the weird quirk while Levi rolled his eyes, completely unaffected by the quick healing ability.

“Yeah, the brat could heal fast. His deeper wounds sizzled shut last night when I was cleaning him up.”

“What!? Why didn’t you tell me—“

“Because you’d drool all over him like what you’re doing now. Ugh, fuck, can you be any more disgusting? Wipe that shit off your face.”

“Oh, okay!” Hange obediently followed which earned a rather distressed groan from Eren.

It took a bit of time before everyone was settled and contently eating the shared breakfast of mixed seafood that was gathered from their trip to Shiganshina. It was comforting for Eren that he’s being served with something that came directly from his home, a little tidbit of bonus to help the omega adjust to such a strange environment. Eren didn’t think he could take it if he was forced to eat a wriggling monstrosity with too many eyes and extra tentacles.

There were mindless chatter here and there which was mostly prompted by Hange and Isabel. It was at this moment that Eren took the time to observe the merpeople he guessed he’d be spending much time with. Not like he was always interested in other people’s business but he figured there’s no harm in learning more about them, the very few mer who didn’t eye him with much disdain since his true nature was revealed.

Little details caught the young omega’s eye, like how Isabel was all but inhaling the food like it was going to disappear from the table which is a contrast to how Furlan and Levi picked at their food with less vigor and with more delicacy. Hange was occasionally kept quiet whenever Levi chuck a fish head inside the squad leader’s chatty mouth. Eren found it hilarious but he figured it was quite telling of how close the two are. There were also some deep scars and lacerations across Hange’s hip and arms, bite marks that looked like the encounter almost cost the squad leader a limb. The boy thought he could have easily blended in with his share of scars if they hadn’t magically disappeared overnight.

Eren hummed contently around his last piece of tuna when his turquoise eyes landed on the captain. Levi was sitting with one arm draped lazily over the back of the old wooden chair, a firm alabaster hand holding a bowl of seaweed strangely. The omega tilted his head in confusion because he was sure a mer normally holds a bowl by its bottom and not by the lip. A disgusted sneer popped Eren back to reality and he realized the sound was from Levi who eyed the seaweed slime with so much hate that it can’t possible fit inside such a small merman.

By the time breakfast was finished, Hange was swimming all over Eren until Levi pinched their ear and reminded them to clean up the table with the rest of them.

“You’re such a killjoy, Levi! Why can’t you just leave it for a while? There’s adventure waiting!” Hange whined as they tried to wriggle out of the captain’s firm grasp.
“We can’t all be slobs like you who leaves their dishes to hangout for germs to infest for one month straight,” Levi growled lowly.

Eren bit his lower lip with an amused smirk and gently pried a dirty bowl from the squad leader’s hands so that they would be free from Levi’s wrath. The captain made a disapproving sound, stating that a grown mer like Hange shouldn’t be babied by bratty Marian mers like Eren.

The squad leader grinned maliciously, draping an arm around Eren who was suddenly flustered and almost dropped the bowl, “You can’t be so disappointed with a beautiful specimen who willingly volunteers to clean! Isn’t he a cute little munchkin, Levi?”

Eren blushed deeply and stuttered for help but Isabel and Furlan were too busy enjoying his agony to really help the trapped boy. Levi’s glare intensified, a low threatening growl vibrating from his throat and Hange automatically knew that they would very much like to shut up now. Though, unfortunately for Levi, there was a strange twinkling in Hange’s eyes that practically screamed a warning that the captain will have his privacy violated within the next possible hour.

After the kitchen was thoroughly cleaned according to Levi’s standards, the captain, Hange and Eren all left Levi’s territory to the care of Furlan and Isabel. The red headed mermaid was clearly upset that she’d be left out to sit idly by the ship while Hange and the rest of the high ranking leaders would prod and record whatever Eren was. Levi shook his head and ruffled the girl’s hair with a promise that she could come with them later that afternoon when Eren would receive proper rookie training.

“Training? Me?” Eren asked dumbly as his wide eyes begged for an explanation from the captain. Once again, Levi felt himself getting sick and he should really tell Hange about this but with the crazed expression in the squad leader’s eyes, Levi was sure that they’re in the ‘dissecting mood’ and he’d rather not be subjected to that.

Eren was still staring intently when Levi finally realized that he hasn’t replied yet.

“Yes, training. You’re not going to be deadweight here in Legion so you’d pull your own and help us get our daily routine running.”

A bright smile was plastered on Eren’s face that Levi was tempted to look away from the blinding happiness, though his inner masochistic side demanded that he take in such a rare light in this dark hellhole. Levi feared he might be getting as insane as Hange and that’s not surprising with the amount of time he has to spend with his peculiar friend.

“Why are you smiling like you won the damn moon, Eren?”

The boy blinked and scratched his cheek which was dusted with pink, “Well, I always wanted to be a Marian soldier since I was a pup. I wanted to explore the ocean floor but all of that came crashing down when I presented as an omega.”

“The hell?” Levi snorted as they swum up and over some jagged rocks towards the main ship, “Omegas can’t be trained in the military in your place?”

Eren shook his head solemnly and Levi felt his eye roll to the back of his head at the ridiculousness of warm water mers. Levi never looked at omegas as mere breeders or delicate creatures that are to be restricted at home. They had different needs from alphas and betas, yes, but that doesn’t mean he wouldn’t take an omega seriously. Did the Marians not know how fucking dangerous omegas who just gave birth are? Those mers could eat you alive with no regret.
“Your place is pretty backwards, kid. Sorry for the shit life.” Levi consoled in a deep voice that had Eren staring at him again, “At least you’re given another chance here. Though, you’re probably a masochist if you want to be trained under Legion.”

Hange whipped their head at the mention of masochism that Levi instantly regretted saying the word. Eren laughed at the two bicker and felt himself a little less scared and conscious of himself in such a foreign place. Finally, the three reached Commander Erwin’s private chambers and all the fear and anxiety suddenly flooded Eren’s senses. He fought fiercely with his feelings and wrestled them into submission.

Commander Erwin was as unfairly attractive and powerful as he was when he spoke for Eren during the omega titan shifter’s trial. With his slicked blond hair and icy blue eyes, Eren was surprised that there was no indication that the alpha commander was bonded to another. The trio veterans talked to each other about business, with Erwin kindly including Eren when the boy felt a little lost.

“How are you adjusting to the place, Eren?” Erwin asked smoothly and Eren’s omega felt comforted that such an alpha would be considerate.

“I’m doing fine, sir. A little cold but well enough.” Eren answered smartly, not noticing the soft gaze of the captain towards his direction.

Hange beamed at the omega and proceeded to explain that they were going to do a physical and psychological exam on Eren. Within the next few hours, the omega was under the hands of the squad leader and their assistant which was named Moblit Berner. The man was a gentle soul and was kind enough to assist Eren when the younger mer was feeling a bit distressed. Moblit, Eren noticed, was another beta with dirty blond hair parted in the middle and slightly tired eyes, no doubt from being stressed out of babysitting his senior.

The physical exam went on as any normal exam would. Eren watched curiously as the squad leader and Moblit measured the size and length of his tail and took note of his extra fins which all cold water mers didn’t have. Hange cooed at Eren saying that he is such a beautiful omega which prompted another blush from the boy. Eren didn’t know that the squad leader purposely done this, together with some pretty provocative fin flare positions from the boy, to tease the impassive captain who was watching the examination like a shark would as it stalks its prey.

Levi was displeased with the arrangement and Hange was too adventurous not to take advantage of the situation. The psychological exam was a bit more private and the squad leader had led Eren to a more secluded area of the room to take assessment. A nagging feeling at the back of Levi’s head had his inner alpha pacing around restlessly at the deafening silence and the serious face that marred Hange’s usually smiling face.

“Are we done here or are you two planning a sleepover?” Levi grumbled; the phantom itch biting at his skin was starting to make him uncomfortable.

Hange jolted from serious to extremely happy that Levi suffered an internal whiplash, “We’re done here, grumpy! I think Eren should burn off the excess stress. He’s all yours to bend over—“

“Squad Leader, please!” Moblit shrieked in distress, hoping that Levi won’t get provoked because he seriously just cleaned Hange’s office this morning and he doesn’t need another workout for the hell that Levi’s about to raise.

“Such boring men!” Hange whined when Levi physically dragged Eren along with him, “I’m going to visit Eren again later, okay? Don’t tire him out too much, tiger shark!”
Levi had flipped them a rude gesture and swum out of the room before Hange could spit out anything embarrassing. Soon enough, the boy found himself among Levi’s most trusted military officers which was a mix of alphas and betas. The two that stood out the most are Gunther Schultz and Eld Jinn, both powerful alphas. They were part of the elite squad that Levi handpicked himself when he was appointed as captain.

“Too bad you won’t get to meet our other members, Jaeger.” Eld laughed a bit lightly, “We had another omega on the team but I’m afraid she’s posted somewhere else now.”

Eren’s eyes brightened and the two mermen chuckled at the pure innocence of it, “Her name’s Petra Ral and she’s one fierce lady. By the looks of it, the two of you would have bonded very well.”

With those last words, Eren was subjected to grueling physical training under the strict supervision of Captain Levi himself. The man proudly held his head high like any proper authority would and Eren had to stop and catch his breath every damn time the merman would glide gracefully and correct the movements of the officers under his care.

Isabel and Furlan were there too, of course. The young mermaid even had the guts to challenge Levi to a hand-to-hand combat. It was a flurry of powerful punches and swings, their tails fast enough to try and whip the other to submission but Isabel was too young and inexperienced unlike Levi who, from the looks of his scarred skin, had endured a hell that Eren would hope he’d never have to experience. The girl had been thrown to the ocean floor with her arms pinned on her back and Eren let out an impressed whistle.

“Let’s see your progress, Eren.” Levi coolly stated when he finally let go of Isabel’s arms.

“S-sir!?” Eren stuttered helpless and was shoved by Gunther and Eld to take his position. This was completely unfair and whole other level of bullying! He had just endured barely four to five hours of training and now he was being pitted against the most dangerous merman who ever swam the ocean. It wasn’t only that! Levi was stupidly attractive, and while Eren was dumb enough not to notice his blooming crush on the merman before, Eren was so sure that getting the captain’s hands all over him would trigger his brain to shut down.

Oh, he was so screwed and not even in a sexy way.

“You’re new to this so don’t shit yourself, Eren.” Levi assured him but his fighting position had the opposite effect, “I won’t hurt you too much but you have to learn how to take a punch.”

Eren gulped audibly and he really hated the effect of the captain calling him by his first name like they’re so intimately close. ‘Stop it, Eren!’ he yelled at himself as he positioned his fists like Gunther had taught him just a few moments ago.

True to his word, Levi wasn’t as brutal as he was with Isabel but Eren had found himself panting and groaning with every swing and punch to the gut. He was supremely out of practice and Levi didn’t even look like he’s spending too much energy with sparring with the omega. A fierce irritation sparked behind Eren’s eyes and Levi was startled when the boy had started throwing punches that whistled through the water. The omega growled and circled Levi like the proper threat that he is.

The alpha captain’s lips quirked a tiny bit, happy that it doesn’t take much to provoke Eren to attack him. It took several tries until Eren finally got a punch in but it resulted to him being flipped over and nailed to the ground, head first. The omega whined in pain but barred his teeth in defiance. The rest of the Legion soldiers looked on in wonder, appreciating Eren for the first time
since his banishment. It wasn’t common to see a Marian merman with such passion and fiery will to survive. Eren was definitely a force to be reckoned with.

“All right, that’s enough. Take a break, kid.”

“But, Captain Levi—“

“You’ve done well, Eren.” Levi stated, a calming softness in his eyes which lulled the boy to lower his defenses and trust the captain, “There’s no need to excessively exert yourself. The others will bring you back for a cool down later.”

Eren hesitated for a second before obediently nodding. Isabel was all over him after that and Furlan had even joked about Eren looking like a floppy fish when the captain had pinned him down. The omega bristled but didn’t take it too seriously since the two were such in a happy mood. The redhead even brought them to the edge of their training area where the residential part of Legion had started to trickle in.

A bunch of pups were swimming timidly just outside their coves, hesitantly prompting games which mostly consisted of childish imitations of training or hunting. Eren found it odd that the pups were so few in numbers and they didn’t look like they were getting into much trouble and fun as Eren did when he was a small pup.

“Do you want to have pups, Eren?”

The boy shrieked and fell off the rock that he was sitting on, prompting Hange to laugh loudly and scare the pups away behind the much bigger rocks that surrounded their homes. Isabel bit her tongue but held out her hand so Eren could be picked up from a rather deep opening he fell into.

“You scared me!”

“I’m sorry, kid!” Hange apologized though they didn’t look like they were really sorry, “It’s just that you were longingly looking at the pups and I just had to surprise you!”

Eren huffed exasperatedly and smoothed his unruly hair, “I wasn’t longingly looking at them, you know.”

“So you don’t want pups?”

“I didn’t say that too!” Eren defended quickly that he surprised himself. A few days ago, Eren had resented that he presented as an omega. He resented everything that comes along with it, the heat, the alleged weakness, the natural submission to alphas, and the fact that he had to carry pups and be bloated for months. However, it didn’t seem too bad now since all of these things didn’t seem like an issue in Legion. Eren is hesitant, yes, but he didn’t hate the idea as much as he did before.

Omegas weren’t treated lowly by Legion merpeople. One was even part of the elite squad and that’s saying something, right?

Hange took the momentary silence as a cue to further distress Eren, “Do you know how mating and courting works here with us?”

Eren sputtered incoherent words and Isabel had helplessly laughed her heart out while hiding her face behind Furlan who looked a little lost and sorry for the Marian omega.

“Well, it’s important, isn’t it? What if some hunky alpha or beta decides to court Eren and our little baby suddenly does something to offend them?” Hange pouted dramatically, “Then Eren would be
alone for the rest of his life!"

“You’re not going to stop even if I tell you to, right?” Eren sighed dejectedly.

“Nope!” Hange chuckled and immediately sat right beside Eren. “So here’s the deal, kiddo. Our courting is just about the same as yours if my research does not betray me! Alphas, occasionally betas, must prove that they could provide, protect, and care for their chosen omega.”

Eren nodded at this and remembered his mother’s lectures about courting. Alphas proved their worth by hunting for food, building a nest, or crafting jewelry. The boy remembered watching young alphas excitedly looking for prey or sparkling objects to present to their intended. Almost all of them are successful every mating season but Eren was too young that time to appreciate how things worked so he didn’t put much interest in the whole thing.

Hange smiled warmly and gestured wildly with their hands, “But there’s this thing about the consent of the family of the omegas. I heard that warm water mers put a lot of importance in that but here it’s a little different. Since our families would usually be killed off before we could properly mate, we offer small prayers of sorts to our deceased to ask permission to court or to get blessing so that their courting would be accepted!”

Eren frowned at the practice, not because it was weird but because it showed how difficult it was to live as a cold water mer here in the wide expanse of Krolva. The omega couldn’t image how much harder it is for Underground merpeople since it was fabled to be as dangerous as swimming straight into the jaws of death.

“There’s this other real cool thing, of course! Titan kill count is what makes the intended swoon!”

The omega blinked, “Titan kill count?”

Hange nodded excitedly, “Yep! You see, killing Titans is already a thing here with us Legion merpeople so it’s become some sort of unsaid game for us to count how many Titans we take down. The larger the number, the more attractive the courting mer is for us!”

“That means Levi is the hottest thing in Legion.” Isabel suggested while wiggling her brows, earning a gagging noise from Furlan.

Eren’s heart sped a little at the implication and stubbornly looked away from Isabel’s scrutinizing gaze. It would not do well for such a young omega as Eren to think of the captain anywhere near the word ‘hot’ when the merman himself is the one who has primary custody over Eren. That would be inappropriate, right?

Unfortunately, Hange was just as bad as Isabel when it comes to teasing Eren about Levi. The squad leader graphically described what mating is like, a total opposite of the rather conservative practices of warm water mer. It was funny for them how the uptight mers would call their mating practices as highly lewd and obscene when the whole act of sex itself is the definition of obscene! Cold water mer are highly aggressive and passionate during intercourse that Eren felt his face was about to burst when Hange began to describe positions and their alphas’ favorite things to do to their newly bonded omegas.

It didn’t help that bonding for them included biting the neck as a sign that they were taken. Eren felt himself flush and his body was hot all over, responding to his mind’s unhelpful imagery of everything that was described to him.

The stuttering and the embarrassed scent of Eren had attracted the attention of the other soldiers
that were under Levi’s care, prompting them to snicker and shake their heads at the commotion. The mers couldn’t help but warm up a little to the foreign omega when such a creature that was deemed dangerous was stuttering and falling all over himself just by the idea of a very intimate act like sex.

Isabel was relentless with the teasing and had poked Eren constantly whenever she brought up the fact that the boy had done nothing but stare at her big brother since they arrived at Krolva.

“Why the fuck are you all so noisy?” Levi grumbled irritably when he eyed a rather rowdy crowd of soldiers who immediately bit their tongues in silence.

Eren and Isabel looked helplessly, feeling a bit betrayed that Hange and Furlan were nowhere to be seen.

“Big brother—“

“You’re more idiotic than usual with the damn kid around.”

“Hey!”

“Scrape off the barnacles from the ships if you two have excess energy. That’s an order.”

The two young mers sighed dejectedly and hurried off to get tools to start their work. The other soldiers looked at them sympathetically with slight amusement but this is just considered a very light discipline especially since it’s from Captain Levi himself.

Isabel hated cleaning out the barnacles as much as the next teen mer. Those were stubborn little things and her arms ached badly by the evening whenever she’s tasked to do so. Eren had learned from their experience that Isabel’s bitching about the chore was not without reason. The omega was a little bit sore from the training and the constant picking and heaving stubborn barnacles out of the ship’s wooden planks had left him breathless and exhausted.

The two had barely covered one ship by the time complete darkness had started to set. Eren was still having some difficulty adjusting his eyes to the lack of light. The omega would constantly bump into something and Isabel had to grab his hand at one point to avoid any injury. The boy was grateful but it also meant that the mermaid would notice how his hand trembled badly as the cold seeped through his limbs.

Isabel cooed sweetly and apologized about the coldness but there was nothing that the two mers could do about it. The pair had ended up seeking shelter from the harsh cold within Levi’s territory, hungrily eating morsels of cut fish like they haven’t eaten for days. Levi had to stop them from eating too fast when Eren started choke on his food.

“Fucking disgusting, brat. Did you leave your manners back in Shiganshina?”

The omega frowned, slightly embarrassed of getting caught acting like a complete idiot but he was much too hungry and exhausted to care. He did apologize though but he didn’t see the slight smile Levi flashed him because the omega was still practically almost blind when it’s nighttime in Krolva.

When the food was finished and the table and dishes were all cleaned, Levi had led Eren back to the prison cell so the boy could finally sleep. Eren groaned and squawked when his head hit a stray beam.

“Hold my arm or else you’d be headbutting the whole place into dust.” Levi deadpanned and
offered a muscled forearm.

Eren blushed slightly and slipped his trembling fingers to fit around Levi’s arm. It was ridiculous that Eren was reacting this way since the captain had carried him around Shiganshina when he was beaten up badly by some rough alphas or the time that Levi had forcefully cleaned and groomed him after the trial.

This time the situation was different. There was no deep physical pain that made his mind foggy, no rush of adrenaline that made things a little too fast for him to comprehend. This was a slow progression of trust between them and Eren was more than happy to be able to freely touch the person he looked up to since he was a pup.

Levi was careful to lead Eren through the ship, though a certain amount of tension could be felt under Eren’s fingertips. The omega didn’t understand what it meant and was beginning to think that maybe Levi didn’t like being touched or that he didn’t trust Eren enough not to transform and maul him. It was unknown to him that Eren’s natural omega scent was still causing the captain unneeded distress though it had lessened substantially since yesterday.

Thankfully, the pair reached Eren’s cell without much delay and the omega had contently slipped to his nest. Eren made clicking and cooing noises as he curled in on himself and snuggled to the soft plush moss that cushioned the otherwise uncomfortable rocks. The boy mumbled a goodnight with a yawn that he forgot that Levi’s eyesight was far more advanced than his.

Just right at Levi’s line of sight, the pearls that had sunk deeply into the cracks of the caved in floor had twinkled weakly, taunting the captain with its meaning. The pearls ate through Levi’s heart, remembering the days when he has seen these pearls form and crust unto his mother’s stained cheeks. Dark memories of the captain resurfaced, full of screaming and ache until the sudden silence had swallowed him whole. This wasn’t right; Eren being banished and restrained against his will until a boy as young as him was forced to complete agony that he cried pearls in a crumbled prison cell.

Levi felt the urge to vomit but remained completely still. Eren had been a bright ball of sunshine despite his many difficulties and the omega’s sheer will that screamed for acceptance and acknowledgment during training is enough proof that the boy would not bend so easily despite reaching rock-bottom.

The captain sighed as he slowly closed the creaking bars of the cell. He’s a bit distressed and shaken by the flood of memories that Eren’s pearls had triggered.

“Isabel?” Levi called out when he reached the second floor of the ship.

The young mermaid turned around from grooming her scales and was a bit worried about Levi’s tone.

“What’s up big bro?”

“There’s a blanket upstairs where we keep the cloths, right?”

Isabel blinked but nodded at the question. There was no need for Levi to ask her something as obvious as that since the captain was very meticulous about where things would be placed. Not a single small trinket would be misplaced in Levi’s territory.

“Go get that and place it over Eren. I’m not sure if the soggy thing would help fight the cold but it might comfort the omega.”
The mermaid gasped quietly but was left alone just as quickly when Levi had propelled himself away in a flurry of bubbles. Her big brother is certainly a kind soul and it’s a shame that not a lot of mer would exert much effort to crack open his cold exterior. Hopefully, with Eren’s natural effect and charisma on mers, the golden tailed omega could help her big brother loosen up and be happier.

Following Levi’s orders, Isabel swam up to the room where a closet was filled to the brim with assorted cloths that were made by humans. They ranged from frilly dresses to corsets, suits with some holes in them, and even some curtains, bed sheets, and blankets which were previously owned by those unfortunate souls who went down with the ship. Isabel picked a fairly thick one and plunged downstairs to deliver the blanket.

Eren was about to fall asleep when the omega heard a rattling sound, making him sit up slightly in a daze and watch a figure of what could be Isabel carefully treading the water.

“Hey, what’s wrong?” Eren’s coarse voice called out.

“Big bro thinks you’d be more comfortable with a blanket so I got you one!”

The omega blinked at the item and held out his hand. The fabric was a slightly scratchy at some areas but most of it was soft to the touch. Eren didn’t know what it was so his natural instinct was to smell it and take small bites to test it out.

“Don’t bite it, silly!” Isabel chuckled as she pulled the blanket from Eren’s sharp teeth, “You’re going to put holes in it. Big bro won’t be pleased by that!”

Eren made a humming noise and allowed the mermaid to wrap the material around him, “You call him ‘big bro’, does that mean you’re related to him?”

Isabel shook her head as she sat next to Eren who was getting a bit woozy from exhaustion, “I call him big brother because he adopted me together with Furlan! We’re such an odd family but it works.”

The Marian mermaid smiled kindly and felt himself a little saddened. He admitted that he missed his mother, Mikasa, and Armin as every hour passes and it pains the omega to be away from them for so long. Isabel cooed and wrapped a comforting arm around Eren like a little sister would when their sibling is distressed.

“I’m sorry to ask but… where’s your family, Isabel?”

The girl snorted and blew bubble through her gills, “My family’s dead since I could remember. Underground mers don’t usually have the luxury of bonding for long with their family members since it’s a survival of the fittest type of world down there. That’s the reason why everyone’s basically a collection poorly stitched together adopted twerps.”

Eren frowned and curled a protective arm around Isabel who smelled slightly distressed at the question. He knew he should stop talking but his mouth had started running ahead of his brain because of his groggy state.

“I suppose the rough life made Levi extra grumpy?”

Isabel giggled, “He’s a complicated guy. I’m sorry if he comes off as rude to you.”

“I’m not bothered by that.” Eren confessed as he sighed, “that actually makes him more reachable, you know? Makes me think that it’s not so hard to get to know him.”
“Yeah…”

It took a few moments before Isabel bit her lip and debated on whether or not to tell Eren about Levi’s past. The boy is fairly new to the family but Isabel had instantly warmed up to the omega, seeing as how he was so passionate and he practically saved her life.

“All… Do you think you could tell me more about Levi?” Eren stuttered pathetically and hoped that Isabel couldn’t hear how hard his heart was beating. What was he doing? This was all just pathetic attraction and admiration for a man who was hailed both as hero and monster.

“What would you like to know?”

Eren shrugged carelessly, “Anything that you could tell me, I guess?”

Isabel had sat up and twirled her messy hair between her fingers as she thought about it carefully. She started with the basics such as how old Levi truly is, which prompted a shocked gasp from Eren because no way was that young face as old as she said, then she told him about Underground merpeople and how they lived between the deepest trench with very little source of bioluminescent light.

“It’s basically two towering huge ass rocks and we have small homes attached to the sides. It’s darker than here in Krolva but it’s kinda pretty at night since we have these small rocks and corals and it lights up the place in a bit of orange light. Kinda like the torches humans make!”

Eren nodded and tried to image the scene. Despite the place being so deep in the ocean, he couldn’t help but think it to be a tragically beautiful place.

Then Isabel shifted uncomfortably to the topic of Levi’s mother, Kuchel Ackerman. She told the omega that she doesn’t know much about the woman but all she could get from bits and pieces was that Kuchel was a beautiful omega lady doomed to be a prostitute and gave birth to Levi by accident. Isabel didn’t know what happened in between but from the looks of it, Levi’s mother had died early on and the captain had spent majority of his childhood starving and stealing just to get a bite to eat. It was a cruel world and Levi had to fight to the top, getting his hands constantly dirty with blood and filth just to be where he was now.

“That’s why he hates dirt so much though, we were always covered in grime and we didn’t have enough money to buy anything that could get us properly cleaned. I guess the dirt reminds him of our life as Underground merfolk.”

Eren, who had sat up slowly as the story progressed, looked lost and gaped openly at Isabel who sported a sad face. The brunet couldn’t believe that a person such as Levi had went through such a horrible life. Eren felt immensely moved and emotional just by hearing his story and the protective instinct of the omega to protect the alpha and his family had burst through his heart.

These merpeople were so different from the fat slobs of Sina and Shiganshina. They lived such comfortable lives and had feigned ignorance at the suffering of the mers they discriminated and misjudged; the very ones that put their lives on the line so that merfolk would not be wiped away into extinction.

Isabel chuckled nervously and panicked that she over-shared but Eren dismissed the thought. The Marian omega thanked her profusely and told the mermaid that he definitely won’t tell anyone that he knows about Levi’s personal history.

When the mermaid was long gone, Eren pondered on the details that were laid out to him. There
was a deep sense of respect and awe that bubbled inside Eren’s stomach. The captain was not simply a skilled Titan killer but also a gentle soul who had gone through the miseries of life and yet had taken in two young mers which he raised with all the love he refused to acknowledge publicly.

If anything, Levi’s backstory had inspired Eren to push further to his goal of being a valuable soldier and maybe one day he’d be worthy of Levi’s trust and friendship.

Chapter End Notes

This is a very long chapter hahaha. I'm not even sorry, y'all.
I don't know if anyone's still reading this but hey! I have a new chapter and it was definitely interesting to write. It's hopelessly long once again but yeah, I can't write as much recently so I'm packing everything in.

Military training in Legion had long been rumored to be the worst physical test a mer could ever live through. Whispers of grueling laps and exercises had floated up to higher places through the quivering voices of gossiping mothers and insecure adolescent mers who are too curious for their own good. It’s not that Erwin or Levi could blame any of them. The warm water mers had every right to be terrified.

Eren had not endured a single moment of training in his life when he was still living in the reefs of Shiganshina. The closest he could get would be his all too frequent fights with Jean and maybe some hesitant tips from his sister Mikasa but that was all he ever got. Usually, to Eren’s embarrassment and irritation, the omega’s fights would be singlehandedly won by his overprotective alpha sister so that just subtracts more time for him to learn how to take down other mers.

“Fuck!” Eren cursed for the nth time since his few weeks of training with Levi’s squad and the other Legion merfolk. The boy was struggling hard to keep up with the pod’s every demand for improvement. The alpha mer in front of the omega was frustratingly cocky and had an equally annoying mouth on him that just agitated Eren more.

“Are you even trying?” the alpha sneered and flipped Eren into a tight hold, “I thought you said you’re going to hand my ass over to me on a silver platter. You’re all bark but no bite.”

Eren hissed threateningly and swatted his tail until he could feel the tiniest opening for him to wriggle out of the trap hold. The alpha didn’t seem too bothered and had roughly slammed the omega to the nearest boulder. In a moment of false sense of confidence, the alpha released his hold and was punched in the face with the equivalent of Eren’s body weight.

“You fucking little bitch—“

“That’s enough.” Boomed Hange’s voice who had just arrived at the training area. The squad leader’s sharp eyes scrutinized the alpha who was bleeding through the nose and cursing under his breath.

Eren huffed impatiently, his skin feeling itchy where they were starting to heal and steam. The omega wanted to rip the alpha apart along with every other unsavory Legion mer who taunted and insulted him openly during trainings. The brunet wasn’t expecting a grand welcoming party or anything, but the fact that a considerable number of Legion openly hated him despite others trying to defend the omega was a little too irritating. They took out their frustrations on beating up Eren and the warm water mer was on the verge of losing control over his anger.

“Eren, you’re with me.” Hange commanded with a slight softness in their tone. The omega nodded
and happily left the annoying alpha to bleed all over himself. Eren didn’t usually like what comes with Hange’s arrival but this is the one time he could forgive the intrusion. The squad leader’s experiments were weird at best and terrifying at their worst. Eren sure wasn’t excited to be subjected to another form of physical pain but he can’t deny the excitement under his skin about finding out what more his shifter body could do.

“Where’s Captain Levi?” Eren asked a bit shyly compared to his loud and rough tone. The captain had always been present during the boy’s training and experiments with Hange but the short-tempered alpha seems to be missing for two days straight. Not that Eren was counting. He definitely wasn’t.

“Short stuff has got some pretty boring business to deal with Erwin,” Hange answered brightly, back to their originally giddiness now that they’re getting closer to an open field, “I could yammer all about it but it’s all administrative stuff that will probably make us age faster… or get bigger eyebrows like Erwin does.”

Eren laughed freely and swam towards Moblit who had an array of tools and human goodies that were most probably stolen by Hange from heaven knows where. The young mer peeked curiously and cringed at some which looked pointy or too odd to comprehend. It was always like this with the eccentric mer, having loads of random exercises and things poked through Eren’s skin. The boy wouldn’t have minded if the familiar calming scent of the alpha captain had been around. Levi might not have been fully conscious of it but Eren was immensely grateful for the alpha’s scent that kept him grounded whenever the experiments got too crazy.

When did Eren start connecting Levi’s scent with safety?

It was odd since the imposing black tailed mer reeked of emotional constipation and downright annoyance bordering on murderous tendencies, but Eren couldn’t help but connect it to being safe and well-protected. Perhaps it was because Levi always stood between him and the aggressive Legion mers who were ready to kill the boy at the slightest slip? Maybe, but Eren couldn’t really bother himself with much thinking.

With a startling whistle and clicking, Eren was woken from his quiet brooding. The omega saluted, slamming his right fist against his heart like he was taught to. Hange cackled loudly at Eren and the omega huffed at being caught daydreaming. It was going to be a long day but he didn’t mind being in the presence of Hange’s team who were much more accepting and friendly than some of the Legion mers.

Somewhere within the solitude of the commander’s office, Erwin was on the verge of snorting as he eyed a rather distracted Levi who lazily flicked his tail and nodded or hummed with everything the commander said. It didn’t take too long to notice the captain’s off-character mood and it piqued the blond alpha’s interest, which really should be stopped because Erwin is well aware of the fact that his tiny friend could practically spread the commander’s insides across the ocean floor if triggered. Yet, Erwin had always been on the crazy side, so the blond bit his lip and decided to mess with Levi even if it will cost him a limb or two.

“I was thinking if we should retrieve some human furniture together when we go scout the southern side of the borders of Titan territory. I’m sure Hange would enjoy dragging one all the way out here, don’t you think?”

Levi hummed and nodded distractedly, his fringe just floating above his unfocused eyes.
“We could make good use of those too,” Erwin continued grinning like a madman, “I’m sure Eren would look good on one of them.”

“Yeah.” Levi answered without really thinking and Erwin had to bite his lower lip to stop himself from barking out a loud laugh. No, the commander wanted a bit more entertainment than this.

“Oh, definitely. He’s such a young omega with an amazing tail fin, his eyes are also bright and expressive. An alpha would be highly pleased to see such a creature spread out and ready for breeding, begging to be taken as a mate while—“

Fuck. Levi was really distracted, wasn’t he? The captain had released a predatory growl, the switch of the high tones bordering on possessive and protective. The strong smell of ‘Mine! Mine! Mine!’ polluted the waters like a threat against all other alphas and the captain didn’t even notice it until—

“What the actual fuck, Erwin?”

The commander lost control and laughed loudly despite the fact that the challenging scent that reeked all over had Erwin’s alpha on a defensive. The blond was too pleased by Levi’s startled look that he didn’t notice a soggy pillow thrown at him until it was right at his face.

“Shit, you dirty fuck! What the ever loving hell was that for!?”

Erwin’s laugh died down to make way for his coughing, extremely happy with the fact that Levi’s usually stoic face broke so easily, “Oh, but it’s true, isn’t it? Eren is a highly attractive mer—“

“Fucking shut your trap, eyebrows, before I make you.” Levi growled, instinctively lengthening his fangs in a display of anger, “When did you become a perv, you sick shit?”

The commander clicked his tongue in amusement but barred his neck slightly to appease Levi’s ranging alpha. This man honestly had zero knowledge about dealing with attraction and feelings that Erwin felt a bit sorry for his friend. Maybe it’s time to help him out? The weeks that Erwin and Hange have been observing their aggressive friend had made them suffer too much migraine from the emotional constipation.

“I was only kidding, Levi. There’s no need to threaten your superior.” Erwin smiled too easily that Levi felt himself slightly surprised. It seemed to knock some sense into the captain but the wary scent was still lingering like a shadow.

Erwin coughed into his hand and smoothed the scales that covered his tail, “Anyway, you’ve been distracted lately. I can’t help but be worried. We’d be frequenting the Titan territory in a few weeks and I can’t have our strongest soldier not paying attention when needed to.”

Levi scowled at the blond and quirked a thin brow. He really hated Erwin’s lengthy sermons about discipline and being a proper soldier. As far as Levi was concerned, he’d rather shove a stick up his ass than subject himself to the torture that was Erwin’s boring lectures.

“What’s your point? I’d rather make this quick since I’m getting sick of your face. Two days is too long to sit in a room with you.”

“You’re agitated.”

“Congratulations on being a therapist.”

“Levi.” Erwin firmly emphasized with a loud voice, barely startling the captain who still had his arms crossed in front of his chest defensively, “I don’t really like the direct approach when doing
“this but you leave me with no choice. You’re too damn stubborn for your own good.”

The captain scoffed, turning his glare away from Erwin to burn a hole into the innocent floor.

“If there is something you need to address regarding Eren, I suggest you speak now or we will all suffer the consequences of your insubordination.”

“Leave the fucking brat out of this. There’s nothing wrong with me—“

“Are we really going to ignore how the boy affects you both emotionally and physically?”

“Erwin fucking Smith—“

“I’m not dense and I am sure you are well aware of this, Levi.” Erwin intervened again, pumping dominant alpha pheromones to get his point across, “Ever since Eren has been put under your custody, you’ve been acting strangely. You’re angrier than you’ve ever been and it’s like you always want to punch yourself in the face… or every other alpha within ten feet of Eren’s vicinity.”

The small captain flinched but refused to say anything, choosing instead to grip his arms tightly and maintain the solid frown that marred his face. Erwin was really getting sick and tired of Levi’s shit and the commander was not pleased that he had to become some sort of impromptu counselor just because his friend didn’t know the basics of alpha and omega attraction.

“It’s probably just his Marian filth making me sick.”

Erwin blinked dumbly, “His what?”

“I’m probably just sick, shitwin. We’re done. I’m not talking about this anymore, so good fucking bye.” Levi growled out and slipped out of Erwin’s office before the commander could protest. There’s not much the blond could do with Levi’s state anyway. Further prodding of such a defensive alpha would mean unnecessary fights which Erwin wasn’t too keen on doing.

It was unknown to Erwin that Levi truly did have a grasp on what’s going on. The captain might be having struggles with being socially awkward but that didn’t mean his pent up emotions were completely alien to him. If anything, Levi felt too deeply compared to anyone else, hence the alpha’s natural defense to shut down anything that would become a potential weakness.

It took some time though, for Levi to finally notice that there was something going on between him and Eren. The older merman had the ultimate whiplash of his life when he finally realized his warm feelings were anything but sickness. The captain still stubbornly refused to give it a name, though. Giving it a name would make it too real and Levi was not ready to face that kind of demon.

“Hey, Eren. I think it’s time to stop.” Hange called out worriedly as their fin fluttered nervously behind their back.

“No, it’s fine! I’m okay!” Eren assured the squad leader, his face still marred and distorted into a partial titan transformation. The boy heaved heavily but refused to show more physical signs of exhaustion. Eren was just thankful that his lips haven’t melted off like it does when he’s fully transformed, or else Hange would have definitely grabbed him by the tail and forced him to call it a day.
The other alpha and beta soldiers, the ones who were stationed to be the guards of Hange’s team, looked warily at the shaking boy. Some of them spat out curses and threats while the others tried to croon softly or reprimand their rude teammates.

It was getting late and it wasn’t a secret that Eren is still struggling with the cold of Krolva. The weeks of forced adapting to the weather had Eren severely exhausted but the omega’s body had obediently tolerated it for as long as he could. Unfortunately, the nights in such a deep place were unforgiving and Eren’s constantly battered and beaten body could hold no longer.

“Eren, please…” Moblit begged, “Listen to us. You’re at your limit.”

“I’m not weak!” Eren shouted fiercely, his golden eyes glowing threateningly, “I can fucking do it! Let me carry the burden, damn it!”

The restless alphas started getting angry from Eren’s stubbornness and smart mouth. It was only a matter of time before one of them pounces on the half transformed omega and Hange was getting a bit tense. The squad leader absolutely adored Eren, not just simply because he’s half-titan, but because the enthusiastic boy had awakened something inside Levi that most of them thought was already dead. The omega had a natural charisma and his undying determination to push his limits was a perfect complement to Levi’s grouchy and distant persona. Hange just dearly hoped that Eren would stop this nonsense before he hurt himself.

“We’re not calling you weak, Eren. Don’t be stupid!” Hange sighed desperately, “You’re one tough omega and I’m sure you could take us down if you really wanted to. Just please, understand that you have your limits too!”

Eren didn’t seem to listen to the squad leader and continued to hold his half-titan form. Moblit muttered under his breath and the beta and some omega mers were starting to worry frantically.

With a growl, Hange shouted steadily across the field, “Levi would kill me if anything bad ever happened to you. You don’t want to disappoint him. Right, Eren? What would the captain say?”

The effect was immediate, much to Hange’s amusement, since the omega had blinked out of his inner stupor and relaxed his formerly hunched shoulders. It was very much like Eren to be concerned about what Levi thinks of him. It didn’t take the group much to discover Eren’s secret hero worship over Levi since he was a child. The omega had flailed and hid his crimson face behind his hands when he accidentally confessed about who his childhood hero was. The warm memory that flooded Hange’s mind had crumbled messily when the omega lost his balance and dropped his weight for the current to carry.

“EREN!” Hange screamed, swimming hurriedly to where Eren was left floating like a discarded corpse. The majority of the squad leader’s team had rushed in to check on the boy but they were kept at bay by Moblit who allowed the other mer to inspect the omega closely.

“Fuck, fuck, fuck!” Hange cursed continuously as they pressed against Eren’s pulse point and hovered over his mouth and gills to hear any sort of breathing. The boy was extremely cold to the touch and his breathing had slowed dangerously that Hange feared Eren was not breathing at all. The titan transformation had also disappeared and all that was left were the deep scratch-like scars across the omega’s cheeks. The boy still remained limp and the squad leader was on the verge of screaming out in frustration.

“We need to get him to warmer waters, now!” Hange looked up frantically at Moblit who pumped out a soothing scent to calm his senior.
“It’s alright. We’ll go get him up,” Moblit assured the other, “I don’t think the commander will have any issue with the abrupt decision but what about captain—“

“Oi, the fuck is going on here? Why does everyone stink like shit?”

The soldiers smartly saluted but were unable to hide the expressions on their faces. Most of them were sick with worry while the others looked like they didn’t even want to be here. With a flick of a wrist, the younger soldiers moved to the sides to allow Levi to see what would be one of the scariest moments in his life.

Hange sat helpless on the ocean floor, their maroon tail curling over Eren’s body which was eerily still. The boy’s chocolate brown hair had swayed with the current and revealed dark sunken eyes which were sealed shut, a stark contrast against his extremely pale skin which was normally a healthy caramel. Levi’s inner alpha growled and barked out in anger, reprimanding the short captain for letting a precious omega suffer so intensely.

“Explain yourself, shitty foureyes.” Levi hissed threateningly, uncaring about the obvious audience who were watching their leaders closely.

“Eren got too exhausted and his body just broke down! I think he hasn’t fully adjusted to our waters yet and it took a toll on him!” Hange cried out, “He’s deathly cold. You need to get him to warmer waters quickly!”

Levi didn’t need any further instructions, sweeping in and scooping the boy out of Hange’s arms like his life depended on it. The dark sand that rested beneath them had scattered into a thick cloud as the captain pushed himself forward, Eren still clutched tightly near the frantic alpha’s chest. The omega was sickeningly cold and the lack of shivers had Levi’s alpha pacing restlessly.

The captain’s sharp eyes easily adjusted as the nearing nighttime blanketed Krolva. Time seemed to stop as the alpha raced out of Legion’s territory and searched for the closest boundary, the heavy beating of his heart and blood rushing through his pointed ears was all Levi could hear.

How could they all have been so stupid? Eren was a warm water mer and he was bound to succumb to some kind of sickness because of the biting cold. A nagging and growling voice at the back of Levi’s head endlessly chanted that it was his fault and if the boy should die, the blame is all on him. The captain snarled viciously at the darkening thoughts. Now was not the time to let his scrambled emotions get the better of him. The faster he can get Eren up to the warmer waters, the better.

Eren remained unmoving until Levi was finally able to reach the border where the first few rows of corals that signaled the water’s change in temperature finally trickled in. The captain sighed in relief and looked for a covered shelter for him to set down Eren.

Thankfully, Levi found a pack of boulders that were stacked together to form a makeshift cave. There were some inhabitants but the alpha mer was quick to throw out the rather annoyed octopus along with some other fish that seemed to be more than terrified of the presence of a large predator. The alpha scooted to the end of their new shelter and settled the omega against the soft cushion of moss and sand. The waters here were warm enough to unsettle Levi and the captain took it as a cue that he was in the right place.

“Come on, brat.” Levi grumbled as he plastered himself firmly against Eren’s back, sharing as much body heat as he could manage, “Your stubborn ass can’t quit on me now. Not after how much trouble you already caused.”
The omega didn’t utter a word and Levi’s alpha involuntarily whimpered at being useless.

“Fuck, look at what you’re doing to me, you stupid shit.”

The captain continuously rubbed Eren’s arms, chest, and back in a desperate effort to get some warmth into the frozen omega. The minutes that Eren laid silent were agonizing and openly mocked Levi’s clear lack of ability to take responsibility over a mer that was stupidly the opposite of him. What the hell was Levi thinking taking in Eren like that in a heartbeat? The brunet obviously had needs that Levi, nor any other Legion mer, could never give.

Levi was on the verge of begging when Eren’s body started shivering violently, the boy babbling out incoherent words as his teeth chattered along with his body’s involuntary shudders. The raven haired captain crooned and encouraged Eren more to take in as much heat as he needed. The shivers were a good sign that the boy’s system was finally fighting off the excess cold and it will be just in a matter of time before Eren finally wakes up to reveal his beautiful turquoise eyes to Levi.

Fuck, he was so screwed.

It was late in the morning when Eren finally woke up.

A strange sense of warmth and calm had blanketed the omega that Eren was tempted to just sleep until the next day. Gods, did his body feel like it was hit several times with a steel rod but the firm body that curled around him had Eren feeling like he turned into goo.

Wait… warm body?

Instincts immediately forced the brunet’s eyes to flash open and he was momentarily thrown out of balance when he realized that the strong arms wrapped around him belonged to the unfairly handsome captain that he’d been crushing on since Eren first set his eyes on him. He’s just dreaming, right? No way would the real Levi ever lovingly curl around Eren like he was the most important omega in the alpha’s life.

“Shut up.” Levi grumbled sleepily and Eren was about to squeak a response but his voice was nowhere to be found.

“I can practically smell you worrying, brat.” Levi muttered and pressed his face against the crook of Eren’s neck, “Go back to sleep and stop smelling god awful. You kept me up for an entire day and a half so you don’t get to wake me up in a few hours.”

Eren blinked rapidly and decided not to further annoy the alpha who sounded extremely exhausted. The boy felt sorry for the captain for handling such a handful like him so he crooned softly and released calming pheromones to help Levi fall into a deep sleep. The alpha made a soft noise behind his throat, limping uselessly in a matter of seconds.

The pair had fallen asleep once again until it was already nearing the late afternoon. Eren’s stomach growled fiercely, effectively embarrassing the omega who tried to hide the successive growls of his belly that whined for solid food. The alpha chuckled, being woken up by a very angry Jaeger stomach was certainly a weird thing but the captain was too tired to bitch about it. Eventually, the black tailed mer slipped out from their shelter and hunted down any available prey that would silence his omega’s stomach.
Shit, did he say 'his'? Gods help him.

The hunt for edible fish served as a good distraction for Levi’s frantic mind. The activity made him focus more and it was a comfortable fall back since it involved physical work and no emotional requirement whatsoever. The unlucky school of fish that was subjected Levi’s fangs served as the pair’s late breakfast which Eren all but inhaled without further prompting.

“Slow down, Eren. You’re going to get yourself sick again.” Levi reprimanded half-heartedly, his inner alpha too pleased that the omega was incredibly happy and well-fed.

“Sorry, Captain.” Eren apologized with a light laugh, “I’m just really hungry and the fish tastes really good. Thank you for taking care of me!”

The captain felt his stomach do flips and he internally hissed at his alpha that was howling and puffing up with pride at being complimented by the omega.

“Uh, sir, where exactly are we?” Eren asked innocently after he had devoured the last fish that Levi caught.

Levi glanced up from where he was sitting and flicked a tiny crab away, “We’re a few miles away from the borders of Shiganshina. Your body shut down because of the cold so I brought you up here so you could readjust again.”

The omega made a sad humming noise, flicking his fins and scratching at the green specks on his golden tail. Levi could practically read the mixed emotions of fear and longing that resided on Eren’s face but the alpha made no further comments.

“When are we going back, sir?”

“We’re not going back right away. We will stay here for a few days and gradually move back to Krolva until shitty foureyes discovers some kind of herb that could help you trap more heat in your body. Hange was here earlier and we’re under strict orders by Erwin to reside here until further notice.”

Eren’s eyes widened and he shifted away from his seat, “What? But what about training? The other soldiers are directly under you and they’re going to need you to lead them!”

“They’re not pups so I’m sure they could train without me breathing down their necks. You need all the rest you can get so that’s the end of it.”

"But I’m fine, sir!” Eren pleaded, "There’s no need to stay out here for too long. I promise I won’t cause trouble again.”

Levi let out a loud ‘tsk’ and crossed his arms, “You can’t honestly promise to not faint again, brat. That’s practically out of your control. What’s your damn problem anyway? Any soldier would die to take a vacation away from that shithole.”

“I don’t want to be a burden to you or the entire Legion!” Eren cried out, bordering on hysterics which was probably brought upon by his body’s exhaustion, “I am not weak! I can do this, please!”

“What the ever loving fuck are you talking about, Eren?”

The omega huffed and pushed himself off until he was swimming towards the entrance, Levi’s body being the only thing that separates the boy from his freedom.
“Sir, please. We’re wasting precious time.”

“No. Explain to me why you’re disobeying my orders like a damn idiot. You just practically woke up from being frozen to death and you’re already itching to get your tail back to Krolva.” Levi growled threateningly but his soft gaze defeated the point of his threat.

Eren gritted his teeth and moved away, “Don’t look at me like that, captain!”

“Like what!?” Levi hissed in plain frustration.

“Like I need some sort of protection! I’m fine! I can do this. The more I stay here, the more I’m proving to them that I’m some pampered omega that needs to be doted on and taken care of! I’m nothing like that!”

Levi stared at Eren incredulously, “Who the hell even said that!?”

“The fucking alphas and some betas of Legion! They think I’m like some sort of shit smeared across their walls and I’m sick of it! I’m not weak just because I’m from Shiganshina nor because I’m an omega, damn it! Why can’t any of you understand that I’m—”

A loud cracking sound and a bolt of pain smacked Eren from continuing his hysterical ranting. It took a moment for the omega to finally notice the pain was blooming from his bleeding forehead where it was firmly pressed against the captain’s own. Whatever angry retort Eren had has died on his lips as he stared directly at the molten grey eyes of Legion’s strongest soldier. Levi was livid and had head butted Eren harshly, an alpha way of directly confronting an equal.

“Fuck, Eren, do you ever shut up?” Levi growled lowly, “No one’s saying you’re weak. Those sick fucks are more likely beating you up because they’re insecure. They know you’re a shifter and you could tear them apart without much effort if you wanted to.”

Eren breathed in deeply, stuttering and completely lost as the alpha placed his firm clawed hands on top of the brunet’s cheeks. “You’re right, being an omega doesn’t make anyone less of a mer. If anything, it implies that you have us alphas wrapped around your finger. However, you have to realize that some of them are in the team precisely because they distrust you. We need to keep an eye out, Eren. The fat slobs of Trost and Shiganshina wouldn’t have surrendered you to us otherwise.”

“I know.” Eren whispered.

“So enough of this stupid shit, alright? When you’re well enough to go back, you could punch them in the face as hard as you can and I won’t even bat an eyelid. Just fucking rest, please.”

The omega blinked and obediently nodded, finally released by the alpha who also sported a bleeding forehead. Eren crooned worriedly but the captain didn’t give him time to apologize before the dark tailed mer swam away, seething.

Levi didn’t return for many hours which left Eren to become a worried mess. Fortunately, Isabel and Hange had poked their heads into the makeshift nest of the pair and brought with them some food and supplies to last them for a week. Eren was obviously grateful but he still felt greatly worried that he offended the captain who was only looking out for him.

Isabel crooned softly when she noticed the angry closing gash on Eren’s forehead, apologizing
profusely for Levi’s harsh attitude towards the brunet omega.

“No, it’s okay.” Eren muttered as he gently pressed on the healing wound, “If anything, I’m happy he treats me as an equal. I was being an ass so I kind of deserved it anyway.”

Hange cackled loudly and pressed against Eren to give him a tight hug. The omega flailed and Isabel couldn’t help but join the squad leader in tormenting Eren more. The brunet deserved payback for making them worry so much.

“Should I leave this threesome or can I interrupt?” Furlan smirked from the entrance which prompted Eren to burst into a crimson shade.

“The hell, blondie. You made Eren all uncomfortable.” Isabel laughed loudly and rolled unto her stomach like a pup.

The beta mer shrugged and sat comfortably on a spot with soft moss, “I’m taking over Levi’s shift so you guys could go home now.”


Furlan grimaced at the question and the two other beta mers’ inquisitive staring, “Uh, well, Levi said I’m the one who’s supposed to watch over Eren now. That’s all the he said, I swear. Don’t look at me like that squad leader, sheesh!”

The omega visibly saddened and turned over to curl his tail around himself. Hange was kind enough not to make any unnecessary jokes and simply resorted to patting the frustrated omega’s hip. Isabel, on the other hand, muttered endlessly and seemed to use a different language as her vocal chords shifted into deeper and darker tones.

“Don’t be too sad, Eren.” Hange patted the boy affectionately, “Levi is just being his grumpy self and probably just wants to clean the entirety of Krolva to cool off.”

Eren sniffled and angrily bit his lip. He just really hated the fact that Levi’s disappearing scent was making him feel more lost and hopeless. Why couldn’t he just have a good relationship with the captain?

Does he not deserve to be with such an amazing alpha?

Chapter End Notes

Yes, just a clarification:

-Some of the Legion mers were friendly or not too distrustful of Eren but there's still a considerable number of them that hated Eren's mere existence.

-Headbutt is apparently a way for alphas to confront other alphas. It could either be a challenge to fight or simply a way for them to make the other yield. It's strictly an alpha-on-alpha interaction so Eren was quite surprised that Levi treated him like an equally terrifying alpha.
"Maybe, just maybe, Levi would be brave enough to admit that he has formed feelings for Eren. Perhaps it was time to admit to himself that he wants this more than anything and Levi is allowed to be selfish and want—no, need—Eren like his whole life depended on it."

With Eren’s stubborn determination, the omega was able to bounce back to his original health before they hit the sixth day of the impromptu mandatory health recovery that was strictly ordered by Erwin and Hange.

It wasn’t an easy journey for both Eren and Levi who were still confused as to where their relationship stood. There was no denying that the two mers developed some sort of deep bond and understanding after Eren’s unfortunate face-to-face with death but neither mers seemed to know how to go about the development. The awkwardness got worse when Levi would be constantly missing during the day, leaving Furlan to care for an increasingly moody omega. The beta mer cursed the older Legion mer internally for days, clearing sensing Eren’s distress that the comforting scent of the familiar alpha kept disappearing when he needed it most. The more frustrating thing was that Eren didn’t even know that he was agitated because of the lack of the short mer. The boy was just a bundle of nerves, confusion, and anger.

It took a considerable amount of nagging from Isabel, Hange, and finally, Erwin before Levi finally relented and relieved Furlan of his involuntary service. It wasn’t that Levi ignored his responsibilities; if anything, the merman had always made sure that he pumped calming pheromones every single night when Eren was too out of it to fall asleep. There were even times that he’d lowly croon inconspicuously and coax the boy to let his guard down for him to have better rest.

Levi just really didn’t want to be caught doing those things to Eren since he deemed it too intimate. Isabel and Furlan thought it was stupid for him to hide it, though they wisely refused to call him out. Eren was the suicidal bastard after all, not them.
“Fuck yes! It’s so good to be free!” Eren shouted obnoxiously to the open waters as he twirled and spun around in circles, letting streams of sunlight hit his gorgeous golden tail.

Levi rolled his eyes, ignoring the stinging of his cheeks that was clearly the first sign of a blush, “Stop being an idiot before you get a goddamn stroke, brat. I don’t want to carry your ass back to Krolva just because you strained yourself.”

The brunet simply smiled, too happy that he was finally feeling better. Thankfully, the omega stopped swimming too fast and obediently followed Levi’s calm pace. It didn’t bode well to upset the captain this early in the morning.

“Do we get to train again as soon as we get back?” Eren bounced enthusiastically.

“Did you leave your brain back there? I’d get it if you like.” Levi deadpanned, avoiding making eye contact with the brunet who was obviously pouting.

“But I’m better now!”

“Yeah, well, sucks for you that you’re still under observation.” Levi replied as he scented the waters and opened his palms to test the temperature, “Shit specs still needs to check if the herbs you’ve been ingesting are working to keep more heat in your body.”

The brunet relented and accepted his fate that he’d been under close watch for the next few days until he gets cleared for trainings and experiments. The static energy that ran through his veins was restless but Eren understood where his superiors were coming from. He surely gave all of them a scare after his little fainting stunt and he wouldn’t want to strain them even further by making things much worse.

The captain was thankful that Eren didn’t put up much of a fight regarding his health anymore. He supposed that the boy understood the importance of moderation and picking one’s battles wisely.

Without much delay, the pair found themselves within the arms of the coldness of Krolva. Eren shuddered a little but the herbs he was constantly chewing on had kept most of the irritable coldness at bay. He absolutely refused to say that the alpha’s scent grounded him but Hange’s knowing eyes (and gills) had picked up on Eren’s small tells.

The researcher mer had squealed in delight and kept poking at Eren and his cute little omega nature. The boy flailed miserably and shrieked when he was attacked by Hange and Isabel’s relentless attacks. It was a heart-warming scene that even the strict commander had let himself freely smile at the antics. The trio of troublemakers were a welcome distraction.

“It’s good to have you both back, Levi.” Erwin chuckled good-naturedly as the three mers chased and hid from each other.

Levi only grunted and crossed his arms as he watched their screwed up pod playfully nip at each other’s tails. Eren kept swimming away, barely escaping Isabel who skilfully dodged and slipped through boulders to trap the omega while Hange cackled loudly and made kissy faces, continuously tormenting Eren and his omega instincts.

The whole scene was a great oddity in itself, considering that the three were technically born from different pods and territories, but every single thing about it felt right.

The small quirk of the corner of the captain’s lips did not escape Erwin’s watchful gaze.
“For fuck’s sake, shitwin! Are you out of your mind?” Levi irritably bellowed as he barged into the once peaceful secluded alcove of the commander. The blond didn’t even have to raise his head to know that his shorter friend was scowling and glaring holes into Erwin’s skull.

“You have to elaborate more on that, Levi.” Erwin calmly answered as he picked off another sharp weapon and examined its hilt.

The captain huffed indignantly and sat noisily on a chair, “You allowed Eren to go on a mission.”

“Okay?”

“The little shit hasn’t been training for more than two months, you swimming piece of eyebrow!” Levi growled lowly, “He’s going to get himself killed the moment he swims past our borders.”

Erwin quirked a thick brow and looked calmly at his seething captain, “Eren has been excelling in his training, is he not? I’ve heard he passed the trials of some of our elderly mers with flying colors. Surely this improvement must mean something.”

“Those aren’t even expert level trials.” Levi snorted, twirling a stray piece of his hair out of the way. Damn, he really needed a haircut or else he’d be swimming straight into a titan’s mouth during their next expedition.

The commander doesn’t seem fazed by the growing irritation under Levi’s skin and answered back, “It’s only a food gathering mission, Levi. I’m sure that’s not as life threatening as you think it is.”

“Everything we do is fucking life threatening.”

The blond laughed softly and finally set down the weapon he had been inspecting closely. It was no longer a secret to him that Levi had grown more protective of his charge ever since their one week getaway from Krolva. The alpha had constantly made sure that Eren knew how to defend and attack like a true cold water mer to the point that other alphas who dared insult the boy before had learned to keep their opinions to themselves.

The captain even allowed the brunet to pick fights with alphas and betas that sneered and taunted him, making sure that Eren could get away with his traditional way of climbing up their hierarchy. Each alpha and beta had clawed and punched in retaliation but they were no match against Levi’s personal training and Eren’s unending determination. In the end, the boy had improved greatly in such a short span of time that Erwin deemed the omega worthy of going out of Krolva for the first time.

What baffles the commander is how Levi could be so comfortable with watching the omega beat up the other Legion mers but still be prickly about Eren going out of Krolva just to gather food. Titans weren’t even that frequently seen that close to their borders anymore and the other predators were not even as big as Eren was.

Honestly, Levi is such a confusing mer.

“You’ll be with Eren when he goes out for food scavenging, you know. He’s still under your custody so the boy can’t freely move in or out of Krolva without your express permission.” Erwin answered smartly as he weaved through the waters, “Trust in your charge, Levi. Eren is a very capable omega and titan shifter.”

“I’m just not fully comfortable with feeding him to the shitty giant ugly stains, alright?” Levi
confessed tiredly, “I know Eren is developing into a good soldier but the Titans out there are much worse than the ones that took down Shiganshina and Trost.”

Erwin smirked, “Love is such a delicate thing, isn’t it?”

“Ugh, disgusting!” Levi complained, “Are we really going down that shithole?”

The commander shrugged, “Well, you are fond of him whether you admit it out loud or not. Just remember that Eren needs your level-headedness more than your alpha instincts right now. The latter could wait later on during courting, right?”

Levi scrunched his nose in displeasure, earning a loud laugh from Erwin who was already waving him away from his secluded spot. The shorter alpha huffed his assent and exited without much noise or complaint. The captain knew that he couldn’t fully reason with Erwin just yet but the raven’s inner alpha kept howling its irritation at him.

It wasn’t that Levi didn’t trust Eren’s skills in combat. The boy obviously had the makings of a strong fighter made more powerful with the raw strength of his titan half. However, not much mers knew of Eren’s constant nightmares that tormented the omega. As far as Levi knew, the horrid dreams were mostly centered on the tragedy of Shiganshina and being too late to save his mother from the fallen rubble. Eren would always thrash and cry out until Levi would finally slip into the cell and gently make soothing circles on his hand and ears. This is a trick that the captain learned during their stay near the borders of Shiganshina. No one needed to know that, of course.

Levi just prayed that any of Eren’s potential encounters with the Titans would not result into triggering any kind of trauma.

With a powerful push of his dark tail, Levi swam through lines of soldiers to reach the edge of a barren field that Hange lovingly called their ‘laboratory’; whatever the shit that meant to Levi. The captain could already see the obnoxious bouncing of the squad leader’s ponytail, a sign that Hange was babbling about some weird nerdy shit once again.

Eren was kind enough to listen to the tiring topic but was pleased when he saw a glimpse of the captain’s familiar frown. His torture would finally end.

“I’m surprised you haven’t punched shit glasses in the face yet, Eren.”

“Levi!” Hange whined, “You’re so mean!”

“Whatever, Eren’s due for a field trip this afternoon so get your filthy hands off of him.” Levi rolled his eyes boredly and waited for Hange to release the younger omega from their experiment. Thankfully, it’s not as tiring as the previous experiments but it still left Eren a bit strained.

The omega bounced a bit to flare his fins from having to sit in an uncomfortable position for the past hour, earning a hideous giggle-snort from Hange who teased the boy that he was flashing them with his pretty fins. Eren blushed intensely which made the squad leader laugh even more. What was so funny? Levi didn’t think there was anything particularly special about what Eren did but the two mers seemed to know something else.

“I-I didn’t mean it like that!” Eren whined.

“I don’t understand what’s going on with your damaged brains but we need to get going before we lose what little light we have. The brat is practically blind during the evening.”

“Sorry, shortie!” Hange snorted, “You can have Eren all to yourself now! Oh! Please don’t forget
to go to the other sunken ships, pleeeaaaseee! I need human trinkets to add to my collection and Erwin won’t let me go with you!”

Levi clicked his tongue at the request, “It’s for good reason. You always bring back so much crap you can’t even carry.”

“But it’s for science, Levi!” Hange whined once again and Levi really wanted to tie the maniac to a mast before they end up begging even more with those whiny high-pitched noises. Moblit was smart enough to calm the squad leader before Levi could get any chance to actually follow through his violent thoughts.

“If you would please, captain?” Moblit pleaded apologetically, “I’m sure they would serve as enough distractions so Eren could finally get some time off from working with us.”

The omega sang and clicked his tongue happily at the thought of having some free time that Levi didn’t find it in himself to deny the precious mer’s request to personally find human stuff for Hange. Eren was just too cute for the captain’s poor old heart that the older merman felt like he needed to look away from the bright grin.

Dark blue was all that Eren could see, the color stretching wide across the carpet of dark sand that was slowly changing in color to darker shades of brown to a light tan. There were barely any living corals within the first few feet outside of Krolva but it was replaced with the abundance of huge rocks and occasional anchors.

The heavy sound of the busy current swished and gurgled as the captain and Eren’s tails propelled the mermen deeper into Titan territory. There was an occasional vampire squid and the humming of whales passing by but there were no sightings of any Titan mers as of the moment.

“Does vampire squid taste good?” Eren asked with a slightly disgusted expression as he watched the creature with red eyes calmly swim its way to a crack between boulders. Dear Neptune, that thing’s inky tentacles were giving Eren the creeps.

Levi only smirked at the seemingly frightened omega, “That thing could last you a year, brat. Hange tried eating one of those and it took them a solid half hour before they could swallow a small bite. It’s too chewy so I wouldn’t recommend it.”

Eren seemed relieved to hear that he won’t be munching on the slimy creature so they pushed on further until the small trickling of the oddly colored and sharp corals finally paved way into what looked like a cemetery for large sunken sea vessels. The omega made chittering sounds, expressing his awe at the sight of so many fallen ships that were crusted in by corals.

The raven haired captain let out a deep call and alerted Eren that this hunting ground wasn’t of much use and could only produce danger should any of the predators residing within the innards of the vessels decide that mermen were good enough for dinner. Eren obediently nodded, firmly grasping the hunting net that was attached to his hip, and had swum up to higher waters to avoid any violent confrontations.

“I heard Furlan had taken over your hand-to-hand training.” Levi casually sprung up as the pair made their way through the array of fallen beams and torn sails.

Eren blushed and remembered his colossal fuck up just a few days ago which resulted into Furlan beating each lesson into him until the omega was finally successful in locking the beta into a
complicated chokehold.

“He can be very strict.” Eren pouted as he rubbed his arm that still had the phantom memory of Furlan’s grip.

Levi made clicking sounds and rolled his eyes, “He just really wants to brag and have you pin down tons of alphas. Isabel is quite obsessed with your progress too.”

The omega smiled at the thought of the two members of Levi’s family tirelessly supporting him into reaching top ranks and earning his proper place within Legion. The sweet memory was only broken when the alpha captain had made challenging noises and quizzed Eren relentlessly regarding techniques and combat maneuvers. Eren stuttered at first but remained determined to answer everything perfectly until the shorter mer had demanded that Eren show him his progress.

Eren’s inner omega growled and preened at being challenged by such a delectable alpha. The danger of having to defend himself against Levi in a foreign territory urged Eren to punch and claw without mercy against the raven who was dodging every move Eren made.

Levi almost wanted to laugh at Eren’s predictability when it comes to attacking first. The omega was extremely impatient and would not hesitate to punch or claw if given the first opportunity. The brunet kept barrelling himself against the captain with impressive force but Levi knew well enough to use the other’s momentum to throw him off course.

The pair had danced around each other with violence and grace, Levi effectively blocking powerful punches and kicks of the omega’s tail with minimum effort. The captain twisted and turned Eren’s arm, his grip was solid until the omega cried out in pain and had desperately tried to elbow Levi’s face. Eren was lucky enough to hit the top of Levi’s nose, causing the older mer to flinch and hiss at the pain upon impact. With the captain distracted, Eren extended his claws and tried reach for Levi’s own net to flip him over and trap his arms. The raven’s sharp eyes caught the movement, leaving Eren entirely baffled when his own hands were now tangled within the net. The omega hissed as his arms got dragged up against the floor, his back hitting it with much force that caused Eren to curse lightly.

Eren yelped and wriggled until the omega relented, barring his neck as a sign of submission that the alpha had overpowered him. Levi’s eyes darkened at the sight of the tan flesh, exposing the delectable scent gland that was the source of Eren’s natural allure. The captain felt his tongue run over his sharpened fangs and immediately tried to push himself off of Eren before his inner alpha decided to do anything stupid.

“Nnnh, captain?” Eren whined in a daze.

The omega had tried to hide the blush and longing in his voice but utterly failed. Eren was shocked when he felt a part of him internally moan at the weight of Levi’s warm body firmly plastered against his. The alpha’s natural dominance made Eren’s inner omega keen and want more of the safety and security that came with the press of Levi’s skin. Oh gods, Eren felt like he was going to pop a boner. How embarrassing!

The two mers breathed heavily, too lost in each other’s scents and eyes that their instinctive reaction to separate after the end of a fight was nowhere to be found. The pools of Eren’s deep turquoise eyes had entirely enthralled the captain; a static electricity of longing and primal need to claim and mate had locked both the alpha and the omega in a standstill.
Fuck, Levi really wanted to kiss Eren.

He wanted to taste those plush lips and run his tongue over them, making the younger moan or kiss back just as fiercely. Gods, he’d do anything to hear the omega keen and make pleased sounds just by Levi’s soft touches. Would Eren be shy and try to hold back his noises or would he be as vocal and demanding as he always does?

The two were so close to giving in. The frantic questions and hesitation in their minds had been silenced by their need to get closer. It was like there was no other important thing in the world other than having their bodies closely pressed together until their hearts beat in sync. Common sense, a thing that Levi had relied on for years, had left him entirely.

He really shouldn’t do this, his logic thinks. An alpha with such a shady history and a clear lack of experience in taking a mate shouldn’t dirty a precious young omega that was teeming with hope and a clear sense of a better future.

There was no such thing for Levi. The older mer had forged an iron wall around his heart; his thinking warped into hopelessness that the Titan mers could ever be truly kept away. He was a mer that have seen strange things that have left him with almost no heart to give.

The alpha mourns its curse of being the object of everyone’s pain, of being the very reason why the ones he loved the most had died or suffered permanent loss. Eren might have been called a monster or a demon but Levi knew the boy was a thousand times more valuable than he is.

But to hell with that, right?

Maybe, just maybe, Levi would be brave enough to admit that he has formed feelings for Eren. Perhaps it was time to admit to himself that he wants this more than anything and Levi is allowed to be selfish and want—no, need—Eren like his whole life depended on it.

Eren’s eyelashes fluttered close, the omega unconsciously begging the alpha to press his lips against the boy’s soft caramel ones. Levi wasn’t about to deny his Eren such a request but fate had other plans.

The distinctive smell of rot and death permeated the waters like a plague. The alpha captain instinctively barred his fangs as he scanned his surroundings for the threat that he knew was simply waiting around.

“C-Captain? What’s going on?” Eren whined, completely put out that he didn’t get the kiss that he desperately wanted.

Levi released his hold on Eren’s arms and gently placed a calloused hand on top of the omega’s beating heart, “There’s a titan nearby.”

Eren’s eyes immediately hardened and Levi would have been saddened by the loss if it weren’t for the impending doom that was hiding behind the dark waters. The omega slipped from Levi’s grasp and started looking around, heavily relying on his sense of smell and hearing to find where the Titan was hiding.

It didn’t take them long to find the creature. The Titan was smaller than the average Titan mer, its head and nape was the only part of it that has a protective shell while its ribs and sharp bones protruded its body that it looked like a mer suffering from malnutrition.

Levi didn’t even know why that thing was swimming around near the borders of Krolva. His very last scouting mission with Isabel and Furlan had not been more than two months and they weren’t
able to spot any movement of the Titans going closer to their home territory.

“Permission to engage, sir.” Eren growled lowly, though the slight smell of fear didn’t escape Levi’s sharp nose.

The captain was almost tempted to refuse. Not a few hours ago, Levi personally confronted Erwin about Eren’s potential encounter with Titan mers while going on a food hunt. His inner alpha had been unreasonable and Eren’s nightmares provoked the beast to be more protective and cautious.

But now is not the time to baby Eren. The captain had been too caught up with his new emotions that he failed to remember that the omega had always wanted to prove himself worthy. Eren was not weak and Levi intimately knew that from the very beginning. Why the hell was he even worrying in the first place? The raven cursed his inner alpha once again. Levi would never allow his alpha to dominate or control Eren. If the captain wanted to move forward with whatever it is that he’s feeling for the boy then he’d have to give the same amount of trust that Eren is freely giving to him. It was only fair.

“I have one condition, Eren.”

“Sir?”

Levi’s cold grey eyes met Eren’s fiery ones, “Failure is not an option. You fucking win or I’ll gut you myself.”

Eren grinned smugly before pounding his fist against his heart in a passionate salute. Levi’s alpha wanted to kill the raven for allowing the omega to ram himself into the dark abyss of potential death but the captain made sure to reel it in. Eren was a natural-born fighter and a titan shifter so there’s no reason to fret. Levi’s trust and faith in the boy is more powerful than the hideous overprotective side of his alpha.

Without any hesitation, the omega sped past the captain and stealthily approached the creature. The small titan’s glazed eyes suddenly regained consciousness as the smell of a young and supple merman tempted its belly. Eren growled threateningly, elongating his sharp fangs and claws as his fins flared in a threatening display. The titan gurgled at the back of its throat, sickening yellow eyes glowing at the prospect of a good meal.

The boy didn’t give it a chance as he rammed his clawed hands into the juncture between the titan’s neck and its sharp jaw. The creature roared as dark red blood spilled and clouded the waters, the tangy iron scent made Eren slightly squirm as it mixed with the natural rotting smell of the titan.

Levi watched carefully from a good distance, seemingly confused and entertained at the fact that Eren was stubborn enough to refuse to shift even if it was to his advantage. His subordinate’s movements were more calculated than when he first arrived and joined Legion, the twists and turns to decapitate the small titan reminded the captain of his own battle strategies. It looks like Eren had always been closely watching and imitating him.

The fight wouldn’t last too long, Levi thought, as the titan became desperate enough to blindly open its mouth to bite into the waters for a chance to slow down the slippery omega that was slowly tearing the creature apart. The captain would have thought that the intimidating cavern of multiple rows of sharp teeth would have at least made the omega a bit nervous but Eren remained murderous.

“Fucking die!” Eren yelled as he swum up and flipped over, burying his claws into the protective
shell of the titan and ripping it apart as he swung his entire body to the ocean floor. The titan roared loudly, the thick curtain of blood obscuring the vision of both mers but Eren instinctively knew where the vulnerable nape was. With a last push of his reserved strength, the omega opened his mouth and bit through the smooth lump of flesh that would end the struggle.

The creature wriggled what’s left of its body, it was certainly bigger than Eren despite the lacking limbs and the obvious signs that it hasn’t fed for such a long time. The omega refused to let it budge, pinning the dying titan to the floor until a final gurgle had signaled that the creature was dead.

At first, Eren was still clouded with adrenaline to realize that he has actually defeated the titan. It was only when Levi was close enough that the boy realized he was out of danger and that he had officially made his first kill ever since being taken in by Legion.

“I did it!” Eren smiled brightly at the captain.

Levi should have been disturbed by the sight of Eren smiling with chunks of flesh and blood hanging around his teeth and cheeks but the captain didn’t find it in himself to give a damn. He could clean Eren later and it’s not like he wasn’t some sort of murderous freak himself.

The captain ruffled the omega’s soft brown locks and nodded in approval.

“Not bad, kid.”

If only Levi didn’t look away so quickly, he would have noticed the slow transformation of golden scales into deep dark ones like Levi’s own.

Chapter End Notes

You know it's bad when you get cockblocked by an ugly titan.

Coming up next: Overprotective alpha sister and Levi's first encounter with the emotion called "jealousy". Also a blond coconut will be really cute and set everyone straight (well, as straight as they can get).
Deluded Waters

Chapter Summary

"Levi would be content, as he’d like to delude himself, as long as Eren would happy even if he’s out of the picture."

Chapter Notes

Hello, everyone! I apologize for the long wait but I’ll be putting the reason behind it in the end notes.

Just a heads up that some of the characters' attitudes would be altered to fit in the story but it is in no way a reflection of how I really see them. I intend to have them grow and understand more as we progress in the story so don’t worry too much if they seem a bit annoying to you.

Tags and ratings might change to better inform you of what's going to happen.
This update didn't go through some heavy editing so I apologize for any grammatical, format, or continuity errors.

Thank you so much for the continued support! Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Erwin Smith liked to think that he had everything under control and not much would go haywire if he addressed all concerns under his strict supervision. That kind of facade had always been what kept Legion running despite the harsh environment that Krolva was in but things don’t always go as planned.

“Wait! Come back!”

Ah, there it is.

The loud giggling and clicking of childish tongues had echoed throughout the huge expanse of Legion’s territory. It was such an odd sound considering that the few pups that survived had all been withdrawn and rarely played outside their nests. Of course, that had all been broken by a bright eyed omega who had come from the warmer waters of the ocean.

Eren’s enthusiasm had been a force to be reckoned with; a frightening storm that matched Hange’s own. The commander didn’t know whether he’d crack a smile or discipline the young brunet because of his antics.

“I’m gonna get you!” Hange laughed loudly as they sped through rocks and boulders to chase after Eren and the rest of their tiny playmates. The squad leader should have known better than to entertain Eren’s idea of having a break but Hange simply cannot be stopped. They kept making excuses that it’s to learn the culture of warm water mers and Eren simply shrugged and let them tag
along.

Hence, Erwin’s headache had been increasing since the pups are having too much fun playing the omega’s new games. Wow he’s becoming a grouchy old merman, he’d probably shorten into Levi’s height anytime soon.

“Oi, Erwin” Levi muttered, “You have a creepy smile. You’re having disrespectful thoughts again, aren’t you?”

The blond alpha coughed behind a closed fist to hide the fact that, yes, he was having disrespectful thoughts about Levi’s height. Erwin was too smart to admit that though. Jabbing at Levi’s height meant a painful death and it was only Hange who could get away with it.

“I’m still mulling over your report regarding that titan you encountered during Eren’s first mission.” Erwin expertly evaded Levi’s piercing glare by changing the topic, “Did you see anything else besides that? Any changes in the temperature or scents?”

Levi shook his head and muttered a bored ‘no’. It was annoying that Erwin’s brain was on a rampage regarding the new information but it couldn’t be helped. It was better to be extremely cautious than wrap one’s self in a bow to be handed over as titan food.

“This seems interesting,” Erwin hummed, “Mike had sent a message that there’s some sort of movement in the upper waters as well.”


The commander grimaced and swiped a hand across his tired face, “No, but there’s a possibility. Though, there’s a higher chance that it’s the neighboring territories that they’re after. I can’t simply pinpoint why the sudden pattern.”

Levi’s cold grey eyes looked worriedly down from Erwin’s office where Eren and Hange were playing another noisy game with the pups. The omega was infuriatingly cute and good with the little ones. The Legion pups didn’t know how to properly speak yet but they excitedly barked back at Eren like he’s their own mother. The brat really did have something special in him and Levi wondered what it’d be like if Eren had his own pups.

The image of the smiling brunet placing a warm hand on his swollen belly popped into Levi’s mind and the alpha had to momentarily slap himself back to reality. What the fuck was wrong with him? Levi knew he desired Eren in some way but to consider the beautiful omega as a mate, and pregnant at that! The alpha was a bit worried why he’s not completely averse to the idea as he should be.

“Are you alright, Levi?” Erwin asked with a little amusement in his tone.

“Yeah,” Levi lied easily, “I was just thinking that the brat would definitely not be happy about the news.”

The blond hummed his agreement, “Well, Mike will be arriving here anytime soon. I have reason to expect that our little pod is going to be noisier and livelier than ever.”

Levi quirked a thin brow at the comment but his silent query had been answered by a loud shout announcing the arrival of Mike’s team. The group of soldiers that were stationed around the entrance and the ones at the training grounds had stopped to watch the arrival of the group.

The captain didn’t really understand why the soldiers were suddenly interested. This was a regular
occurrence and Mike’s team of mers had always been sent out on long journeys so nothing could be new. Levi’s confusion was only cleared when the raven haired captain himself had swum towards the grounds and was met with a tropical and warm scent that was clearly foreign.

“Eren!” an alpha mermaid gasped, flinging herself into the general direction where the confused omega was curiously watching.

Levi immediately felt himself go on defense, his alpha not liking the fact that a stranger is suddenly close to Eren. The omega was clearly intended for him and not that shitty alpha mermaid. Who does she think she is rubbing her scent all over the baffled omega!?

A snarl had ripped from Levi’s throat before he could control himself, luckily Hange was fast enough to ground Levi.

“Hold your seahorses, short stuff!”

“Fuck, get off me!” Levi hissed, his fangs elongating along with his claws which were darkening as seconds ticked by.

Hange’s grip never wavered as they tried to pin down the seething captain, “Well, I’m sure Eren wouldn’t forgive you if you tried to rip apart Mikasa.”

“And you thought you could just take him away from me!” Levi snarled as Mikasa finally joined the party, ruffling her hair and glaring aggresively at the three brats.

Mike watched the reunion with an odd quirk of the lips, sniffing subtly at the mixture of warm and tangy scents of the warm water mers. The overly-aggressive alpha mermaid had smelled completely sour the whole trip while the blond omega with the weird haircut smelled like fear and a tinge of excitement. What an odd family.

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“Get off of him, brats. You’re making a scene.” Levi snarled at the three after having been released by a slightly nervous Hange. The squad leader really did not like the deathly scent of aggression that the smaller captain was giving off.

Mikasa simply glared at the captain, maintaining eye contact as she rubbed both hers and Eren’s scent glands together. Levi barred his teeth and suppressed a hiss at the intimate display. Usually it was only mates or intendeds who would do such a thing and the captain’s enraged alpha was barking madly. Was this crazy alpha Eren’s intended!? Is that the reason why she threatened a fellow alpha like Levi?

A thick burning emotion crawled its way up to Levi’s throat. It was ugly and molten that left the captain’s tongue with a bitter aftertaste. Every single time the mermaid clutched Eren tightly, the seething anger and ‘something’ would mix together, burying its deadly claws through Levi’s aching heart. He did not like that girl touching Eren. He doesn’t want anyone touching his omega!
“Are you fucking deaf or do I have to repeat myself again?” The captain questioned coldly, it was quiet and could barely be heard if one didn’t listen but the rest of the soldiers knew what that tone was.

The alphas visibly shrunk from their places, even Mike shuddered slightly and scooted closer to the blonde Nanaba in an attempt to appease Levi. The captain rarely got legitimately angry, most of his shouts and insults were a way to discipline than convey his true raw emotions; but when it did seep out, it was through his quiet and icy tones. Legion knew to tuck tail and swim away when Levi uses that voice.

“Mikasa,” Armin pleaded worriedly as he tried to pry away the uncaring alpha from Eren. Thankfully, Mikasa didn’t put up much of a fight against Armin. She only maintained a steady unwavering gaze that challenged Levi’s cold ones. It was an alpha-on-alpha taunting and the rest of the mers who watched the scene got more nervous.

Eren snorted in disbelief as he shook away the excess sand that clung to his hair. Alphas could be so annoying especially when they’re overprotective or territorial. The boy hated the excessive coddling but Mikasa won’t be Mikasa if she didn’t have a dying need to protect Eren from everything and anything under the sun. Don’t get him wrong; he loves his sister to death but he loves his freedom even more.

The tension broke into tiny delicate pieces as Erwin cleared his throat. All the Legion mers straightened automatically and slammed a fist against their chests in respectful salute to their commander. Eren followed while Mikasa and Armin warily looked at the pod with barely concealed discomfort.

The commander welcomed Mike’s team and also Eren’s little family. The foreign mers hesitantly greeted Erwin, pressing the imposing Legion alpha’s knuckles against their forehead as a sign of recognition and respect; a common practice done in warmer waters. Erwin quirked a tiny smile at the action, lowering himself in response as a sign that he treats the Marian mers as valued guests.

Levi merely snorted, crossing his arms in irritation of having new brats staying in Krolva. Hange suppressed a cackle at the annoyed posture of their short friend but remained quiet for the most part as respect for Erwin who was trying to explain much of the situation and how the arrangements will be followed.

Eren was surprised to learn that the commander had coordinated beforehand with his family, when the boy was feeling weak and uneasy, in order to fulfil his promise to cater to the brunet’s mental and emotional needs. It seems that Mikasa and Armin would be staying a few days to check on Eren and see if he has successfully adapted to Krolva.

Tools against Titan can’t be poorly taken care of, after all.

The two young warm water mers nodded obediently, and it was then that Eren noticed their attire. Mikasa was wearing a silver chain belt which was basically a series of interconnected hoops, her signature red scarf draped across her neck which dangled to cover her breasts. Armin, on the other hand, had tied his hair back and an armlet of gold and icy blue stone wrapped around his arm in a comfortable fit. Of course, Mikasa would dress up rudely so as to impose a threatening display while Armin... well, he basically looks like he’s trying to impress—

Oh, well, nevermind. Eren will deal with that information later.

“We’ll be sleeping in the same quarters as Eren, correct?” Mikasa asked Erwin directly, her face
never breaking nor showing any type of emotion.

Armin merely choked on his own spit while Levi clenched his teeth at the audacity of the girl to straight up demand something from a dangerous mer like Erwin. The commander is adept to such situations, fortunately, since Levi had been a bit of a prick before and Erwin had to practice going head to head against a stubborn, straight-faced alpha.

“Only for the first night, I’m afraid.” Erwin answered perfectly that Levi wanted to punch that well put facade in the balls, “You have to understand that precautions must be made and we can’t simply let him do as he pleases. Eren was sent to Krolva to become our last hope and not to be coddled.”

Mikasa’s face darkened slightly but she understood that forcing them to relinquish Eren to them for several nights would be pushing it. The crimson tailed mermaid nodded and the group of soldiers were quick to disperse after Erwin sent them all away to continue with their training or daily chores.

Much to Levi’s dismay, the two new mers immediately latched on to Eren when the rest of Legion disappeared. The boy named Armin chuckled happily, scratching at his button nose when Eren made a joke about the blond boy’s appearance. It was a sweet scene if only the alpha mermaid didn’t look at Eren like her whole world fell into place and nothing else mattered.

The captain’s face remained stoic but his hands betrayed him as they opened and clenched again, vibrating with the physical need to just touch Eren and remove the annoying tropical scent that smelled too strongly of warm water plants. The alpha inside Levi was restless and the captain wanted to reason that it was simply because his job was to protect Eren and make sure that the boy will become useful for Erwin’s big plan, but really, the excuse sounded pathetic even to his own ears.

“We’ll show them to their resting quarters, yeah?” Hange declared excitedly, placing a warm hand on Levi’s shoulder, “They have a lot of catching up to do and also Erwin will need you for a meeting with Mike.”

The captain simply nodded and allowed the squad leader to handle the situation that was currently making a lot of noises behind him. Levi could feel Eren’s worried glances but the alpha refused to make eye contact with the very source of his confusing thoughts and feelings. There were a lot of things to process and, sadly for Levi, he really didn’t have much of an idea on how to communicate it to others or even himself.

Meetings with Erwin had never been fun in Levi’s humble opinion. It was a horridly long and dragging affair that bored the captain into the next month, making his stiff muscles uneasy from the lack of movement or any type of action at all. Levi was more of a physical mer and detested talking excessively since he’s infinitely shit at it, so having to suffer through Erwin’s obnoxiously noble speeches and Mike’s straightforward yet worried reporting was giving Levi that biggest headache of his life.

The captain was so close to punching Erwin in the face when the commander spouted more bullshit about prolonging the meeting to think things over thoroughly. He really just wanted to get back to his room and quiet his head.

Fortunately, Hange had barged in and reported that the three warm water mers were already settled
near Levi’s territory. The captain’s frown deepened at the mention of the new addition to his plate of responsibilities but he refused to admit that it mostly has something to do with Eren’s possible intended.

“Thank you, Hange. You and Levi are dismissed. I still have to get more details regarding Mike’s report so we’re going to have to stay for a while. The two of you should report here by morning, understood?”

“Yes, sir!” Levi and Hange both replied, slamming their fists against their chest though the captain did it with less enthusiasm.

Levi was quick to swim away, his black tail weaving through the hallways as he left the baffled squad leader in front of Erwin’s office door. The captain really didn’t want any sort of interaction with creatures that could make sounds, all he wanted was solitude so he slipped away unnoticed by most of the Legion mers and sunk into his bed.

But the gods hate Levi so much so they sent the very embodiment of noise to bother the alpha male.

“Aaww, is my little munchkin sad?”

Levi growled lowly and turned his back on the annoying squad leader, “Go the fuck away, shitfins. I don’t need your crap right now.”

Hange pouted from the windowpane of Levi’s private room. It was a miracle in itself that the captain wasn’t reprimanding them for leaning on his insanely sanitary windows. What has gotten into their little captain all of a sudden?

“Come on, Levi. This is very unlike you and it’s creeping me out,” Hange whined again, “And that’s saying something because I personally find Titans very cute and——“

“Gods, shut up!” Levi hissed, pressing his hand firmly against his face while he desperately prayed to the heavens to open up some sort of black hole for the freak to disappear into. The alpha already had a frightening splitting headache and Hange’s persistent prodding was making it worse.

The squad leader hummed in contemplation, making clicking noises as a way to communicate to Levi while the captain tried to ease his throbbing head. Levi was thankful for the shift, since clicking and humming were very basic ways of talking and he felt like that’s the only thing he could do with the little energy and patience he has.

‘Hurt?’ Hange clicked their tongue and whistled shortly.

‘Harpoon. Brain. I die.’ Levi clicked back and hummed lowly as he sank into his bed even more, his fingers pressing circular motions to ease the tension that was clawing through his temples.


“Fuck you!” Levi cursed and threw a random vase at Hange who easily dodged it.

“Seriously, Levi! We’re not as dumb as you think. Eren came back to Krolva from the hunting trip smelling like you and I actually had a mini-heart attack thinking that you mated the poor boy on the cold hard floor. Erwin almost died of aneurysm!” Hange laughed with a slightly dramatic tone
as they wriggled their way through the tiny window, “I know you feel something for him so why
don’t we just go out there and tell Eren to kiss your forehead bett—“

“He’s not mine.”

“What?”

Levi glared at Hange who managed to get themselves stuck halfway through the window, “The
brat is not mine to do whatever I damn well please. And anyway, the little shit is too busy with his
— whatever they are, and bonding like some hormonal teenage girls. I don’t want any part of that
kind of germ fest, thanks. Now, go away.”

Hange groaned tiredly and rolled their eyes like an exasperated mother, “You are honestly shit at
communicating your feelings. You’re not making any damn sense and they say I’m the crazy one!”

The captain didn’t make a sound, his back still turned on Hange. This frustrated the squad leader
even more as they wriggled and squirmed through the window which is really not helping their
case; They clearly underestimated the size of their hips and now Hange is probably going to be
stuck there forever to be some sort of wall decoration.

“Levi! You’ve got to tell Eren that you love him with all of your constipated heart!”

The shorter male growled in annoyance and finally pushed himself off of his bed to get into
Hange’s personal space. The giddy squad leader merely blinked innocently at the seething merman
who was probably the epitome of death at the moment.

“Stop trying to dissect my emotions like I’m your goddamned shitty science project. I’m not telling
anyone jackshit so suck it up and get out!” Levi hissed angrily and shoved at Hange’s face until the
beta’s entire body was ejected from the tiny window.

With a last huff, Levi gave a warning glare and slammed the window shut that it looked like the
glass would crack in half. Hange sighed in defeat as they rubbed their tender flesh that had been
scratched by the window.

As much as it’s fun for the researcher mer to see Levi experience different emotions at strong
levels, it’s not quite enjoyable to see their short friend suffer through the confusion and tedious
processing since they’re clearly outside Levi’s comfort zone. Hange laughed at the thought that
just months ago, they were so willing to throw Levi into the harsh current of love and attraction but
it seems like now they have to go down and suffer with him.

Eren found himself sitting in a nice little alcove just a few feet away from Levi’s territory. The
space had been previously used by the alpha himself to store food or cleaning supplies but they
have all been transferred to the right wing of the sunken ship in order to accommodate the
newcomers.

Armin had been shivering the whole time but found comfort and solace in his best friend’s arms.
The blond mer had missed Eren very much and his omega side naturally felt secure around the
presence of another omega that he had grown up with for a long time.

The alpha mermaid smiled softly at the scene; Mikasa finally felt like everything is in place now
that the two cute omegas are snuggled up and seeking as much warmth from each other as
possible. However, Eren didn’t seem entirely comfortable, occasionally rubbing his wrists irritably at the scent glands found on his neck. The omega had a grimace on his face as he continued rubbing at his skin.

“Eren, are you hurt? Why do you keep doing that?” Mikasa asked with worry as the brunet pursed his lips at the tingly discomfort.

“I don’t think so... it’s just so—annoying and itchy!” Eren complained with a whine as he rubbed at his scent glands again. The boy huffed in exasperation as Armin cooed softly to ease Eren but nothing would work. The omega recognized too late that it was his instincts working again and that it hated the scent of another alpha on his skin.

‘Wrong, wrong, wrong!’ it howled and screamed at Eren and made the boy feel sick and guilty for letting another alpha scent him so easily. It confused the brunet at first, knowing that Mikasa is not just some alpha and is actually part of the family, but then Eren recognized that he might have unknowingly done something for his instincts to come into play.

Imprinting on another alpha.

The boy flushed in obvious embarrassment when he first realized that his scales changed color. It was very indicative of Eren’s affections and it took a lot of twisting and turning through unforgiving nights before the omega could finally admit to himself that he desired Levi as a partner, as a mate.

Imprinting itself could be an advantage and a disadvantage for many reasons but most omegas depend on that particular trick to announce their wish to mate or to accept an alpha’s courting. It was the only way warm water omegas could flaunt a bonding mark since they refused to practice biting each others’ necks, deeming it too barbaric for their tastes.

So Eren was really surprised when he found the stray scales just peeking through his older ones. Apparently, biology decided that Eren was far too slow when it comes to accepting his emotions.

Curious tan fingers snuck their way down to the said changed scales; the coal and violet tinged color of each new additions had been hidden underneath Eren’s earthy green ones, shyly poking out to declare to the world that the youngest Jaeger’s heart had been taken. Mikasa’s keen eyes followed the movement and Eren immediately regretted his carelessness.

“Eren!” Mikasa hissed in distress as she surged forward and caught Eren’s wrist, fingers just shy above the set of scales that mirrored Levi’s own, “What is that!?”

“Fuck, Mikasa! Let go!” Eren whined and caused Armin to fall off of his lap.

Armin blinked groggily at the two who were obviously struggling about something, “W-What’s going on?”

Mikasa barred her fangs, grabbing the omega’s golden tail and lifting it up for closer inspection. Eren stumbled clumsily as he lost his balance, tail and arms flailing away from the alpha that was invading his personal space but the raven haired mermaid refused to relent. Dark eyes quivered and contorted into slits as Mikasa took in the obvious evidence of Eren’s imprinting. Who the hell did this to her little brother!?

“Who is it, Eren!?” Mikasa asked with anger although her tone sounded desperate and pleading to
familiar ears.

The omega growled in warning, “None of your business! Don’t touch them!”

“I won’t have you imprinting on a monster! It’s him isn’t it!!?” Mikasa yelled back as she pointed an accusing finger, “It’s that bastard Levi, right? His scales looked just like these.”

“Why do you care!?” Eren screamed in irritation, causing Armin to quiver and back away to remove himself from the inevitable explosion that is Mikasa and Eren’s traditional way of fighting each other.

It’s just their luck that they haven’t even stayed for more than a day and the two are already at each others’ throats. Armin sighed at the problematic state they’re in but he couldn’t move to intervene as the crimson tailed alpha heavily pumped aggressive pheromones that would normally send an omega begging for forgiveness and mercy. Eren was obviously the stubborn exception.

“Are you insane? That short stump beat you to a pulp publicly and had taken you away from us like some pet fish! He’s a cruel murderer as well!” Mikasa hissed.

The brunet gaped at his sister and pushed her off of him, “What the fuck are you saying?”

“Didn’t you know he’s from the Underground!? I heard about the horrible things he did, Eren. That man is not who you think he is. He killed people for a living and he was good at it. That’s why Erwin Smith took him in because he’s a killer who doesn’t flinch at his job!”

“Mikasa—“ Armin worriedly whimpered. That information came directly from him due to research but the blond omega didn’t think that his friend would use it harshly against Eren. It doesn’t help that they’re already in Legion’s territory and anyone could kill them if they said something bad.

“It’s true, Armin! You said it yourself.” Mikasa defended quickly, “Eren had imprinted on Levi! We have to do something—“

“My life is not yours to control!” Eren cried angrily.

Mikasa grimaced but held her steady gaze, “Your mother made me promise to protect you and stop you from doing crazy things, Eren. This is crossing the line and you know it. You’re a prisoner here and you act as if they’ll accept you without judgment. We’re your true family, not them!”

“If you’re my family then you’d let me make my own decisions!”

“And what?” Mikasa sneered in distaste, “Let you imprint and mate with an alpha whose hands are covered with so much blood? The very man who slaughtered and murdered families with brutal force? That same Levi Ackerman who is tasked to kill you—“

“Don’t talk about my alpha that way!” Eren shouted at the top of his lungs that he felt like his throat was about to burst from his effort to just scream and wail his frustrations and hurts. It wasn’t fair. Levi might have done horrible things in the past but there must have been a reason for it. The alpha was strong yet gentle when he touched Eren, caring and warm when he’d secretly comfort a crying Isabel.

Eren himself felt so upset that fat tears leaked from his eyes, beads of slightly pearlescent tears floating along with the current. It was too late when he realized that he had just called Levi his
alpha and a hot burning embarrassment crippled him.

Suddenly the waters felt too hot and prickly; Eren hiccupped badly as he scrambled away in deep confusion and hurt from having his intended alpha be rejected by his family member. The omega whined in distress, eyeing his childhood friends with barely concealed sadness and anger. Armin tried to comfort the brunet but Eren had already swam away from the alcove, propelling himself forward with no direction in mind.

Armin regarded Mikasa with an exasperated look as the alpha mermaid stared at the empty space which Eren recently vacated.

“You didn’t have to be so harsh on him, you know?”

Mikasa flinched slightly and pressed her lips in a tight line, “Would you rather have him bond himself with such an awful person for all of eternity?”

The blond sighed and carded his fingers through his golden hair, disturbing the intricate tie that was holding it into place, “I really can’t say anything yet, Mikasa. We don’t personally know Captain Levi and for all we know, the stories about him were just exaggerations to make Legion more unappealing. Besides, Eren won’t listen to us now that you’ve established that you’re not open to any sort of compromise.”

Mikasa sighed and scrubbed her face angrily at the situation. She was so bad at communicating her concerns with Eren that they always ended up having a nasty fight. The mermaid didn’t want to agitate her brother but the stories she heard about Levi Ackerman had sent her skin crawling with fear. Mikasa just couldn’t allow Eren to fall in love without knowing the alpha’s bad sides; though it’s very unfair for her to assume that Eren wasn’t informed of such things. The boy was living in Krolva after all.

Apparently, Eren wasn’t the only one in the family who barges into situations head first.

Mikasa took a deep breath and decided that she should apologize later.

Eren weaved his way through Krolva, blind with hot tears. The omega knew he was a very emotional type of mer but this seemed a little excessive even in his opinion. Mikasa had a valid point but Eren just couldn’t accept that the alpha who showed him true freedom was being insulted by his own family. The brunet fell hard and fast for the captain, that’s true, but he knew that it wasn’t one of his impulsive decisions. From the very start, Eren knew there was a deep sort of attraction that pulled at his heartstrings; a certain kind of connection that some other romantic mers would call a true mate’s calling.

The boy’s lip quivered with uncertainty, thinking that maybe he’s taking it too far, until he found himself torpedoing straight to an oblivious Hange who shrieked inelegantly but caught the shaking omega with firm hands.

“Holy shit, Eren! Are you alright?” Hange questioned worriedly as they checked on the boy’s forehead and fuzzed over him like a mother would.

“M’fine.” Eren muttered as his cheeks were squished between the squad leader’s hands.

Hange sighed in relief and laughed at the boy, jokingly reprimanding him for acting like a pup.
who’s running away from their mother’s punishment. Eren gave a weak smile as he brushed away his chocolate colored bangs from his forehead.

“I know what would make you feel better,” Hange grinned like a Cheshire cat, “You need a distraction! How about running an errand for me, starfish?”

The omega blinked at the request as he scrubbed at his blotchy cheeks, “What is it?”

A bottle filled with a strange blue colored seaweed was waved in front of Eren’s face. The omega titled his head in confusion at what he’s supposed to do with it.

“Our Levi is suffering from a terrible headache and he’s too much of an ass to ask for help so he needs to ingest this as soon as possible!” Hange explained excitedly, “However, he did kick me out earlier so I’m sure I’m not welcome in his room. Why don’t you bring it to him, Eren? I’m sure he wouldn’t mind if it’s from you!”

“B-But—” Eren stuttered unsurely as the bottle was shoved into his hands, “Why can’t Isabel or Furlan do it? I might make the captain angry if I make his private quarters dirty. You know how he is!”

“Those two are still not done giving the rest of Levi’s team the proper headache they don’t deserve-ish,” Hange laughed heartily, “Their return will be this coming late afternoon so there’s no one else available but you.”

Eren eyed the mer with barely concealed disbelief but Hange smiled sweetly and left the omega with no room to argue. Being stuck in a cramped room with the alpha that stole his heart wasn’t exactly the best thing to do when one is currently running away from anything that has something to do with love and affections. However, Eren cannot disobey direct orders from a superior so he merely pouted an ‘okay’ before swimming hesitantly towards Levi’s personal chambers.

The brunet was still sniffling and scrubbing away the hardening tears that were crusting on his cheeks that some Legion mers were giving him odd looks. Eren refused to be bothered by them so he slithered away faster than necessary, his inner omega keening with happiness at the fact that he could hide away in his alpha’s nest. Eren wanted to slap himself for having too much contradicting thoughts; his instincts were really a pain in the ass most of the time.

“Captain?” Eren knocked hesitantly when he reached the familiar oak door of Levi’s room, “Sir? It’s Eren. May I come in? Squad Leader Hange sent some sort of medicine for you.”

There was no answer from the other side and Eren feared that Levi might have left the room before the omega even reached it. However, the strong scent of Levi lingered inside and was a strong indication that said shorter male was still residing in his quarters. Eren’s heart fluttered at the comforting scent and, against his better judgment, he had opened the door despite not hearing any confirmation that he could come inside.

Eren bit his lip as the door groaned from being opened. The boy dearly hoped that the captain wouldn’t be too displeased at the intrusion but it was really for his own good. A relieved sigh escaped Eren’s lips when he spotted the male alpha resting on a comfortable cushion, though his frown still remained despite the fact that he’s sleeping.

Levi’s face when he is at his most vulnerable state is truly a sight, as far as Eren is concerned. The captain always had a cold and intimidating look on his face whenever he’s awake and ordering
everyone to stay in line. Levi was known throughout the entire ocean for being a creature devoid of emotions and conscience; a tool for killing that had been sharpened by violence and brute force.

The brunet omega couldn’t blame the others for seeing only the outer shell of the captain since it was meant to be a huge wall that protected the inner soul of a gentle mer. Eren, however, could not be fooled by Levi’s less than elegant language and callous treatment of others. The shorter male cared for his subordinates and hated unnecessary deaths; he’d lose a limb or two just to keep his very little family safe and well-fed; Levi had probably already sold his body and soul just to keep so many merpeople alive despite the fact that they openly detested and judged him for being who he is.

The omega quietly inched his way towards the dozing male, clutching at the bottle filled with blue liquid and seaweed, and sat near the edge of the cushion. Eren’s fingers seemed to have a mind of their own as they brushed away Levi’s raven bangs away from his face. The captain was so unfairly beautiful, his alabaster skin and young face fit the description of ethereal beauty.

Slowly, Eren traced the features of the alpha’s face with feather-light touches. His fingers gently pressed against Levi’s closed eyelids and long lashes, down to the bridge of his straight nose then to the smooth planes of his cheeks that had tiny scars and nicks. Almost hesitantly, Eren traced the captain’s thin lips as if he’s touching something forbidden or fragile.

Eren held his breath when Levi huffed and grabbed at his wrist. The boy was ready to be reprimanded and called out a pervert but the alpha did no such thing; he even pressed Eren’s wrist close to his nose and nuzzled it like a content purring pup. The omega’s heart beat rapidly against his chest as the alpha murmured in his sleep; the perpetual frown slowly melting away into a content press of the lips.

“I’m so sorry,” Eren quietly whispered like it was a secret between them, “I’m such a coward that I can’t even ask for this when you’re awake.”

Levi didn’t move an inch nor did he release his grip on Eren’s wrist so the boy continued, “Mikasa said a lot of things about you which I’m not really sure of. I don’t want to believe any of it until it comes from your mouth or Isabel’s or Furlan’s. There must be a reason, right? There must be.”

Gentle tan fingers began petting alabaster skin again and Eren almost laughed when Levi’s nose crinkled a bit, “I don’t know where we stand anymore. I mean, that almost kiss wasn’t just my imagination, yeah? Fuck, I might just be assuming too much for all I know! I’m such a pervert.”

The alpha only made a soft humming noise and unconsciously rubbed over the tiny scent glands on Eren’s wrist. The omega laughed at the action since it’s soothing his need to get Mikasa’s scent off of him.

“I want to kiss you so bad, Levi,” Eren whined and gently pressed his forehead against Levi’s, “Shit, I always made fun of horseface for being such a sap but I think I understand now. I really want to be close to you but I want to do it right. You have to be awake or else it won’t mean anything so please...”

Eren didn’t really know what he’s begging for but he found comfort at the fact that Levi’s own fingers brushed soothingly against his wrist like it was an attempt to comfort the brunet.

The brunet couldn’t fight his heart anymore so he closed his eyes tightly and pressed a wet kiss on Levi’s forehead, just to ease his desire to kiss Levi’s lips. With all of Eren’s strength, the boy
managed to convince himself to pull away from the center of his affections and placed the bottle with swishy fluids on top of the bedside table. The omega fled the room, being content at seeing Levi finally resting peacefully.

It was only a couple of minutes after Eren’s abrupt departure that Levi finally found enough strength to wake himself. The alpha’s head still felt like it was going to crack into two but thankfully it wasn’t as bad as it was earlier. It took time before he realized that the strong scent of Eren permeated the waters in his room and Levi’s inner alpha howled in delight.

The captain hesitantly sniffed at his hand and rubbed at his forehead where the soft tropical scent was the strongest. Levi smiled softly for the first time in weeks when he realized that Eren had managed to barge into his room; the blue bottle on his table, no doubt, was the very thing that the beautiful omega had delivered. It didn’t take a genius to figure out that Hange probably setup the whole thing, the crazed moron.

Levi reached for the bottle with a soft look on his face, twisting and turning it as if to inspect and admire a caring gesture from a mate.

“Brat,” Levi chuckled good-naturedly and downed the whole thing in one go.

At least for a moment, Levi could pretend that Eren didn’t have a potential intended; that the brunet omega could be his and his alone. Though, Levi didn’t count himself as a lucky merman, since he wasn’t blessed with luck to be gifted with a partner in life. Perhaps he wanted Eren to be his lifelong mate, but he’d never force it on the boy if it meant ruining the omega’s life even more.

Levi would be content, as he’d like to delude himself, as long as Eren would happy even if he’s out of the picture.

Whether or not he’d fight for the omega, is another question entirely.

Chapter End Notes

As I said I'd be explaining myself in the end notes.

It's pretty obvious that this is the longest delay I've had for updating. I have been going through some breakdowns recently and it affected my academic performance and other personal stuff so I chose not to touch the story just yet since I'm sure it would affect the fic negatively.

Thankfully, I'm better now though I apologize if this recent update is not as good.

Thank you for all the comments, kudos, and bookmarks on this fic! I am filled with love.
Your support keeps me going!
Freedom is to Feel

Chapter Summary

"And in that moment, Levi realized he still had circumstances, feelings that he’d like to feel differently than he had... or even for the first time."

Chapter Notes

I have no idea why it took me so long to write this but this story is getting more challenging to create as we go along. There would be a lot of plot heavy chapters and I’m just (_(:3」∠_∠)_ are you ready for the drama and the angst? Because I’m not.

(Also I apologize for any grammatical mistakes because English is obviously not my first language. I'm just putting it out there. I'll clean it up later on!)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The morning after the transfer of the Marian merpeople had been a complete disaster.

Armin, who was supposedly the most level-headed and reasonable of the little family, had been stubborn as a bullshark and refused to wake up despite endless prodding from Eren and Mikasa. The blond kept groaning and mumbling ‘it’s too dark out to be morning yet’ and completely forgot that Krolva never had decent sunlight in the first place.

“Come on, Armin,” Eren whined though he struggled to keep his laughter in, “You’re going to get me in trouble if you don’t wake up.”

“Don’t care,” Armin answered back and proceeded to bury his head under a pillow. Mikasa, who had been up earlier than Eren himself, merely blinked before hefting Armin’s whole weight onto her shoulders. The omega squawked indignantly which caused Eren to snort like a pig and roll on his stomach, momentarily forgetting his little spat with his sister.

It was only the promise of having a chance to watch Hange’s experiments in the flesh that Armin managed not to be irritable and upset. Though, Mikasa had to endure a face full of baby blue and yellow scales before she managed to make the blond calm down. Armin really did have some fight in him and it had always been a very stupid decision to annoy him when he just woke up.

Armin and mornings just didn’t work out that well, unfortunately.

Thankfully, Levi didn’t really give a shit about another Marian omega who is pouting lazily in his kitchen. The captain merely lifted a brow then proceeded to ignore the trio entirely in favor of eating his breakfast in peace. Peace, in a limited definition, that is him completely not giving a single fuck while Mikasa bore holes into the back of his skull just by glaring at him.

Eren was oblivious, as usual, since he’s too smitten by the array of fresh catch that were placed neatly on the kitchen table. The brunet inhaled most of the food and was only stopped when Levi
whacked him in the head with his tail.

“M’sorry, Capt’n” Eren smiled bashfully with a mouthful of fish that Levi was torn between finding it cute or disgusting.

“How many times do I have to tell you to close your damn mouth when you eat, brat? You’re not a pup.” Levi grumbled as he turned away from the brunet, “Also, leave some food for Furlan and Isabel. I don’t want to hear them bitch about coming home to an empty table.”

Eren blinked at the alpha as he scrubbed the excess meat away from his cheeks, “They aren’t back yet? I thought they’d be here before sundown yesterday.”

Levi merely grimaced but did not answer. It was unusual for the two to be delayed that long especially when they’re with Levi’s elite team. Their missions weren’t easy, that’s a given, but they always made it back to Krolva in time or at most just a few hours late from what was agreed.

Eren looked at his captain with intense worry which annoyed Mikasa to no end. Why did the short man have to make her baby brother so sad this early in the morning?

“Sir, I— Mfph!”

The alpha captain gaped as he tried to comprehend the scene before him, which is mostly Mikasa shoving a medium sized fish into Eren’s open mouth.

“Eat.” The mermaid said with her usual gloomy tone while Eren grumbled and helplessly tried to shout at the other for trying to choke him with a dead fish. What the hell?

Levi’s brows furrowed more at the odd interaction. Is this how warm water alphas treat their intended? What a shitty way to show that one could protect and provide when they’re trying to choke their special other with food. Warm water mers are so strange but it didn’t look like Eren’s entirely pleased with the gesture as well. Shit, did Levi have to shove fish into Eren’s mouth too?

What kind of kinky courting shit were Marians into!?

Before the captain could question the two, a familiar loud piercing cry had echoed through Legion’s territory. Levi immediately bolted from his seat, leaving his guests baffled and unnerved by the urgency and the potent smell of worry that the deep water alpha had left.

Eren had instinctually followed the captain, slithering through the tight fit windows in order to catch up with Levi’s blinding speed. A curved line of disappearing bubbles had led straight to the alpha himself, clutching a sobbing mermaid protectively. It was Isabel but she looked like a wreck with her sporting a black eye and a missing fang; her body heavily bruised and scratched all over. The young girl wept openly and pleaded in scared tones, her language obviously not familiar to Eren’s ears anymore.

Mikasa and Armin had followed hesitantly but they respectfully remained distant as Levi cursed and growled under his breath, answering in deep dark tones similar to Isabel’s. The waters suddenly reeked of aggression that Armin felt himself gag and tremble.

‘Who did this to you?’ Levi hissed angrily as he carded strong fingers through Isabel’s fiery red hair.

‘They’re coming!’ Isabel whined in distress, ‘It’s like nothing we’ve ever seen. Big brother, I don’t want to die! I want to see the stars!’

The captain’s jaw tightened as he embraced Isabel and murmured comforting words. Eren fell right
beside them, pumping calming pheromones and singing through whistles so that the girl would stop crying. The omega felt angry but at the same time he’s confused as to what caused all this. It was then that Furlan finally stumbled into the area; his condition no different from what Isabel had suffered.

Eren was quick to catch the beta whose fins had a large chunk bitten out of it. The taller blond wheezed weakly and allowed himself to be carried closer to Levi who was waiting patiently but smelled like he was on the verge of a murder spree.

“Levi... the commander—” Furlan choked, nursing his bruising rib, “Please. We’re the only ones who escaped. They’re still— they’re going to get killed!”

The captain made a move to swim away and report to Erwin but Isabel clutched on to him tightly and refused to budge. Levi tried to reason with the younger mermaid but she refused and cried hysterics about the nightmare that they saw past Legion’s borders.

The crowd that they attracted murmured worriedly; different kinds of tragic theories popping up and making the situation worse. The sea of merpeople eventually parted when Erwin’s loud booming voice rattled the grounds. A strict and imposing aura clothed him as he glided through the waters and approached Levi’s beaten family.

“What happened?” Erwin asked in a clipped tone.

Furlan coughed, a heavy red cloud of blood puffing out, “Titans, sir. They’re much worse than aberrants— like mutations. They have crystal armors and have... higher intelligence.”

Erwin gritted his teeth at the information. It was no longer a secret to him that there was an alarming change in the behavior of Titan and Mike had been harping about strange scents coming from those that they observed from the upper waters. The damn monsters’ rotting smell wasn’t as pungent and they feared that it might entirely disappear, leaving them with little to no clue as to when a titan is approaching.

“What happened?” Erwin barked urgently, not liking the implication that something big is coming for Krolva and they are left unprepared.

“They stayed behind—“

A loud crashing boom rattled the coral and stone walls of Krolva. The merpeople gasped and screamed as their protection shook heavily, threatening to crumble and spill over them. Soldiers were quick to evacuate the pups and what little pregnant omegas they have. In case of a Titan invasion, it was important that another generation could be birthed so that their species won’t disappear.

Erwin shouted orders left and right while Levi deposited Furlan and Isabel to the medics. Hange had appeared with Moblit in tow, both of them carrying twin blades that were Legion’s signature weapon when on the offensive against Titan. The squad leader’s team had already secured the perimeter where the lone titan had been forcibly headbutting and eating its way through the curved dome walls.

As Erwin had feared, the damn thing didn’t smell like anything at all.

“Sir!” Eren shouted, pressing a fist against his heart as a sign that he was awaiting orders. It would be the first time for him to truly fight under the care of Legion and he’d be lying if he said he didn’t feel like he’s shitting himself. The titan’s head was huge, rows of sharp teeth were crusted with
glistening crystals while the protective armor of its head looked like it was made out of solid diamond. Any mer in their right mind would definitely be crippled with fear; except for Hange who looked like they hit the jackpot.

“Eren, you’re with Levi.” Erwin commanded as he elongated his claws and fangs. Armin was quick to whimper at the sight which the blond alpha answered with an apologetic smile. Erwin did hate distressing omegas with his intimidating look but there was nothing he could do for now.

Upon the mention of his name, Levi swam up next to Eren and placed a warm hand on the brunet’s lower back. It was a sign that the alpha would be the omega’s foundation, a common gesture shared by veteran soldiers when preparing to depart to the front lines. Eren blushed heavily and smiled at the captain, feeling safe and secure now that he will have someone who would help him become Legion’s ultimate tool in their conquest against Titans.

“Sir, permission to join.” Mikasa asked boldly though her tone suggested that ‘no’ was not an option.

Erwin pressed his lips together in a thin line, “I can’t have liabilities right now. Your pod will have our heads if you get killed.”

The alpha mermaid remained unfazed like she was expecting that kind of answer, “Sir, I have been trained as a Marian soldier. I think I know what I’m doing. Assisting you would be expected of me since I’m bound under oath—“


“Enough! Both of you!” Levi shouted, “The gloomy brat could tag along if she’s so damn persistent but she’s not allowed to cross the borders. Eren, come with me. We don’t have time for this crap.” The captain grabbed Eren whose eyes burned bright with rage and violence. The brunet looked like he wanted to confront the crimson tailed mermaid but Levi would not sacrifice innocent lives just for them to have what he thought was a lovers’ spat. Legion needed them right now and that’s all that matters. He needed to find his team before it’s too late.

“Eren, fucking concentrate,” Levi bellowed as he dragged the boy closer to the walls.

The brunet growled lowly but let himself be dragged along. Soldiers were already shouting curses as they circled the titan and tried to restrain its movements as much as possible. A beta mer handed the two with twin blades identical to Hange’s to which Eren received with a look of determination.

Eren felt betrayed and angry but most importantly he’d been in a rollercoaster of different emotions within a span of a few months. He didn’t understand what was going on but he was desperate for release and he found an outlet through the prospect of slicing the titan’s nape with his own hands.

The captain immediately bolted straight for the creature and rammed his blades into its neck, creating a crisscross like scissors would so that he could find an opening.

The titan roared loudly and reared its head as Eren took the opportunity and plunged his own blade into the wound then heaved upwards to break the weak point of its jaw. The brunet was about to whoop a success but his blade snapped into two like fragile glass. Levi’s eyes widened as he pushed the omega out of the way and got hit on the side of his head in the process.

Eren cursed lowly as he spotted three more similar looking titans headed their way. The other soldiers were already being deployed outside but the ones staying to defend the coral walls were already struggling hard against the quick and agile titan.
“Show me your secrets!” Hange cried excitedly as they sliced through its crystal shell and received a shower of blades broken into pieces as predicted.

“Fucking hell, shitty four eyes!” Levi complained as he shook his head of the debris and rammed his whole body against the titan so that it would be distracted enough not to eat the enthusiastic beta.

Eren hissed threateningly and gathered all his strength to transform; the pain of having to endure deep gashes from his blade had helped trigger his body to contort and shift. The omega roared loudly, his deep voice echoing through the waters to warn the other titan to stay away.

The armored titan merely tilted its head like it was mocking Eren as it showed off its fast healing gashes. Eren opened his mouth wide in a scream as he pushed the creature further and further away from civilian homes. Mikasa kept track of her brother from a distance, her borrowed blades firmly placed on leather belts attached to her hips. She knew Eren was still upset with her and she didn’t want to try his patience when he was still transformed.

Levi followed the titan shifter and duly ignored Mikasa and the rest of the soldiers. The iron scent of blood hit the captain’s nose that he chose to momentarily close his gills in irritation against the putrid scent. It took a moment for him to realize that his teammates were the source of the smell and they looked like they were on the verge of death.

“Captain...” Oluo wheezed, trapped in between two large boulders. Eld and Gunther were somewhere nearby, face down on the ground as they heaved labored breaths.

Levi reached for Oluo’s outstretched hand and knelt right next to him, “Don’t move too much or you’re going to make it worse. What the hell happened out there?”

The other alpha groaned tiredly, “We were ambushed—caught off guard. We didn’t see them coming until Eld and Gunther shouted at us to swim away. The crystals! They—“

“I know,” Levi confirmed as he gripped his subordinate’s trembling hand, “Did you find any weakness at all?”

Oluo grimaced and wet his bloodied lips, “No, sir. Furlan and Isabel’s poison only causes a light scratch but that’s it.”

“Then let’s hope that Eren could save our asses.” Levi said with finality as whistled a high pitched tone to call for help. He didn’t have time to chat with Eld or Gunther but the captain made sure that they knew he was there to take their burden away.

“EREN!” a female voice shouted from afar that Levi felt his stomach drop. Mikasa already had her blades drawn as she crashed against a smaller titan and sliced its tail, forcing the creature to fall hard against the harsh black sand.

The alpha mermaid tried to get past the hard crystals as Eren forcibly dragged the much larger titan away from the wall with his fangs sinking deeply into the titan’s flesh. Despite the muddled consciousness, Eren noticed that the skin of the titan was colder and tasted bitter like chemicals compared to the other titan that he had put down in Shiganshina and the outer borders of Krolva. The brunet shifter gagged, which was a horrid mistake since the titan took the opportunity and swatted him against rows of barrels and steel cages that were abandoned on the ocean floor.

Levi moved with blinding speed, gripping his blade in a reverse hold and spinning rapidly to decapitate the titan. It howled angrily and bled all over the place, clouding the waters until the poor
vision of the Marian mers could no longer see through the fray. The captain made no sound as he hacked into the titan but his blades could no longer withstand the hard shell causing the metal to crack and bend into nothingness.

The raven haired alpha cursed lowly, watching as Eren howled in pain when the shifter made a wrong move and realized that he was impaled by a large fishing hook.

Mikasa swam to Eren’s side, extending her claws and untangling the thick ropes that were connected to the hook.

‘LEVI!’ a girl’s voice cried out and the captain’s cold grey eyes widened.

What the fuck was Isabel doing there!?

Soldiers began shouting in panic, sounds muddled into a singular noise as Levi watched in agonizingly slow motion how Isabel swam towards danger. Furlan kept shouting words that the captain could not understand but Isabel remained determined though her eyes spoke of a different story. The mermaid was delusional, her green orbs fogged up and her scent reeked of fever and sickness.

Fast images of his family being slaughtered in front of him made Levi freeze in deep fear. The titan behind him had already recovered fast and was looming over his smaller body. Hange shouted an order that Levi did not quite catch but a sturdy whip had already latched on to the titan.

Mikasa gritted her teeth and caught another whip thrown in her direction, swinging the weapon towards the titan and making sure its poisonous barb sank into its flesh. The titan roared irritably and dove down to swipe a meal out of Levi and his family.

Furlan threw himself against Isabel, shielding the girl from the opened fanged mouth of the titan as Levi finally turned around and saw death face to face.

The titan’s mouth stretched open, an eerie sound coming out from the back of its throat as it descended on the shocked captain and the two heavily injured betas.

For a moment, Levi saw his life flash before his eyes; a life that was filled with many regrets and missed chances.

The last time Levi felt a sense of hope was left in ruins in the darkness of his past. For so long, he’d expected to go out the same way that he lived; blood and violence, and that would be it. It’s the only thing that the future has to offer and he’d take it without a flinch if it meant he could give Furlan and Isabel a better future than his.

He was the captain, after all...

...and the captain must always go down with his ship.

‘LEVI!’ a panicked gurgled voice cried out.

Levi blinked, “Eren?”

The omega’s titan form roared in anger, glaring at Levi like it sensed the alpha’s self-sacrificing thoughts. Eren was furious and it clawed at the protective shell with potent fury streaming through his veins, turning into what looked like fiery lava.

‘If you win, you live. If you lose, you die. If you don’t fight, you can’t win!’ a phantom memory of
Eren’s voice rang insistently. It clawed at Levi’s thoughts; the sheer determination of Eren to live and fight to see another day despite being a shifter, being hated.

And in that moment, Levi realized he still had circumstances, feelings that he’d like to feel differently than he had... or even for the first time.

The raven haired mer gritted his teeth and internally reprimanded himself for being so weak. There were so many things he had yet to do, so many people he had yet to save. He had no right to rest.

He had no right to leave Eren and his family.

With the last of his strength, Levi pushed himself upwards until he reached Eren’s titan form who was struggling to get the shell to open. The captain curled his fingers painfully on the exposed flesh of the titan, pumping poison into its system and causing the skin of his forearm to blacken at the intensity of it.

Levi hissed in pain as Eren continued to drool and spit a glowing molten substance, effectively cracking and weakening the crystal shell.

The two heaved and screamed out in agony as they pulled the creature apart, completely unaware of another Titan coming their way.

Mikasa’s ebony eyes widened as the creature sped across the ocean and went directly for Eren, its toothy mouth opened to swallow the brunet whole. In a moment of panic, the mermaid released her hold on the whip and caused Hange and Moblit to fall over due to the sudden force of having to restrain the Titan single-handedly.

Mike and Nanaba frantically tried to catch the other side of the whip, causing the out of control weapon to slash through Mike’s face and Nanaba’s hands. Mikasa didn’t care for whatever happened, too intent on protecting Eren and destroying the very thing that threatened the omega.

The warm water mermaid was successful in putting the aberrant Titan down but it caused the much larger creature to topple over, effectively dragging Eren and Levi towards the ground.

Hange screamed in horror as the titan’s open mouth enclosed around Furlan and Isabel.

Erwin appeared out of nowhere, speedily making his way through the throngs of soldiers in a state of panic and fear to meet with Furlan who was gasping heavily as he dragged both Isabel and himself to safety.

“Give me your hand!” Erwin shouted as the younger beta fell, extending his trembling brusied hand.

“ERWIN, WATCH OUT!” Mike screamed as he pulled desperately at the whip that did little to hold back the falling Titan. Nanaba cried in frustration as she helped Mike but their efforts were futile.

A fast blur of shadow moved towards the beta mers that Erwin thought he was seeing things which caused him to slightly falter and slowed down his movement.

The loud deafening boom rattled the grounds of Krolva as rows of sharp Titan teeth met the ground and entombed Furlan and Isabel alive. The commander’s eyes widened, his mouth dropping into a perfect ‘o’ as he watched the two betas disappear into the creature’s mouth. Hange cried out in despair as they released their grip on the whip, swimming rapidly towards the cloud of sand that covered the fallen Titan.
“No, no, no!” Hange called out as their clawed hands scraped and dug through the sand. Erwin blinked himself awake, cursing at himself for being distracted and allowing Levi’s family to meet their ultimate end.

The squad leader was relentless and carved through the debris despite their bleeding hands and crooked nails, “Isabel! Furla—”.

“Hange, get back!” Erwin ordered frantically; Moblit was fast enough to dive in and drag the ponytailed beta away before the searing heat caused the sand to melt and gurgle, huge rows of bubbles erupting from the inside of the Titan head.

Legion watched in awe as the crystal head caved in and cracked, meeting with the fast forming glass shards which sprouted from the puddle of melting sand; an eerie noise, mixture of a roar and breaking bones made all of the mers cringe until the spitting liquid of lava drooled from the gaping hole of the Titan’s head.

A loud victorious roar startled the mers before an explosion of heat pushed them harshly across the fields. The soldiers screamed in distress as they blindly felt for their blades to plunge them into the ground as an anchor. Most of them weren’t fortunate and were thrown like limp ragdolls until their bodies hit either the corals or the black sand.

“What the shit was that!?” Hange blinked rapidly from beneath an unconscious Moblit when the blow of hot water has finally died down.

“Eren!” Mikasa called out as she swam towards the gore of what’s left of the creature. From the opening of its shell was Eren whose head was thrown back, seemingly too still to be alive. It had caused a frenzy of different emotions into the crimson tailed mermaid, making her weep as she cradled her brother and listened desperately for any sign of life.

The rest of Legion held their breath as Mikasa begged for the omega to not leave her alone, that she is sorry for everything and that she will never stand in the way of his happiness if only he’d come back to them.

As if hearing her prayers, Eren gasped a deep breath; his heart thumping heavily against his beaten chest as his sister’s face crumpled into pure relief. Fat pearlescent tears dripped down Mikasa’s alabaster cheeks as she pressed against her sibling. The brunet omega blinked as his titan form sizzled away and his face returned into its previous form. What the hell just happened?

It was only later that night, when Erwin and Hange had come inside the medic section, that Eren was informed of how he saved Levi and his family. The trio had been found underneath the cushion of titan meat, too deep into a hastily carved hole in the ground so that they’d be spared of Eren’s powers. Though, Levi had suffered burns across his arm, the two heads of Legion were just thankful the three made it out alive.

Eren cried heavily that night, relieved that everyone was saved and that his desired mate was in good hands. The brunet omega had also settled his disagreement with his sister while Armin nagged them through barely suppressed tears about their stupid stunts.

However, all good things must come with a heavy price. It seemed that some of their omegas had been killed or miscarried. A cluster of crying orphaned pups were all that was left. The pod grieved their lost loved ones; pairs of infertile betas and alphas taking in the abandoned children as the other soldiers prepared to have the dead buried. A heavy curtain of silence plagued Krolva and everyone seemed too put out and confused as to the new kind of Titan they had just faced.
Unknown to the devastated pod, a twinkling set of ebony eyes took in the gore with much amusement. The merman grinned at the result, his hand brushing through his greasy hair as he hummed a happy low tune. It seemed that for a brief moment, three descendants of the Ackerman bloodline had come together; the oldest of them bringing with him death and despair...

...and an intent to take away Levi’s future happiness.

Chapter End Notes

Heeey! (that was kinda short? maybe.)

If any of you are Supernatural fans then you'd notice a 'destiel' scene that was slipped into this chapter. I felt like it was perfect to insert for Levi's lines since he's an emotionally constipated character here and I just— I can't pass it up.

Sooo.. new tags will be appearing, new plot twists, new characters...
I didn't forget Eren's friends so you'll see them in the future (so that also means we won't be stuck in Krolva ohoho. We still have two to three different places to explore)

do свидания!
Tell Me The Truth, Love

Chapter Summary

"He wants badly. His inner being needs desperately and it’s shouting Eren’s name until Levi finally relented and admitted that fucking hell, okay? Yes, he feels deeply for Eren so goddamn much it doesn’t make a lick of sense."

Chapter Notes

Hello!

I am back once again and I just finished my final exams about a week ago. I now have the chance to update frequently (I think)

Here’s an interesting little chapter to keep you all on your toes~
Happy reading, everyone!

(Warning for a lot of use of profanities in this chapter because this is Levi’s pov and really? What else did we expect?)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

They say that near-death experiences forces people to confront the inner demons that they had buried for years. It’s what strangles people into place and makes them decide which fork of the road to pick. Most of the time it’s too late but others are fortunate enough to be awakened before they doom themselves into the wrong path.

Levi had been used to meeting death in the face. He was a veteran not only in being a soldier but also in having to face traumatic situations and making difficult decisions. So it’s no longer a surprise that nothing showed on his face while the rest of Krolva healed itself.

As for making the right choices, Levi can’t really brag about being good at it. Looking around Krolva makes the captain wonder whether or not they made the right decisions or there was some other way to have lessened the damage.

Fuck if anyone knows, really.

Most of the soldiers and non-combatant mers were occupied with rebuilding the coral walls; sticky goo from their saliva helped bring together the pieces, its natural chemical composition built to rejuvenate and force the corals to heal themselves quickly on their own. Hange was there to oversee the progress and barely spoke a word to Levi or Erwin. The damn scientist was too engrossed in the healing process and was obviously coming up with theories inside their head. Levi knew well to leave them alone; they’d be rattling their ideas in a heartbeat once they’re done anyway.
Isabel and Furlan were still unconscious in the medic section. The two betas suffered deep injuries and the omegas worked their hardest to put them back to their fins again.

Omegas.

Truly they’re works of art considering how their nurturing and caring nature drew the line between life and death for Legion. They were fierce and unwavering; not even the difficulty of giving birth deterred them from their mission to protect and heal. True, they had softer and milder demeanours than alphas and sometimes betas but in totality they were an important piece to Legion’s survival.

They are the key to success just like Eren.

The captain snorted silently as he unraveled the bandage covering his burned arm. Levi was temporarily stuck in his room while the rest of the problems got sorted out by Erwin and the rest of his most trusted advisors. The shorter alpha gave the commander a lot of shit for not giving him a job to do but Erwin stood firm in his decision. It was important that Levi be able to recover fast if another attack were to happen. Levi grumbled but relented; though he hated that he was left to his thoughts for days.

It didn’t help that his mind was plagued with Eren all the damn time.


He was fucking going insane and he barely even said a word to the kid since the breach.

It was always a flash of gorgeous turquoise eyes and the next thing is he’s seeing the brat speeding away to hide Levi and his family away from danger. Eren’s insistent voice would repeat the same muddled words over and over but Levi can’t understand. Then suddenly he feels. Every touch of the omega burns him good and it’s too much but not enough at the same time.

Suffice it to say that Levi would find himself extremely hard and panting on the bed like some hormonal teenager. This has been going on for days and the amount of curses coming out of his mouth every time did not diminish at all.

So now he had to literally sit himself the fuck down because he really needed a one-on-one with his goddamn brain before he literally pops a knot again; hopefully, not in the presence of the omega mer he’s been pining over.

God fucking damn it all.

Fuck feelings in the ass with a spear.

Levi doesn’t care anymore.

He wants badly. His inner being needs desperately and it’s shouting Eren’s name until Levi finally relented and admitted that fucking hell, okay? Yes, he feels deeply for Eren so goddamn much it doesn’t make a lick of sense and the higher ups would probably cut his balls off. But goddamn it he’s so sick and tired of looking at the brat and physically restraining himself from touching that gorgeous golden tail.

Wow, what a complete perv but any alpha would agree with him that Eren is a piece of work.
The brunet was physically attractive, no doubt. His caramel colored skin contrasted the sickly pale ones of the other omegas in Krolva; shiny golden tail with fluttering decorative fins that makes Levi momentarily stop to gape at the beauty of it when they open; firm and lean body with rapidly developing muscles as Eren trained relentlessly every single day of his life in the colder waters.

However, it’s not really his physical appearance that reeled in the elusive captain; God, no. That was way too easy. The brat just had to have the biggest heart in the whole fucking ocean; with his damn declarations to kill all the titans, to be free from fear and not be a livestock. Eren was reckless and a poor excuse of an omega in a traditional sense and that just made Levi ache more.

Eren Jaeger never bends no matter what the circumstance but he is also a softie when it comes to family. The ultimate selling point was when he caught Eren trying to comfort Isabel with his sweet tones. Of course, he’d curse just as bad as Levi but the brunet omega was always gentle when handling Isabel or even Furlan at some point.

And that’s what ended Levi.

Cause fuck him sideways (preferably with Eren but he’d be damned before he says that out loud).

‘Fun-fucking-tastic,’ Levi muttered to himself in disdain as he examined his injured arm. He fell hard and fast for a boy he just met for a little more than three months. What a princess he turned out to be. Not to mention the fact that said omega is probably already promised to someone else.

The captain sighed in defeat; emotions were never really his forte and he’d rather punch a freakin’ wall than have to deal with this crap.

A timid little knock woke the raven haired alpha from his brooding. Levi was a bit tempted to just ignore whoever it is outside but the knocking became firm and insistent. The alpha growled beneath his breath; can’t he get some peace while he sorted out his mid-life crisis?

“Come in,” Levi says instead because he’s not a complete ass and he did have duties as the captain.

Whatever grouchy mood plagued Levi’s face almost completely drained out as he watched his precious omega inch his way inside his private quarters. Eren was biting his lower lip, eyes strained to look at the floorboards like a submissive display and Levi felt like he just nutted just from that. Wow, desperate. Better write ‘cause of death: sexual tension’ in his gravestone.

“Captain, I—” Eren croaked pathetically and Levi’s inner alpha felt a great need to pull the omega into his arms and comfort him; but he didn’t because that was not proper and he’d like to have Eren make a choice when it comes to touching.

Levi blinked at him and failed to notice quickly that the boy was eyeing his burned arm with much horror and guilt. The captain cursed internally but he could not hide his injury now.

“I’m so sorry!” Eren cried out, “It’s my fault, sir. I shouldn’t have lost control like that. I injured a lot of merpeople and I even burned your arm just for a single fucking titan. I’m so sorry! I didn’t know— I just—“

“Eren, shut up.” Levi barked at him and the brunet’s lower lip wobbled terribly as he pressed his lips into a thin line. The captain instantly knew that the boy thought he was being reprimanded; not that he’d blame him cause Levi just raised his voice.
Shit, he was so bad at this. Time to do damage control.

Levi breathed in deeply and extended his arm. It was an invitation and Eren was given a free reign whether he’d take it or not. It took a few moments of adorable confusion before the omega registered the older alpha’s soothing scent and slightly warm gaze. The brunet was unsure; not wanting to read the gentle gesture the wrong way.

“Are you going to gape like a fish the whole day or are you coming here? I’m old, Eren. I don’t have all of eternity.”

It was the only prompt the brunet needed before he rushed in and pressed himself against the captain. Levi curled his injured arm protectively against Eren while the boy had his cry over how stupid and incapable he was. It wouldn’t take a genius to realize that the boy was probably devastated by the amount of damage suffered by Legion; that he’d taken the blame because he was supposed to be a tool to keep everyone safe. The omega reeked of distress and guilt which made Levi’s inner alpha extremely unhappy and out for blood. The crying continued for a while until the soft movements of Levi’s fingers carding through Eren’s unruly brown hair lulled the omega into quiet sniffles. Eren was still kneeling on the floor so Levi got a good view of the golden tail which was thankfully as uninjured as the rest of Eren’s body.

Good.

Levi didn’t know what he’d do if he had to see Eren heavily bruised or wounded.

Tiny sparkling black scales caught the captain’s attention but he dismissed it momentarily; too concerned about Eren’s stability than some discoloration.

“Are you done?” Levi smirked, “You really look like a brat now. All snot and shit.”

Eren blinked momentarily before barking out a beautiful broken laugh. Levi felt his heart explode with pride at the mere fact that he made the omega happy despite his obvious distress. Add in the fact that Eren ran to him for comfort instead of his intended mate; Levi’s alpha was definitely feeling victorious.

“Ugh, I’m all gross now,” Eren laughed weakly as he scrubbed the crusting pearlescent tears, “Oh, shit! Levi, your arm—“

The captain rolled his eyes and pushed the omega away before he could fret unnecessarily, “Yeah, yeah. Oh woe is me. Stop squirming you disgusting shit. You’ve got fluids all over your face.”

Eren wiggled a bit until he felt Levi’s strong hands cupping his face. The alpha inspected the younger omega with a scrutinizing gaze which caused Eren’s poor little heart to beat rapidly.

“Disgusting,” Levi muttered with no malice, just a quirk of the corner of his lips which made Eren unprepared for the warm tongue that licked his cheeks clean.

The omega felt like he was punched in the gut with the amount of nerves causing him to internally shut down but he desperately savored every swipe of the alpha’s tongue against his skin. Eren unconsciously closed his eyes as his hands gripped unto Levi to anchor himself lest he gets swept away by the overwhelming heat that was setting his body on fire.

Eren mewled and whimpered as Levi thoroughly cleaned him of the tears that were crusting on his
tan skin. He knew it was normal in Marian culture to groom close friends or family but Levi’s actions triggered anything but familial feelings. The alpha was definitely not cleaning Eren as a friend or a subordinate and the brunet felt a little lightheaded at the mixture of his scent and Levi’s.

Levi growled appreciatively as Eren desperately tried to remain still but their tails had minds of their own as they brushed and tangled with each other; seemingly triggered by their intimate feelings.

Fuck if Eren had an intended. Levi would challenge any alpha who dares to claim the boy and separate him from his Eren. The brunet shifter was his and he’d let the world know.

The captain was too damn tired of hiding. No amount of self-hatred could ever stop him now that Eren was keening prettily under his ministrations.

Eren was babbling quietly in his native tongue as Levi changed his tactics and started aggressively licking Eren to make sure his scent was all over the brunet. Normally, Levi would abhor such base and animalistic thinking but he was too lost in his own desires to stop and think about the consequences. When the alpha was satisfied with his work, he momentarily stopped and watched Eren’s fluttering eyelashes. The next thing he wants to do requires Eren’s consent and he’d be damned if crosses the line just because his brain is fucking exploding with lust. Marking Eren was one thing, devouring him completely was another.

“Eren,” Levi said firmly but it took a while before the omega had some amount of coherence to understand that he’s being spoken to.

“Open your eyes,” the captain crooned and Eren followed obediently; turquoise meeting metal grey, pupils blown wide as their instinct to mate and breed started to kick in. “You tell me when to stop, understand?”

The brunet didn’t comprehend at first until Levi was leaning in, his breath and the brush of thin lips making Eren’s own quiver in anticipation.

‘Tell me if I can be more than this’ were the unsaid words but Eren clearly saw it in his captain’s eyes.

Fuck, yes. Eren wanted Levi to be more. He wanted the alpha to be his mate, his other half. Since the very beginning he’d been too stupid to realize that his hero worship of the Legion mer was beyond pure adoration for his valiant work; no, Eren was already feeling the pull of his mate a long time ago.

There were fanciful stories, legends of soulmates and intendeds made for each other since before their conception and Eren thought that every single one of those who believed in that shit were fucking crazy but now he thinks he might be the wrong one. Everything felt right with Levi, the world made sense even for just a bit. The feeling was never like being completed, no. It was a feeling that somebody is finally journeying beside you and it’s the most fulfilling thing ever.

So Eren simply smiled. He closed his eyes and tilted his head for Levi to have better access and the alpha immediately crooned in delight. A swipe of tongue cleaned the crusted tears on the boy’s lips and Eren felt himself moan and press closer, desperate for more of what his alpha could offer. The grooming continued until Eren was a mess and his grip on Levi’s forearms began to sting from the pressure.
Levi growled into Eren’s mouth and the boy opened up prettily, allowing for the prodding tongue to enter his hot mouth. Shit, Eren never kissed anyone before and he didn’t know if he was sloppy but Levi immediately shut down his thoughts with a tiny suck on his bottom lip.

“Nnngh, Levi. Please—” Eren begged. And Eren never begs... but it felt just right. It was pure submission not in a degrading way but an offering that they could do so much more; so Levi did.

They kissed passionately once they tested the waters and Levi was very surprised when the omega almost manhandled him; bratty little shit was too greedy and wanted to drown into everything that was Levi.

Time stood still until both of them were too breathless and burning with desire that they decided to part, though unwillingly. The two were completely wrecked with their messy hair and spit-slick lips but Levi didn’t care because finally, finally, he has Eren with him.

The brunet smiled in a goofy way that made Levi snort in amusement, “So you like me?”

“I had my tongue in your throat, Eren. What do you think?” Levi replied in a deadpan tone that sent Eren into a blushing mess, squirming away from the alpha who was too blunt for his own good.

“Captain!” Eren squawked indignantly.

“Levi.”

“What?”

The captain genuinely smiled for the first time in his long years, “It’s just Levi now, Eren. At least when it’s just the two of us together.”

“Okay, Levi.” Eren repeated with a huge grin, unable to contain the immense joy in his heart.

The captain clicked his tongue in an attempt to distract himself from the cuteness. He felt like his heart was going to give out if Eren kept doing stupid shit like making his stomach feel like there’s freakin’ eels inside. Gross. But he can’t really describe anything in a romantic way so sue him.

For a moment, the two were content and blissed out until a flying fist came out of nowhere and cracked against Eren’s skull.

“OW! WHAT THE—“ Eren cried out in pain as he held the sore spot on the top of his head, Levi’s fist still hovering over it like a threat that he’ll try again.

“That’s for being an idiot and taking all the fucking blame to yourself,” Levi explained with an unimpressed tone, “make better life choices, Jaeger.”

Eren looked at the captain incredulously like the older alpha grew two heads, “I don’t understand!”

The captain rolled his eyes, “Tell me, brat. Was it possible for you to see the future outcome? Did you know what was going to happen to almost half the population when the shitstain attacked?”

“No,” Eren answered gloomily like a pup being lectured.

“Well, then. Understand that we make either good choices or shitty ones but that doesn’t mean it’s
completely our fault. You were given a chance to decide and you tried your best to answer the problem,” Levi explained like a superior would but his voice eventually faded into gentleness, “All you could do now is make the choice that you will least regret, Eren. If it doesn’t come to that then you have to move on or the world will eat you alive.”

The brunet omega looked at the captain in awe, seeing the raven haired alpha in a different light.

“And I won’t allow you to keel over so easily,” Levi smirked and patted the boy’s cheek, “I have so many things I plan on doing to you so don’t you think you could just get away from me like that.”

Eren felt his heart stutter into a stop at the bold declaration, his own arousal spiking so fast that he felt himself slick from the alpha’s words. The omega’s reaction did not escape Levi’s keen nose, causing the alpha to smirk and lick his lips at the delicious scent of Eren’s desperate need to be mounted.

“I, uh—“ Eren stammered, trying to think of an explanation as to why his chosen intended was suddenly so forward when the alpha had been giving him mixed signals since day one. Not that Eren was complaining, Levi asserting his dominance is definitely a turn on for him.

Levi bit his lip, thoroughly amused by the dazed omega trying to figure out what’s happening but he still had some merciful soul in him, so he ruffled the brunet’s messy locks and sent him away to continue with whatever work Erwin tasked him to do for the day. Eren hesitantly eyed the door and the captain until he gathered enough strength to leave the alpha with a stolen quick kiss on the cheek.

“Cheeky brat has the nerve,” Levi snorted as he resumed inspecting his burned arm which now had additional scratch marks from Eren’s earlier desperation. Now, that’s a mark that the captain would willingly parade around.

Hours went by and Levi was not ashamed to admit he spent most of it ogling at Eren while the younger omega used his power to carry boulders and other heavy debris off of Krolva’s open pathways. The added bonus would be the toxic glare that the gloomy brat, Mikasa, always gave off when the mermaid would pass by the captain’s window. No doubt she already received the older alpha’s challenge. It was just a matter of waiting time.

When darkness approached, Levi had enough of his damn room and proceeded to swim away and find Erwin to punch him into giving him something to do. The shorter alpha sniffed out the commander who seemed to be everywhere until the strong mingling scents of different officers tickled his nose and led him straight to one of Erwin’s protected secret rooms/office.

“I’m telling you! It was so hilarious——“ Hange’s distinct high-pitched bitching could be heard through the thick wooden walls. Levi rolled his eyes and unceremoniously banged the door opened with barely concealed disinterest.

“Levi!” The mers in the office exclaimed simultaneously that it made the shorter alpha snort.

The captain merely lifted a brow, “You’re all too damn loud. What’s the point of making this secluded?”
Erwin coughed behind his hand as Hange all but threw their whole body weight against Levi who was slightly caught off-guard, “Aww! Levi, my little shrimp! How’s our precious bottom-dweller doing?”

The shorter alpha growled as his cheek pressed painfully against Hange’s own; the damn beta was cooing like there’s no tomorrow and Levi felt a desire to commit murder right then and there. Moblit, Mike and Erwin chuckled at the scene until Moblit had been merciful enough to coax Hange away before any sort of crime was committed in such a cramped space.

“It’s nice to see you have your strength back, Levi,” Erwin smiled professionally as he sat down on a slightly battered couch, “but I specifically asked you to have the day off and rest in your room.”

“Yeah, well, I’m rotting my brain into mush doing nothing so I’ll annoy you to no end until you give me something to do,” Levi retorted as he sat opposite of the commander and lazily draped his uninjured arm over the couch.

“So stubborn,” Erwin complained with a tight furrow of his brows, “Just like Eren.”

Hange cackled loudly and pressed against Levi, effectively getting their hands inside his mouth as the squad leader scented him.

“What the actual fuck!?” Levi screeched but Hange remained undeterred.

“Oh my god—‘ the beta grinned triumphantly that Levi instantly knew where this shit was going, “You really scent marked Eren—“

Hange went flying across the office and half of their body broke through the creaking wood, effectively leaving their tail end on display like some tacky decoration beaten into the wall. Erwin made a disapproving sound while Moblit’s face comically morphed into pure horror and worry.

“Squad leader!” Moblit cried out in distress but the other beta simply mouthed off from the other side of the room, babbling about territorial alphas and how Eren won’t stay a virgin for long.

“You always did have questionable tastes in decoration, Levi.” Erwin sighed as he worried the bridge of his nose with deft fingers.

Levi was fuming with irritation and embarrassment to properly give an answer so Mike simply clapped him on the back with a quick ‘congratulations, captain!’ and assisted the other beta mer who was trying to extract Hange from the mess. It didn’t look like the squad leader was too bothered since they wriggled their rump in a mock attempt to make Moblit laugh.

The captain sniffed irritably and resumed his former position on the couch, “It’s not my fault the freak looks like a shit decoration. They’re your problem now.”

Erwin shook his head and straightened his posture, “Well, enough of Hange’s antics. Since you wanted something to do, we might as well include you in the discussion. We’re all going to have a major headache soon with the vulnerability of Krolva and the incoming mating season.”

A chord struck Levi wide awake as he let the words of the blond sink in.

*Mating season.*
It’s the one time of the year where everyone would be slaves to their instinct to mate and breed. All unmated alphas would start scent marking possible partners and with the decrease in the numbers of omegas, there would be fights and challenges everywhere. Not to mention that the attack on Krolva left their territory open and there won’t be any nests that could properly house the mating couples.

Eren.

Would Eren be safe? Is he going to choose to mate with his intended?

A deep grumbling voice shook Levi from his inner worry; warm and solid hands placed on his shoulders that most definitely belonged to one Erwin Smith. The taller blond pumped calming pheromones which helped Levi relax a bit. Shit, was this the reason why he lost his resolve and practically half-claimed Eren as his own? Was his instinct to find a suitable mate making him make regrettable decisions? He would never do that to Eren!

“Levi, I can smell you thinking bothersome thoughts. Stop that.” Erwin reprimanded with a firm tone and Levi was left with no choice but to obey. Erwin was still the top alpha and Levi landed only second to him.

“Good, I need your head cleared.” The commander smiled and gripped Levi’s shoulders reassuringly.

With Levi thoroughly calmed, the closest senior officers of Krolva converged again and discussed their plans for the upcoming mating season. The alphas expressed extreme worry since their omega count had dropped significantly and most of them were either widows or teens experiencing their first heat sync. Betas wouldn’t pose much of a problem since they are the most level-headed during the fiasco but they still need the same amount of protection at such a vulnerable state.

Erwin suggested they make new burrows or exploit the newfound miles of land to turn them into temporary nests. Mike agreed but with the fast approach of the season, there wouldn’t be enough time to properly secure the area. Not to mention the fact that there’s a new type of Titan that’s lurking around, the pod is surely risking itself if they decided to make dwelling places on foreign land.

The topic eventually led to the teams who’ll be keeping watch during mating season. This certainly made them slightly uncomfortable since fighting off instincts would be painful and sometimes bordering maddening. Levi and Erwin would usually lead a team of unmated or barren omegas, alphas, and betas. It was usually easier if a deep sea mer had no desire to mate or wasn’t bonded during their first two years of cycles.

Levi was about to volunteer when Hange banged their hand down against the coffee table and glared at the captain through their heavily cracked goggles.

“No, not this time short stuff,” Hange gritted out, “You’re participating in the mating season whether you like it or not.”

“What are you talking about, shit specs? I always forego the damn thing.” Levi growled challengingly.

The squad leader rolled their eyes in annoyance, “Yeah and that absolutely turned out great, didn’t it? Your rut pains are getting worse and you know it.”
The raven haired mer felt cornered, his sharp nails digging into the cushion of the tattered couch as his tail flicked agitatedly. He really hated talking about his predicament especially out in the open like this, “You really need to bring that up in a room full of mers?”

Hange snorted and scooted closer until their entire body was draped across the table, “Come on, Levi. More than anything, we’re not just your allies; we’re your family. So it doesn’t matter even if you tell us how Eren gave you the most amazing blowjob of your life!”

“Please don’t,” Erwin sighed pleadingly while Mike made dying noises at the back his throat.

Hange laughed, dispersing the tense and serious mood they just put on, “Well, the point is, we’re family so it’s only natural for us to worry about you. And Eren, of course! He’s practically going to be family soon, right Erwin?”

The shorter alpha looked at Erwin questioningly who only answered with a mysterious smile, “It would be good for all of us to officially welcome Eren into the pod. Legion would be less wary of the boy and cooperation could be improved by ten folds. Also, didn’t he just save you and your family? That alone already merits an award, plus the fact that it would go well with the obligatory family speech you hated so much.”

The rest of the officers grinned at the last part. Levi always bitched about disgusting family speeches meant to encourage mating and breeding but now it seemed that he’ll take part in the tradition that he detested the most.

“Ha ha, very funny,” Levi grumbled but a light warmth in his chest told him he was just as excited as any unmated alpha would be.

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Eren was...for the lack of better term, high as a jellyfish the entire day.

Despite Armin’s constant disappearing act to join some of the elders in stabilizing their defense and offense and Mikasa’s worried and grumpy stares, Eren’s mood simply could not be pulled down.

Mikasa was no idiot, of course. Something very intimate happened between the older alpha and her brother. Protective instincts dictate that she find the bastard and face him head-on with the clear challenge he practically pasted all over Eren’s face. But the crimson tailed mermaid knew that such was not the right path.

It took her some quiet brooding and a painfully awkward moment with Mike and Nanaba for her to realize that she could no longer act purely for the sake of Eren. Her recent dance with death was like a slap to her face, especially now that she saw how much damage was caused by her negligence. As much as it pained her to admit, sacrificing what little these merpeople had for the sake of her selfishness did not sit well with Mikasa.

“’kasa, you okay?” Eren murmured between bites of leftover fish. They’ve been sent out to rest and recuperate while the rest of the soldiers took over their unfinished tasks.

“M’fine, Eren. I was just thinking,” Mikasa confessed, her tongue heavy in her mouth, “Do you think my apology was enough?”
The brunet omega smiled warmly as he felt his heart soar for his sister. Mikasa could certainly be overbearing to a fault but that did not mean she was immune from the consequences of guilt. It was about time she realized that Eren shouldn’t be her entire world.

“Don’t beat yourself up over it, ‘kay?” Eren grinned, “You panicked and it caused a lot of shit but that’s okay as long as you know that you could have done better.”

Mikasa returned the boy’s smile, “Who are you and what have you done to our immature Eren?”

“Hey!” Eren protested indignantly, “I was trying to be nice!”

“Exactly,” Mikasa smirked and was triumphant at pissing Eren off over something so little. The alpha mermaid allowed her brother to playfully pound his fists against her until she trapped the brunet’s face between her calloused hands.

“I also meant it when I apologized for lying to you about being part of the military,” Mikasa frowned earnestly, “I just didn’t know how to tell you.”

“Geez, Mikasa,” Eren complained with a low whine, “How many times are you going to apologize? It’s getting repetitive.”

The alpha smiled and patted the omega’s tan cheeks, “Because I want to straighten out everything before Armin and I go back to Shiganshina. That will be very soon even if we don’t like it.”

Eren visibly sagged at the news. He knew that his family would be quickly sent back to their home reef. It was only a matter of time before the elders of Shiganshina get any funny ideas. Add in the fact that Carla is permanently disabled, Eren did not have the heart to deprive her of all the help she could get.

“I have to go,” Mikasa announced and let go of her brother, “Don’t follow me or else I’ll know.”

The omega pouted and flicked his tail, showing off his annoyance, “Yeah, yeah. Go be mysterious somewhere else, grumpy. Just get your tail back by dinnertime or Levi would hunt you down.”

“So it’s just Levi now, huh?” Mikasa teased which sent Eren swimming away in embarrassment.

Levi remained steadily quiet as he exited the hidden office where all the senior officers had gathered earlier. Most of them had left an hour ago, leaving only Erwin, Mike and Levi within the closed quarters. The captain had been confused at first, seemingly unnerved by the amount of worry and strain in Erwin’s voice when the taller alpha asked Levi to stay.

“Levi, please stay. There’s a possibility that someone was behind the attack and we’d like your input regarding the matter,” is what Erwin had said and it made Levi’s heart freeze steadily.

The sound of the commander’s voice was filled with regret and even Mike looked like he wanted nothing to do with whatever they were about to tell him.

The two mers had approached Levi with caution. Mike found it difficult to even explain to Levi what he suspected but he had no other choice.
“Levi, the outer reef had a distinct smell,” Mike started as he licked his lips as a telltale sign that he’s slightly nervous, “At first I thought it was you or maybe that Mikasa girl since the two of you share similar scents but— Levi, it smelled like an older alpha. Shit, it smelled like death.”

The raven haired captain was sucked back in present time as the all too familiar fear crept under his chest and threatened to crush his lungs. He had thought the bastard was dead or still doing dirty work just for the fun of it. But no, the elder Ackerman just had to ruin his life all over again.

There’s no mistaking it. If whatever Mike sniffed out of the outer reef was anything close to what he described, then there’s no doubt that Kenny Ackerman had been around. That just made legion’s situation all the more dangerous. Kenny did not smell like death for no reason at all; no, it’s because the man brought death wherever he goes.

A disturbing chill ran down Levi’s spine as he remembered how Kenny loved to make pretty little things beg. At first it had just been a hit job but then the older Ackerman grew a fetish for the screaming and the begging. The prettier they were; the more pleased Kenny would be.

And what else could have caught Kenny’s attention at this point?

‘No!’ Levi screamed in his head, refusing to acknowledge the terrifying conclusion it presented to him.

A territorial growl vibrated from his throat before he could stop himself. Another alpha was around and Levi was too tense to actually move away from a potential fight. His rut is syncing with the incoming mating season and it’s making him more aggressive than he usually is. God help whoever alpha is dumb enough to come near him at this point.

“Captain Levi,” Mikasa’s steady voice declared as she inched closer, uncaring of the stench of aggressiveness leaking from Levi’s scent glands.

“I’m not in the mood for your shit, kid,” Levi growled as he tried to control his temper, “Move along.”

“You didn’t seem to have any problem with personal space when you licked Eren clean,” Mikasa challenged lightly which jolted Levi awake.

That’s right, he had marked the kid like they were going into pre-mating.

“Is that why you’re here?” Levi sighed as he flicked his tail.

Mikasa clenched her fists tightly, ducking her head into the safety of her red scarf. For a moment the mermaid looked more like an undecided lost kid than an aggressive alpha who’s ready to tear apart anyone who even looks at Eren. Levi found a bit of strength in him to feel sorry for the female brat but he really couldn’t be bothered by this drama the whole day.

“I have always been staying at Eren’s side since we were children, without me he could get himself killed or hurt in no time. Please keep him safe while he’s under your care.”

Levi blinked as he pressed his lips into a thin line, “It’s my job to protect that brat, but is he really that weak that you need to remind me?”
Mikasa made a surprised sound as the captain approached her; heavy grey eyes seemingly bored but was quivering into slits.

“As far as I know, I’m also tasked to kill him the moment he loses control. That kind of power does not need protecting, don’t it?”

“And yet you scent marked him!”

“That doesn’t mean he’s completely under me,” Levi calmly stated in a deadpan tone, “Your reef must be so goddamn backwards. It’s pitiful. We don’t treat omegas like you do.”

“How dare you accuse me of that,” Mikasa growled, slowly losing her patience. This wasn’t what she wanted to do but the tiny plankton was testing her.

“If you really cared for Eren like you said, if you worry for him so much, then you’d be more concerned about his development than his inability to get his shit together. The kid just saved my family’s life and you act like that doesn’t count for some actual fucking merit. Get over yourself.”

Mikasa bit her lip, ashamed that the shorter alpha had a point.

“Damn it, this was not my purpose,” Mikasa muttered bitterly.

“Yeah, then what is it? Looking for a fight?”

“No,” Mikasa glared the captain, “I was going to give you a family blessing, pipsqueak!”

Levi raised a thin brow as he crossed his arms, “Hoh?”

Was this guy for real? Mikasa gritted her teeth as the swelling need of wanting to punch the cocky captain in the face grew inside her head. She was already letting go of perhaps the most precious mer in the entire ocean and yet the short bastard had the nerve to amplify his attitude twice his height.

“You know, those who’d court warm water omegas usually aren’t complete assholes to their intended’s family members,” Mikasa snarled nastily, “I have no idea what Eren saw in you. You’ve already tarnished your past with being a murderer and a thief and you still have the nerve to shame Eren with that attitude. He deserves better than you!”

The captain visibly huffed as his muscled arm reached towards the mermaid, firm and rough fingers closing in on her neck to rid her of the opportunity to breathe, “And intendeds like you are supposed to be what’s perfect for him? Give me a break, kid. You’re still a long way from earning a place in this goddamn ocean.”

“I-Intende—?” Mikasa choked back, wriggling and clawing at brutal grip on her throat.

“You know nothing of my past,” Levi growled angrily as his fangs lengthened, “I am well aware of my lapses, little girl. But I also know that both of us aren’t worth his attention. You’re no better than I am if you treat him like some delicate pup. You think I’m some scum from the bottom of the ocean? Maybe you’re fucking right but at least I have the will to better myself so I could be worth Eren’s affections.”

Mikasa gaped openly as tears prickled her eyesight. The choking stench of anger, pain, and guilt
blocked her nose and gills; a telling sign of the older alpha’s inner turmoil that made Mikasa think twice about Levi’s true personality.

“You may be his first intended,” Levi spat venomously, “but I’ll make sure I’ll be his last.”

With those last words, the captain released the crimson tailed alpha who was shaking and gasping for breath. It took a few seconds before Mikasa regained enough coherence to call out to the alpha who was slowly swimming away.

“I—I’m not his intended!” Mikasa shouted as she nursed her bruising throat.

The declaration made Levi stop, his body stiffening like a rod at the meaning behind the other alpha’s words.

“I know my place in Eren’s heart,” Mikasa started, “Maybe I once had that delusion but no more. I am Mikasa Ackerman; the adopted daughter of Grisha and Carla Jaeger.”

Levi glanced at the girl behind him, a slight ‘o’ forming on his mouth.

“Eren Jaeger’s adopted sister.” Mikasa finished finally and Levi felt like he was punched in the gut.

Sister? Mikasa was Eren’s sister and never his intended.

Levi’s inner alpha growled victoriously, teeming with pride and happiness that his omega was free to be truly his and that there’s no other competition to worry about. But at the same time a gnawing guilt clawed through the captain’s insides, telling him how stupid he was to treat Eren’s own family like he did. Provoked or not, an older alpha like him should have known better.

“I think I’m going to have some kind of aneurysm here,” Levi complained as he pinched the bridge of his nose.

The female brat had the nerve to smirk as she went upright, clinging to the fabric of her scarf like a lifeline, “You honestly thought I was intended for him? I am honoured.”

Levi rolled his eyes in annoyance, “Yeah, well, with how you just rubbed your scent glands against his on the first day; you can’t really blame anyone here who thought you two were meant to bond.”

Mikasa blinked slowly, “Oh? But that’s normal for us as family members. It’s a common practice in the warmer parts of the ocean.”

Gods, cultural differences could be so fucking stupid without proper communication. Levi hated being so socially awkward but being completely dumb about warm water culture is causing a lot of trouble for him that’s completely unnecessary.

“We really started on the wrong fin, kid.”

“Obviously.” Mikasa smiled with a bit of bitterness though she held back gracefully, “Though, I suppose my work here is done. I’m not taking back my blessing because Eren would surely kill me but my threat still stands. Hurt him and I will hurt you until you forget your name.”

Levi shook his head, “You’ve got guts for an alpha who choked on her tongue but yeah. You have my word.”
Mikasa nodded, a silent sign for her departure. With the fast movement of her fins, the crimson tailed alpha was gone in a flurry of bubbles. The ocean was quiet once again and Levi was left alone with his thoughts.

Another Ackerman, huh? He honestly can’t blame the kid for falling for Eren despite the circumstances. The teal eyed omega had a way with unraveling cold hearts that made Levi weak. Unfortunately, that party trick seems to be working even on a highly dangerous Ackerman such as Kenny.

A dark aura shrouded Levi as he recalled the bastard’s greasy face. So much is piling up and the captain can’t seem to keep up with all the demands each problem seems to require of him. He was only one merman and he can’t tear himself apart just to address everything.

With a heavy sigh, Levi felt himself fall until he was sitting on a fairly huge rock. At least Eren is free from any alpha. That sort of assurance was enough to lighten Levi’s heavy heart.

Tomorrow could worry about his problems regarding Isabel, Furlan, Krolva, and the upcoming mating season...

...tomorrow will have to share the burden of worrying about Kenny Ackerman as well.

Chapter End Notes

I used canon dialogues at the end! I think it's from the game. I just saw a preview of it so I took some lines out since it fits perfectly!

Comments, kudos, and bookmarks are part of this author's daily diet~
Feed me!

Thanks for reading!
(will edit this later on if there are any errors)
Chapter Summary

Ceremonial war paint and a key.

Chapter Notes

This whole chapter just really came out of nowhere but it's just so fun to write because I get to explore a lot of different things and it's just so fun to incorporate different little a/b/o ideas into one setting.

The next few days went past Eren like a huge blur.

Most of the senior officers were too busy with rebuilding the damaged portions of the walls and coming up with better preventive measures that Eren barely caught a glimpse of his alpha anymore.

Eren blushed at the thought but that’s what they were, right? Clearly, Levi was also attracted to Eren judging by the rather enthusiastic way he plunged his tongue into Eren’s awaiting mouth. It sounds just about right to call the captain his alpha.

“Eren! Stop daydreaming and get your butt in here!” Armin chided from the other side of the reef, a mischievous smirk marking his face.

The golden tailed omega let out an embarrassed squeak before he torpedoed straight to where Armin was helping the other omegas and betas transfer their pups and belongings. It had really been a stressful string of days but Eren couldn’t be too bothered, his happiness masked the overwhelming fatigue that threatened to make his limbs go weak.

“You got a new armlet?” Eren asked conversationally as he heaved two wriggling pups into his arms, the occasional playful nip sent the omega biting back a chuckle.

“Uh, yeah” Armin answered weakly.

Eren snorted out bubbles which caused the pups to explode into gummy laughters, “Are you gonna elaborate on that or do I have to threaten you with teething Legion pups?”

“Hey!” Armin complained as his childhood friend brandished the pups like some weapons, “Stop that, Eren! You’re going to drop them.”

The brunet omega pursed his lips and arched a brow, a clear statement that Eren refused to repeat himself. Armin sighed as he scrunched his button nose, a faint red tint spreading across his face like his tiny freckles, “I-uh, I’m being courted to, okay?”

“What!” Eren shrieked.
“Shh!” Armin pleaded as he looked around and was thankful to find that the omega mothers were still back in their old homes. Honestly, Eren was too loud for his own good and it was never a good idea to tell him a secret out in open waters.

“What the fu— flutter fin, Armin!” Eren gritted out, refusing to curse in front of the pups lest he gets his tongue scrubbed by kelp. Again. The pups mere suckled on their thumbs as Eren continued his rampage, “When has this been going on? Why haven’t I seen you flirting around!?”

“Because you’re totally over the moon for Captain Levi Ackerman that you failed to be aware of your surroundings?” Armin unhelpfully answered which earned him an angry glare from the other omega. The blond laughed softly at Eren’s expression. It was not too far away from what the brunet used to look like when he was barely out of his mother’s nest.

“Don’t look at me like that, Eren. I was honestly surprised myself but it turns out Legion’s way faster than us when it comes to courting traditions.”

Eren frowned deeply, allowing his fins to propel him towards the shared nest that wasn’t too far away from the sunken ships. Faster in courting traditions? That didn’t seem like the case between him and Levi since the alpha haven’t even expressly indicated his intention to court the omega. That was usually the tradition in the upper waters. Eren didn’t know if making out counted as professing one’s intention to court. Marians would pick lovely gems and stones then intricately weave them into courting gifts like Armin was sporting. Sometimes there’s an occasional alpha who wasn’t skilled enough so they’d simply bring the biggest and meatiest fish they could find for two weeks straight.

“Eren, are you okay?” Armin asked when the long sullen silence began to eat at his nerves.

“When do you think Levi will ask to court me?” Eren asked worriedly as he bit his plump bottom lip. It took a few seconds for the question to register before Armin exploded into a deep laughter, sending the pups giggling and imitating the older blond omega.

“That was a legitimate question, asshole!” Eren growled, no longer caring he’s cursing in front of pups again.

“Sorry, sorry!” Armin apologized as he clutched at his aching belly, “I just didn’t think you’d reach this level of oblivious, Eren!”

The brunet huffed noisily through his gills and nose before he went inside the deep cave and deposited the still laughing pups. Of course, even the tiny little mers would laugh at Eren’s predicament. He felt like such a ridiculous moron right now for even asking.

“Eren, wait! I was just kidding,” Armin called out from outside, “I still have to educate you about your alpha’s courting and mating practices.”

“Fuck off,” Eren replied moodily, sinking into the black cushion of sand just near the pup’s bedding.

The blond omega smiled, swishing his baby blue tail from side to side as an indication that he meant no harm in the ribbing. Eren remained silent as he crossed his arms and leaned into the rough walls of the cave.

“You’ve been moody lately,” Armin stated as a matter of fact as he sat next to his agitated friend. The brunet omega held a sour scent of displeasure but it barely masked the heightened sickly sweet stench that Eren was giving. That’s certainly not a good sign.
“M’sorry,” Eren garbled weakly, “I don’t know what’s been going on with me lately and I just feel like everything’s too intense.”

Armin extended his arm and was pleased that Eren immediately pressed himself against the other omega. The two cuddled in an attempt to appease Eren’s ever growing foul mood. It wasn’t like Eren had always been the level-headed one but the boy certainly isn’t extremely emotional to the point that every little thing bothers him. Armin feared that his nagging suspicion might be correct and that would cause a lot of problem especially since he and Mikasa would be leaving after tomorrow.

The omegas eventually were lulled into peace as the sweet smacking sounds of the pups’ lips broke down their walls and forced them to take a nice nap. The water was still too cold for Armin, despite the helpful herb of Hange, so the added radiating heat of Eren certainly didn’t help keep the blond omega stay awake.

Only the irritable fussing of one of the pups managed to wake the two, immediately driving the omegas into protective mother mode and cooing at the upset pup despite having a foggy consciousness. Armin scooped up the little one and passed him to Eren who sang sweetly and let the pup latch itself unto the brunet omega.

Eren once again found himself leaning into Armin who had his own little girl to entertain, “Are you ever going to tell me who’s courting you?”

Armin laughed, “Where’s the fun in— “

“Oh my gods,” Eren gasped and Armin was mortified that his friend had been secretly scenting him the whole time, “Holy mother of— You’re totally fucking Erwin, aren’t you!”

“Eren!” Armin cried out.

Levi finally found some spare time for himself after what felt like hours of putting mer soldiers into their places. Erwin haven’t been kidding when he said he’d scrub the boredom out of Levi in the most efficient way. The blue tailed bastard will surely pay for the excessive work Levi had to do.

The captain just wanted to be productive not slave over the goddamn walls.

With an irritated huff, Levi escaped his workplace and found himself the most delectable omega within the walls of Krolva.

Eren had his back turned but the captain could clearly see that the boy was laughing at his blond friend. Said blond friend had blotchy red cheeks and was reprimanding Eren about something. Levi couldn’t give a damn as he swam his way to Eren.

“Erwin really has some sort of favoritism if he isn’t overworking you two,” Levi drawled with a deep, velvety voice that sent the brunet omega’s skin crawling with desire.

Eren had the decency to blush as he turned around and saluted the captian. Armin quirked a tiny smile and lowered his head as a sign of acknowledgement.

“We’ve just finished dropping off the pups, sir,” Armin replied professionally when Eren looked a bit tongue tied. Gods his childhood friend was definitely whipped and he didn’t even know it.

“Good,” Levi answered back, his hooded gaze landing on Eren’s, “The healers told me earlier that
Isabel and Furlan are awake now. Did you visit them already?"

“Really?” Eren brightened ten folds that Levi felt himself go temporarily blind.

“Yeah, kid. Isabel’s going nuts over wanting to see you so you better scram before she throws a bitch fit.”

The brunet omega grinned, momentarily forgetting himself as he pressed himself against Levi and chittered happily about the betas’ recovery. The alpha blinked and Armin feared that Captain Levi would discipline Eren but he did no such thing. Instead, Armin watched as Levi’s cold mask drop into a warm smile, his clawed hand carded Eren’s chocolate brown hair while the other pressed possessively on the omega’s supple hip.

It took a few moments before Eren reluctantly released the shorter male alpha. The captain snorted at the dazed expression of the young omega and ordered the brunet to get his ass to the medical section already. With a firm nod Eren swam away and called out to Armin to follow him.

The blond omega was about to chase after his speeding friend when he was stopped by an icy grip.

“Armin Arlert, correct?”

“Yes, sir.”

“I need to speak with you later. It’s about Eren.”

Armin’s mouth formed a worried little ‘o’ but the alpha shook his head and assured the omega that his friend was not in any sort of trouble.

“I know nothing about Marians and I’m not about to make an ass of myself,” was all Levi had to say before he abruptly left a slightly amused Armin. Those two were really perfect for each other; emotional constipation and everything that goes along with it.

“Hey, Armin! Hurry up!”

“Oh! Wait for me, Eren!”

The medical section of Krolva could be found near the huge mouth of the cave that served as an entrance to the pod’s territory. There was barely any sort of light coming through but the toothy curved walls of the enclosure served as better protection to those who were injured and ailing. Most of the omegas were too busy with their work that they barely paid notice to the titan shifter that slipped through.

Armin was tailing Eren as they searched for the betas named Isabel and Furlan. The curious omega’s researcher side cheered in delight as he eyed some of the bioluminescent corals that scattered along the rows of dividers that separated a section for some of the pregnant omegas or extremely ill Legion mers. It didn’t take them long to finally bump into a rather shy Mikasa who confessed that she had been helping out and was visiting Nanaba. Eren smiled despite himself even if he could barely see his sister’s expression in the dark. When Mikasa wanted to apologize, she really did so with conviction.

Finally the trio reached the edge of the wide expanse of the cave, a stream of weak light seeping through to make a heavily injured Isabel and Furlan more visible to the Marian mers. Eren cooed and made a series of trills as he made his way towards the betas.
“Eren!” Isabel chirruped from her hastily made bedding and spread her injured arms as much as they could open.

Isabel had various markings of bruises and scrapes, her grin was missing a fang and her arms were covered with the same bandage that Levi’s arm was secured in. Furlan, on the other hand, had a sort of leather strap contraption plastered and clipped to his side, various colored bruises blossomed from his well-toned stomach.

They looked like shit but Eren was just relieved that they’re alive.

The omega dived in and was swooped into a sloppy embrace as the red headed beta laughed joyously; Furlan watching the scene with warmth and interest. Isabel had been distraught and plagued with guilt when she first heard of the incident. Furlan was left to comfort the younger beta but it did not lessen her sadness for causing Eren and Levi so much trouble.

“It’s good to finally see you, Eren!” Furlan laughed behind his hand, “Isabel has been moaning about being such a burden. Why don’t you tell her off for once?”

“The fuck was that blondie?” Isabel hissed which earned her a reprimanding pinch on the cheek. The beta mermaid dramatically wailed while Eren angrily told her off for making assumptions and placing all the guilt on her shoulders.

“No fair,” Isabel fake sobbed, “Why do you get to act like Levi? Just one parent is enough, damn it!”

‘Oh shit’ Furlan coughed and wheezed from the side as he tried to stifle the full blown laughter threatening to crawl up his throat. Isabel had been too out of it to properly register the embarrassment and the obviously scent marked Eren to be aware about the implication of what she just said.

“I’ll kill him,” Mikasa cursed with a hooded glare at the wall as if Levi himself is on the other side.

Isabel recovered slightly and blinked innocent eyes at the obviously warm water omega and alpha who were respectfully watching them from a distance, “Who are you guys?”

The two Marians stiffened a bit until Eren burst into an enthusiastic introduction. Armin had been professional and polite as he formally introduced himself to the betas. Furlan and Isabel were a tad bit surprised as Armin pressed their knuckles to his forehead. Isabel said it was funny out loud and received a good whacking from Furlan for being rude.

“Have some decency. He’s going to be Erwin’s omega soon,” Furlan sighed at the red head while Armin blushed deeply. It seems that nothing escapes Furlan’s sensitive nose and eyesight.

Mikasa looked like she was about to be ill.

“You smell funny,” Isabel told Mikasa without a flinch, “You kinda smell like big brother but at the same time you don’t. Are you related to him?”

“I sincerely hope that’s not the case,” Mikasa replied in a very Levi-like way that sent Isabel growling at her.

“Hey! Don’t talk about him that way!” The red head exploded defensively.

Mikasa’s piercing ebony glare reached Isabel and the beta mermaid felt like she was being reprimanded by Levi again, “I wouldn’t have much of a problem with him if he wasn’t about to
steal away my brother.”

“HAH!?” Eren cried out incredulously as Furlan buried himself within the stack of pillows and bedding he was enclosed in. Isabel made a funny face as she bit the inside of her cheek but refused to utter a word.

There were things that were better left unsaid...

...or in this case better left in the hands of Levi to explain.

Morning turned into dusk and the next day poked its groggy little head out until it went to sleep again for evening to follow. There was barely any light as the coldness of Krolva increased once again and Eren was left thankful that he had to wait for the beginning of the ceremony within the confines of Levi’s territory.

Herb or not, Eren wasn’t a fan of the frigid cold; however, he’s even less of a fan of the fussing omegas trying to prepare him for his initiation.

His caramel skin itched and overheated as some sort of decorative paint was smeared to his face and body like he was some sort of Legion warrior. Not that they’d usually wear them every single day but Eren knew well enough that the traditional paint (made out of sand and some other stuff Hange babbled about) was usually just for the special occasions.

Apparently, Eren’s official welcoming and the opening feast for the mating season was one hell of a special occasion just judging by the amount of itchy paint smeared unto him.

“Eren! You look nice!” Armin complimented as he entered the stuffy room full of Eren’s distressed pheromones. The blond omega had his own paint on his face but it was only made up of three red horizontal lines across his left cheek. Mikasa also had hers and it was a fierce orange arrow going down from her right temple down to her jaw.

Eren, on the other hand, had painted swirls of varying colors of the same sand found in krolva. A mix of black and dirty blue with spots of gritty grey went all the way up to his back and crawled down to his fingertips. The omega really resembled an exotic lionfish now.

“I look like a complete idiot,” Eren moaned loudly into his hands, “This looks so much better if I’m more intimidating like Legion. I just look like a depressing party decoration.”

“That’s not true, Eren,” Mikasa defended, “You look beautiful.”

The brunet snorted, “That’s the opposite of the point, Mikasa. But thanks, I guess.”

Armin cooed and sat down next to the rickety chair Eren was sitting on, “Well, if you hate it so much then you’ll be relieved to know that the paint won’t last long. Water really isn’t its best friend so it will be washed out before you know it!”

The brunet omega made a garbled sound and a click. Eren just really wanted to get this over with since the weird fluttering in his stomach won’t stop. He was so damn excited to be officially welcomed into the pod but Eren was also terrified of the implication. Disappointing Legion was the last thing he wanted to do and that just adds to the burden of pressure he was already carrying in the first place.

“Don’t worry, Eren,” Mikasa smiled proudly, “We’re right here with you.”
The omega smiled and let himself be hauled up to face the crowd of Legion merpeople waiting for his appearance. It was a day to be remembered, Eren reminded himself. He’d do everything within his willpower to show that he is worthy of the Legion name; that the Marian bloodline that shunned him won’t tarnish his raw fighting spirit that was the epitome of a true deep water mer.

The sounds of howling and heavy beats of palms slapping against hard surfaces greeted the warm water mers. Deep war like cries sent their blood warm and tingling, adrenaline reaching its peak as they descended to the open area where a thick crowd already gathered. The alphas’ deep chanting mixed with the betas’ and omegas’ high-pitched trills. Even pups tried to mimic their mothers as they squealed and cried out in their own tiny battle cry.

Eren gasped as all of Legion was decorated in the same war paint he wore. Every single one of them looked fierce and intimidating as their scowls were exaggerated; their backs looked bigger and dangerous as lines of well drawn spikes crawled up their spines. Omegas looked just as dangerous as alphas and this made Eren extremely giddy and proud of the pod.

Armin made a low whistle as he elbowed Eren to look at the direction of the leaders of Legion.

Fuck if Levi looked attractive before, now he looked like a god of war.

The corners of the captain’s eyes were covered with black tar, his right eye had a long smear going down to reach his jaw where it disappeared completely; a light ashen grey rested across the top of his brows down to the bridge of his nose where it was encased in the same deep black that emphasized his dark brows and dripped into a straight line to the tip of his nose. A circle of black rested on his forehead; the same shade decorated his bottom lip into a straight line to his chin.

Levi’s muscled chest had a hand print on his heart; intricate interconnected lines crowded his pale body, crudely shaped spirals that bloomed spikes exploded where skin met scales.

What was also interesting was the way the leaders sported their hair up like it was gelled and poured with ashen white sand, muting the natural colors of their hair and making them look more ethereal and godly.

Needless to say, Eren was about ready to present himself to the alpha were it not for the huge audience.

“You’re drooling, Levi,” Erwin teased from Levi’s side when he saw the captain’s eye dilate at the way the brunet omega was eying him intently. The smell of growing arousal already reached the commander’s nose and it was equal parts amusing and mortifying.

Hange stifled a laugh, “Boy, what I’d do to see someone get down and dirty in the middle of all of this.”

The blond commander frowned and discreetly slapped the squad leader’s head, ceremonial war paint be damned.

Eren strode in as the pod parted in the middle, leaving a path open for the omega for him to reach the upper portion of the elevated rock formation where Erwin, Levi, Hange and the rest of the senior officers awaited. The omega arched his back proudly; determined teal eyes burned with passion as his gaze met the cool and calculated ones of the officers.

Levi had to internally slap himself in order to focus on the event and not purely on the radiating omega that was swimming towards him. Eren looked positively gorgeous in the war paint and the captain was not averse to licking the boy’s skin clean.
The boy stopped right at the foot of the rock formation, deep voices of the Legions mers coming into a halt as the hush of echoes rang throughout the reef. The senior officers stiffly placed their hands behind their lower backs in sync as low guttural sound screeched from their mouths.

“A brother has come,” they recited perfectly and sent Eren’s inner omega reeling at the intensity of the power behind their voices. Legion’s mother tongue was rough and deep, barely caught by warm water mers like Eren and his family; but it still commanded attention and respect.

Erwin moved forward, his already intimidating bulk of muscles made more imposing by the flaking paint and the bones of what looked like deep sea anglerfish stuck to his hair like a headdress or a toothy crown. Even Hange sported the same look but Eren knew well enough those were expertly preserved Titan bones.

The commander recited the welcoming speech that Eren was informed about a day before preparations were made. The omega still failed to understand most of it but Eren had memorized the meaning behind the foreign words by heart. He caught some phrases and words and it was enough to make his heart beat heavily.

“A lost boy... found home.... creatures of freedom... catch— at the times he needs us most.”

Eren’s lip wobbled as Erwin recited his next few words in a language that Eren was intimately familiar with.

“You are no longer alone in your journey to freedom. Offer up your heart like how you laid down your own life to save all of us from danger; take what is given and regret nothing,” Erwin calmly said in a Marian accent, greatly surprising Eren. Armin made a pleased noise at the back of his throat as he saw the result of countless hours of Erwin trying to learn from the blond omega how to speak in Marian.

Eren slammed a heavy fist against his heart as he promised and pledged his loyalty to his new family. The Legion mers roared into howls and whistles, though a bit of the minority were still a bit wary. Hange made teasing whistling noises as Captain Levi moved forward, taking the place of Commander Erwin.

Huge teal eyes connected with determined grey ones, the firm line of Levi’s mouth quirked a tiny bit as the shorter alpha invaded the omega’s personal space. Eren barely registered the gentle tangle of Levi’s fingers against the hair on his nape as he urged the omega to stoop lower and meet the alpha.

Isabel made a roaring sound from the side and whistled with a highly amused and embarrassed Furlan.

Without a word, Levi positioned Eren’s right fist against the alpha’s heart as he did the same to Eren’s. Their foreheads pressed together intimately as they gazed into each other’s molten eyes full of something the omega can’t quite describe. There was gratefulness for saving Levi and his family, tender affection for a boy who finally found a pod he could belong to forever, love that aches as deep as the scars they endured.

Armin gasped from the side, hands flying to his mouth as he hid the watery grin stretching his face. This part of the ceremony was supposed to be done by the top alpha, Erwin. It seems that the blond commander was more than happy to step down and let the intimate part of the welcoming be done by Levi. The message behind such act did not escape Armin’s overwhelmingly warmed heart.

Mikasa smiled warmly even if her heart stung just a tiny bit. Seeing Eren so full of love and
happiness was more than enough for her, even if it meant that Eren was forever leaving behind his Marian bloodline. The filthy pod of theirs did not deserve Eren anyway.

The ceremony ended before anybody realized it; the opening speech for the mating season went by as informally as possible since Squad Leader Hange was left in charge of it. A lot of lewd references and laughter caused Erwin to have a slight headache, but he was secretly thankful for it since Legion was just recovering from the tragedy and they needed all the relaxation they could get.

The pod was joyous as they ate to their heart’s content, tables of food and the occasional alcoholic juices from plants and other poisonous fish made their way to different families. It was insanely full thanks to the irrational need of Levi and Mikasa to compete against each other and see who can get the most catch. Mikasa lost by two fishes and she was immensely bitter about it.

The Marians enjoyed their time, though they evaded the offers of the poisonous fishes and the slightly alcoholic plants because seeing Isabel try to pick a fight with a boulder and Mike trying to sniff everyone was more than enough evidence for them that they couldn’t handle the weird stuff.

“We’ll miss you so much, Eren,” Mikasa sighed sadly as she embraced her brother, thick viscous paint rubbing off easily as their time reached the expiration period.

“You make it sound like I’m gonna die or something,” Eren chuckled but was answered by a heavy glare from his sister. The omega rolled his eyes and apologized half-heartedly.

Armin laughed softly and attached himself to both Mikasa and Eren, “Well, we’re leaving by sunrise and we’re pretty sure we won’t see you by then cause you partied too hard tonight.”

“That’s not true!” Eren protested.

“Uuhh,” Armin hummed sceptically, “you totally didn’t see Squad Leader Hange spike your food that’s why you’re so confident now.”

The golden tailed omega cursed lowly which made Armin and Mikasa laugh. The three lingered for a bit before Armin complained about being sleepy and Eren needing some rest before something interesting happens that night. The brunet’s brow reached up his hairline and all that Armin had for an answer was a wink before the blond pulled the sullen crimson tailed alpha out of Eren’s line of vision.

Weird. Really weird.

The event eventually dwindled down, with Furlan having to carry a drunk Isabel to her own room because the beta mermaid was too out of it to properly make it to the healers. Isabel also was trying to pick a fight with everyone so it was better she stayed within Levi’s territory for everyone’s sanity. The barrels and tables were now being hauled away and the discarded shells and clams were being thrown properly under Levi’s strict gaze.

Eren felt tired and content as his muscles relaxed to the soft buzz of whatever it was Hange put in his food.

“Go get some rest, Eren.” Levi commanded as he eyed the dazed omega who was fighting to stay awake.

“M’kay, Alpha,” Eren cooed sleepily as he rubbed his full belly and turned tail to go back to his comfy nest. The omega failed to see the slack-jawed expression of both Levi and the other soldiers who were still cleaning up. Spirit of the ocean, help Levi or else he’d really lose it and pin down
Eren had lazily tucked himself into his nest, his skin finally free from the itchy paint though some spots were stubborn enough to cling to him. The omega huffed impatiently and surrendered himself to sleep, soft waves and gurgles of marine life lulling him into a peaceful slumber.

The omega sniffled and rearranged himself deep into the night as he changed his position and burrowed his face further into the moss, happily purring as a familiar calming scent started to get stronger.

“Eren,” a voice called out to which the brunet answered with a tired little yip.

There was a grumble of suppressed laughter before Eren felt himself being patted on the hip, “Get up, brat. We have somewhere to be.”

The golden tailed boy yawned loudly, rubbing at his sleep crusted eyes before he sat up and saw the image of Levi just hovering above him. The very weak stream of curtain from the moon draped over Levi’s paint-free alabaster skin and made him look so goddamn attractive that Eren couldn’t suppress the needy groan that escaped his throat.

“Come with me. I excused you from your duties tomorrow so you could sleep in,” Levi ordered, holding out his hand while the other rested on the satchel that rested on his hip.

The omega blinked a few times before he took Levi’s offered hand and was whisked away into the night. The waters were still insanely cold and Eren was touched and more than thankful to know that Levi stored Hange’s herbs in his satchel. The captain wordlessly gave it to the shivering omega, pointedly avoiding the blinding smile that was definitely gratitude.

Curiosity was always Eren’s weakness, so the brunet kept asking Levi where they were headed to. The alpha remained tight lipped and only asked Eren to trust him. The omega regarded the alpha for a while before taking the captain’s freshly healed hand and giving it a light brush of the thumb; a sign of trust.

The two quietly threaded the waters until the barren expanse of sand was all that was left. Eren really tried to come up with a reason as to why they were there until a tall sort of rock formation finally came into view.

There were stray seaweeds peeking out from the bottom of the formation, tiny little shells were half buried into the dark grey sand. If Eren looked closely enough there were also flowering plant life purposely planted just by the entrance. This place must be well taken care of or else the entire rock formation will deteriorate and crumbled under the strong current.

“Go inside,” Levi told Eren with a soft voice that it jolted the omega from his daydreaming.

A wide array of different human knick-knacks greeted Eren. There were so many different objects that he couldn’t name and he felt his mouth drop in awe. In the middle of the enclosure, sat a mound where a thing Hange called a ‘hair brush’ with a lotus design rested. Levi approached the mound with soft reverence and motioned for the omega to follow.

“What’s this, Levi?” Eren asked in a hushed tone, seemingly sensing Levi’s uncharacteristic mellow attitude.

“Did the blond coconut ever tell you how we court? Or at least maybe shitty four eyes did?”
Eren wrinkled his nose, “Blond coconut— Ah, you mean Armin? Uh, well he never really got to that but Squad Leader Hange told me some stuff.”

Levi smirked at the confused omega and patted the boy’s golden tail just because he can’t stop himself from touching Eren, “Alright so what’s one of the first few things an alpha must do?”

“Uh,” Eren stuttered for a bit because he was very sure he tried to mute out some of Hange’s old lectures because he was too embarrassed and the squad leader really didn’t need to tell him about the specific mating positions.

The captain looked boredly at Eren before the boy realized he was lost in his daydreams again. The omega bit his lip, fins flaring in and out as he tried to remember what Hange told him during his first few days in Krolva.

“Alphas court like ours. They present gifts to their intended and also seek for permission from the family,” Eren stopped hesitantly as he remembered the sad part of the courting, “but Legion—families are considered luxury so you get consent or blessings differently.”

The alpha nodded as he leaned closely to the mound, “Your sister already gave consent.”

“What!!?” Eren shrieked and was flicked on the forehead for being too loud.

“Yeah, but she’s not the only one who I’m getting consent from,” Levi explained, “I also told Isabel and Furlan so there’s just one more person I’m getting a blessing from.”

The omega’s eyes watered slightly with tears, his mind finally realizing why Isabel and Furlan didn’t react as radically to him smelling different when he visited the betas. Levi must have really planned this out and it made Eren’s heart swell to know that his alpha was putting so much effort just within the first stages of courting. Eren Jaeger is one lucky omega.

With a gentle touch, Levi reached out and covered Eren’s warm hand with his own and guided the brunet into touching the mound. The omega blushed at the intimacy and was lost in the way Levi’s normally sharp grey eyes suddenly softened as he gazed at the cluster of rocks where their entwined hands rested.

“Maman, I’d like you to meet Eren Jaeger,” Levi started as he pressed their hands firmly into the mound, “He’s a damn stubborn omega with the occasional shitty attitude but I’m too far gone for the brat.”

Eren gasped as he stared at the mound once more.

“I wanted your blessing so I could court him. I know this was what you always wanted so I’m doing this properly. Watch over us so we don’t annoy each other to death,” Levi prayed and the older alpha felt the omega’s hand squeeze his in a tight hold.

“I’m sure you raised him better than this, Mrs. Ackerman,” Eren teased but his smile was pleasantly content and emotional, “Your son has the dirtiest mouth but I’ll make sure to tell him off for you.”

“Damn right shitty brat,” Levi snorted, “You’d be so sick of me until you’re all old, gray, and have sagging tits.”

“Levi!” Eren chastised which Levi only smirked to.

The two exploded into a playful banter until Levi deemed it time to leave. Eren frowned slightly
and pressed his forehead against the mound, like a Marian mer would when respectfully saying a
greeting or a goodbye to an elderly. Levi mumbled something in his native tongue to the mound
before swimming away and dragging Eren to the last place he wanted to go to.

Eren was insanely tired, he could feel his fins stuttering as they swam further away but the pain of
aching muscles could not dampen his happiness. He obediently followed Levi until huge
formantions of rocks and caves settled in once more. There were few hums from different sea
creature which Eren pointedly ignored as he tailed Levi to some sort of underground cave.

There were too many stalagmites to dodge and some of them even touched the stalactites from the
ceiling of the glittering cave. Levi placed a protective hand on Eren’s lower back as he changed
their position and put himself in the line of danger and covered Eren’s body with his own.

At last, an opening was reached by the two mers but it only led upwards. Eren chirped and made a
soft trill to question if they were going up to which Levi answered with a firm nod. The omega
obeyed and swam up tiredly but was pleased to find that the light was getting stronger as they
reached the upper portion.

The omega was momentarily stopped, the soft swish and gurgle of the ocean was loud as his
fingertips nearly brushed the surface. It wouldn’t take much effort before he could finally take a
lung full of air but the omega whined in distress and Levi was left hovering near the omega.

“What’s wrong?” Levi asked as he watched the entranced omega, teal eyes taking in the movement
of the water.

“We weren’t allowed to breach the surface in Shiganshina,” Eren whispered like it was his dirty
little secret. It was no longer surprising for Levi, knowing that the warm water pod held extreme
prejudice against humans. Not that he can blame them; mers were hunted down for their scales and
their alleged magical tears.

“Do you want to go back?” Levi asked slowly when Eren’s indecision seemed to be overwhelming.

It wasn’t like Levi was an asshole. The alpha give zero shits about rules and he broke them in a
number of ways to survive the brutal life of the Underground, but he wasn’t about to pressure Eren
into anything that made the omega scared. Eren had his own say in this relationship even if he is
the omega. Levi would willingly bend over if his precious Eren asked him to.

The omega bit his lip and Levi immediately recognized the other’s tensed muscles. Eren burst
through the surface before Levi could call out to the other and a swooping sense of burning pain hit
the omega like a brick to the face. Eren panicked as he gasped at the foreign air, gills opening and
closing frantically as it struggled to get oxygen into Eren’s lungs.

Levi’s alpha instincts kicked in as the older mer cooed and talked to Eren in a warm soothing
voice, directing the distressed omega on how to properly adapt to the air above the surface. It took
a while for Eren to finally make some sense out of Levi’s muddled words; eyes turning red as he
gasped and struggled to calm himself. Finally, Levi’s wet fingers calmed Eren’s itchy gills and the
omega’s own body slowly learned how to breathe from the nose.

“That’s it, Eren. You’re doing great,” Levi encouraged the other as he massaged the omega’s
collarbones.

“Shit, sorry,” Eren wheezed finally, “that was so unattractive.”

The captain snorted, tapping the omega’s back one last time as he allowed the shaken brunet to
finally take in his surroundings.

They weren’t really out in the open but were rather inside a cave with no visible outer opening. The ceiling was decorated with numerous stalactites, dripping fresh water and dropping tiny beads unto Eren’s tan skin and fluttering lashes. The darkened space was lightened up with small glowing substances, tiny little circles that glowed dimly of cerulean light. Even the waves carried with them the same glowing orbs that brightened every time the waves crashed into the smooth rocks.

Eren stared in awe as he pushed his fingers against the current and was pleased to see himself enveloped by the soft glowing light.

“Oh my go— this is amazing!” Eren yipped and clicked happily, “What is this, Levi? It’s so beautiful!”

The alpha leaned forward and let his upper half drape over the cool smooth stones, “We don’t really know but some mers say that when stars die, they crash into the ocean and turn into these.”

“Stars?” Eren tilted his head to the side like a curious pup.

“Yeah,” Levi nodded, “bright little balls of light that’s scattered all over the sky. We’ll take you to see them one day, okay?”

The omega grinned widely, his hands still cupping the water that was brightened by the bioluminescent light like he could take it home and show it off to his friends. It was such a childish and innocent thing that Levi couldn’t help the smile that grew on his face.

“Do you like it, kid?”

“Like it? I fucking love this place!” Eren squealed and poured water all over Levi’s head. The older alpha growled playfully and shoved Eren until the boy sputtered and retaliated. The omega splashed as much water as he can as Levi closed in on him with a predatory growl.

Eren squealed harder when muscled arms enclosed around his waist and hoisted him up into the air.

“I’m sorry! I’m sorry!” Eren laughed breathily and was pleased that the alpha was content with his apology. Levi finally let him down which allowed the omega to turn and lick apologetically at the alpha’s thin lips.

Levi inhaled sharply but refused to be distracted from the last thing he wanted to do; the most important part of their excursion.

“You know, Armin said a very distressing thing to me,” Levi hummed and was amused at how fast Eren’s face turned worried and guilty.

“W-What? What did he say?” Eren pleaded, “I swear if it’s anything embarrassing I—“

“Most likely it’s more embarrassing for me,” Levi answered with a hooded gaze.

“I don’t... understand,” Eren confessed.

“Close your eyes and hold out your hand,” Levi commanded as he pulled up the soggy satchel and rummaged around. He could hear the omega snort and mumble something about ‘alphas making a lot of surprises in one day’.
The raven haired alpha finally felt the smooth metal against his skin, it was an object that took a lot of arguments and threats before he could finally get his hands on it. Mostly, he had to thank Armin for being such a persuasive omega. He really needed to think of a good gift for the twerp once he finally bonds with his equally blond mate.

Eren was restless as he fidgeted and bit his lip, awaiting whatever it is that Levi was going to give to him. A surprising feel of something small, smooth, and painfully cold was the first thing he registered. Then his fingers automatically latched on to the tiny object and a small gasp left Eren’s mouth, his breath fogging over slightly as the temperature dropped little by little.

“W-What—” is all the Eren could say as his brain malfunctioned and failed to form the proper words as he gazed at the item placed on his palms. It was a key; an item that Grisha Jaeger always wore around his neck until he passed it on to Carla, waiting for the perfect time when Eren was ready to receive the family heirloom. The omega choked back a sob as he reverently touched the strap attached to it and the new addition of a glittering dark teal stone embedded inside the opening hold of the key. The stone was hastily wired, quite telling of who did the work. Someone who was extremely inexperienced but was determined to try.

“D-Did you do this for me?” Eren sobbed as he clutched the precious pendant and placed it near his rapidly beating heart.

“They told me that Marians express their intent to court by giving them jewelry,” Levi explained as he approached the emotional omega, “I didn’t know about this and Armin told me that you were unsure of my intentions. I had to fix that so your family helped me with this courting gift. Uh, the wiring is kinda shit but I could—“

The alpha wasn’t given time to explain before Eren came crashing into him, a firm mouth insistently pressing to Levi’s own. The omega mewled, wrapping the strap of the necklace around his wrist as he lapped at the alpha’s slowly opening mouth. Levi grabbed at Eren’s hips, using his other hand to anchor them as the brunet became insistent and demanded for Levi’s tongue to meet his own.

Levi acquiesced and let their tongues tangle and battle for dominance, the omega purring loudly and pushing into Levi’s personal space until their scents mingled into one. The alpha growled at the boy’s enthusiasm and let his hands wander the wide expanse of Eren’s exposed flesh, grabbing and pinching at places where Eren hummed and moaned greedily.

“Please, please...” Eren pleaded wantonly as Levi moved away from the brunet's spit slick lips and made his way down the trembling omega’s jaw and neck. The alpha suckled and nipped until he was sure bruises would form for the whole world to see that Eren was his and his alone.

The omega was falling apart under Levi’s ministrations and Eren thought he’d lose his mind when Levi mouthed at the engorged scent glands found at his neck. The boy wailed, fire burning within his veins as the alpha tongue lapped and swirled expertly over the omega’s sensitive glands. A fresh wave of scent and oils smeared over Levi’s hungry mouth and Eren was left sobbing at the intensity of the feeling. The alpha in Levi was restless as the older mer inhaled the scent of a fresh, ripe, and willing omega within his arms.

There was no mistaking the sweet alluring smell of Eren’s slick as it escaped the omega’s slit. Eren pressed himself more against Levi’s chest, feeling like he was falling and loving every single tense of his alpha’s muscles; a clear indication that Levi was also losing control as Eren sharp nails dug into Levi’s back like a punishment for taking too long to mount the aroused omega.

“M-More, I want... Oh gods, Levi!” Eren cried as his alpha rutted insistently against him, “Nnngh.
It hurts please. I want you. Levi—A-Alpha!"

The alpha stilled, his instincts going haywire but his sharp mind was clawing through the surface and screaming that something was wrong. Eren was slicking too much; his skin overheating in such a short amount of time that it couldn’t just be—


Chapter End Notes

DUN DUN DUUUUN.

I am so distressed that I had to used "fishes" instead of just "fish" because back in elementary, if you used fishes you'd be thrown out the classroom with shame written all over your face!

Anyway there we go. That was such a joy and pain to write but really, I loved this so much just because I get to try out new stuff. I may or may not have spent majority of my time listening to tribal music but yeah.

Tell me what you guys think!
Also I'm not really sure but would you guys want to amp up the ratings and makes this extra sexy with explicit smut? I was thinking I could try to do that again but yeah.
Comments, suggestions, violent love. Leave them all down at the comments sections.

As always, I would be rechecking this chapter for errors....when I wake up. lol.

Bye lovelies! Thanks for the continued support!
Chapter Summary

‘Love is weakness, boy. Don’t catch the damn disease or it will kill ya,’ a cruel voice told him.

Chapter Notes

Basically this chapter is smut. That’s it. Smut with so much feelings.

If you're not comfortable with reading weird merman anatomy smut, I'll write a short summary on what happened then you could just skip this.

Enjoy!

Levi gasped as a full body shudder wracked him, a quake that felt like his inner alpha was finally losing its chains as it was taunted by the sweet smell of an omega going into heat. Eren’s beautiful turquoise eyes were glazed and almost unfocused as the boy’s hands gripped and explored the exposed flesh of his desired mate. Levi growled appreciatively as the omega ducked and licked at the alpha’s lips and jaw, a needy whine escaping from the younger’s throat in an attempt to get the alpha more riled up for him.

The combining scents of the two mers were euphoric. Levi’s usually sharp and controlled mindset was slowly being pushed to the edge in favor of losing himself to Eren completely. The alpha stood no chance. His long term loneliness which had been ignored for so long had reared its ugly head and reminded Levi what it’s like to have no company should he ignore Eren’s pleas. With no omegas to assist him in his rut nor to placate his natural aggressiveness as an alpha, Levi had suffered both physically and emotionally.

“Levi, please touch me,” Eren whined in a broken gasp as he embraced the alpha, finding himself slowly becoming limp and pliant as his heat escalated into a frenzy of lust.

Levi didn’t need to be told twice, quickly placing his calloused hands over the boy’s supple hips. The alpha firmly pressed against the area where golden scales met with tan skin, making Eren keen at the pleasure. If Levi had been any other alpha, he would have slammed the omega against the rocks and mounted the boy until the brunet was screaming his name, filled with the thick knot of a Legion alpha. But Levi prided himself in being level-headed; he vowed never to mate with an omega in the same shameful manner as his own mother had suffered. The captain cared too much about Eren to simply breed him in the middle of nowhere, vulnerable and weak against the elements.

“Eren,” Levi groused as his thin lips pressed light kisses to placate the omega, “We can’t here—it’s too dangerous and cold.”
“No, no,” Eren cried out, seemingly taking Levi’s words as a rejection, “I’ll be good, I promise. I can fight— I’m a shifter for fuck’s sake. Levi, I can’t anymore!”

The alpha chuckled and held the half-angry omega in his arms. He’d surely have a handful with their pups if they were the combination of Eren and Levi’s stubbornness. Fuck, they were really doing this? Breeding for days until Eren’s belly is full of growing pups. Levi’s inner alpha seemed to perk up more as the captain’s cock strained to release itself from its sheath. It didn’t help that Eren was slicking like mad and the omega’s own sex was peeking out from his slit, leaking and an angry red.

With an impatient growl, Eren nipped at the alpha’s scent glands and forced Levi’s hand against the omega’s open slit. The captain growled, torn between disapproving such bold actions and loving it at the same time since Eren was proving himself to be a feisty omega with a fight in him despite his heat muddling his head. The boy didn’t seem to care about Levi’s reaction, too pleased with having his alpha’s rough hands to rut himself as much as he wanted. The omega let out a pleased trill, exceedingly content when he felt the alpha move his fingers and coaxed the boy’s straining cock out more. Each stroke made Eren shudder, fresh slick oozing more and more as his hole twitched and yearned for the same fingers to open and prod the omega for proper breeding.

“You’re such a little shit, aren’t you?” Levi murmured as he licked and bit the top of Eren’s ear, trying to subtly remind his omega that he would still be in charge of the situation. The brunet babbled mindlessly, his tone suggesting that he’d be a good boy if only the alpha touched him more. The raven haired alpha snorted but allowed his hand to wrap around Eren’s weeping cock, subtly twisting and turning his wrist just enough to squeeze sweet little mewls and groans from the boy. The sound was easily addicting and Levi didn’t know if he could ever let anyone else hear such beautiful noises without ripping a head or two.

The alpha knew he couldn’t knot Eren at the very moment, the very least he could do was to make Eren climax just to ease the heat cramps that was making the younger mer delirious and needy. Once the omega is settled enough, Levi would have to drag both of them across the ocean to reach Legion territory and hopefully the captain could tend to their needs with the protection of their home. But with the way Eren was squirming and basically singing praises to his alpha, Levi doesn’t know how long he could hold out without biting the omega’s flush neck and permanently binding Eren to Levi’s entire being.

With a firm squeeze and a swipe against the slit of Eren’s cock, the omega cried out and arched his back, pleasantly making Levi growl in possessiveness as his own hardness fully popped from its sheath and slapped heavily against his hard muscled stomach. The alpha’s member was thicker, more veins popped and it drooled thick pearls of semen as it prepared for mating. The thick knot that rested on the base was already swollen and Levi hissed through his teeth as he pressed against his own cock to relieve some pressure.

Eren wiggled in his place as he tried to fuck himself through Levi’s fist, hips jutting frantically as the omega moaned and whimpered under the assault of the waves of pleasure burning through his veins. Eren never really had a proper heat before. The one he experienced when he presented was only mild and even then the omega refused to touch himself in stubborn protest against his omegan instincts. Now with the firm fist of an alpha, Eren seemed to like his designation as an omega even for just a moment.

“Nngh, so good,” Eren cooed before he was unceremoniously heaved from the water and half of his body was draped against the cool rocks, leaving his cock exposed to the cold air. The omega hissed as his wobbly arms scrambled to anchor the boy properly and prevent him from slipping. Eren was about to whine and complain about the lack of skin contact when something warm and
wet enclosed around his hardened member.

“Oh— shit, Levi!” Eren moaned lewdly as he realized that the alpha swallowed him whole, not even batting an eyelid as he focused his deadly grey eyes on Eren’s big turquoise ones.

The alpha bobbed his head, enthusiastically sucking in his precious omega’s slick covered cock and swirling his tongue to make the younger mer cry out. Levi never attempted to do this to anyone, deeming it too unsanitary to place his mouth where someone pisses but he couldn’t care less about fucking germs when his omega was all pliant and needy under his warm mouth.

With a pop, Levi licked the tip of the head and smirked at the trembling omega, “Gonna cum now, Eren?”

“No!” Eren pouted although his limbs were shaking from the effort of controlling his heat, “Need you in me. I won’t cum like this— ah!”

“I won’t really give you much of a choice,” Levi deadpanned as he licked the underside of Eren’s shaft, “We need to get out of here so either you finish now or suffer this the entire trip back.”

Eren was crying fat tears that were more liquid than crystal due to the lack of seawater. It seemed that he was very put out that his alpha would threaten him with deprivation of release and the omega was too emotional to even fight back. An alpha allowing for an omega to release was a reward and Eren oh so wanted that.

The alpha duly ignored the sparkling tears even if it bit through him and taunted his inner alpha to give in to his omega. Levi can’t be swayed and he won’t compromise Eren’s safety even if all he wants is to do exactly what Eren wants; a fat leaking alpha cock inside a very willing omega. Without much delay, Levi dove back down and swallowed Eren again, pumping his fist in sync with his harsh sucks and bobbing of his head. The captain merely relied on memory of other mers pleasuring him and his instinct to please and provide relief for his chosen mate. Eren desperately tried to remain still but his hips eventually canted up to bury himself deeper into Levi’s throat. The alpha coughed, caught slightly off guard and was met with a severely apologetic omega. But Levi swatted the brunet’s hip and nipped and sucked near the boy’s navel to shut him up. Once Eren was pliant enough, Levi returned to his work until he could literally smell and taste the omega’s hole leaking overtime with so much slick that Eren was surely bound to find his release soon.

“L-Levi—“ Eren gasped brokenly as his clawed hands found its way into Levi’s soft black locks, pushing and pulling insistently as the burning heat of the pleasure made the omega’s body taunt, “W-Wait, I’m gonna—“

Levi didn’t allow for his omega to finish as he struggled to bury the omega’s cock, feeling the burst of seed spill out and coat his mouth. The alpha moaned at the deviancy, for omegas were usually the ones to open their mouths for their alphas to fuck into. But Levi loved how he slowly broke down Eren with his mouth, maybe a little too much as he furiously fisted his own cock until he himself found his release and came all over himself like a teenager.

All that echoed throughout the cave were their harsh pants as the mers struggled to come down from their high. Eren laid on his back, his dark turquoise eyes slowly losing its daze as the omega puffed chilly breaths, pleasantly content and satiated. Levi was just as much of a wreck, slumping his upper half just beside Eren as the alpha tried to catch his breath. Having sex was a pleasure but being intimate with your intended was probably the most amazing thing the two mers ever experienced in their lives.

The soft slosh of the frothy waves eventually lulled the mers to a comfortable silence. Eren
couldn’t wipe off the dopey grin off his face as his hand crawled down to meet with Levi’s cold ones. The alpha willingly slotted their fingers together in a tender way that made Eren’s heart soar in delight. The golden tailed omega should be upset that his alpha didn’t knot him but the logical part of Eren’s brain refused to be mad at his intended, seemingly aware that his alpha had a good reason.

“Home?” Levi crooned and Eren could only answer with a weak little yip as he allowed the alpha to pull him down and plaster himself against the strong muscled chest of the shorter male. The brunet purred happily as he went limp and allowed his intended to secure Eren’s body against the alpha by slinging the strap of the long forgotten satchel that was thankfully hooked to one of the stray pointy rocks of the cave. Levi would be pissed if he had to swim down to the bottom just to grab the damn thing.

Eren flailed a bit as he tried to unravel the twisted string of the necklace given to him. The alpha took pity on the agitated brunet and untangled the cord from the boy’s wrist and placed the gift on his neck. The omega smiled toothily as he wriggled his fins, a chirp of thank you left his mouth before he woozily pressed his head against Levi’s shoulder. The alpha huffed as they descended back into the dark water, carefully scooping handfuls of saltwater to reintroduce it back to Eren’s gills. The brunet whined lowly as he began breathing underwater again before the two dove back to the bottom of the cave and hastily made their way towards Krolva.

The entire trip would have been easier on Levi’s part if Eren wasn’t the biggest shitty brat that ever existed.

A needy omega was already a challenge in itself but if that was combined with Eren’s personality, it would usually result to a headache and a sexually frustrated Levi. The alpha did his best to ignore the desperate and downright slutty pleas of his omega but fighting with instincts can be futile. The warm water mer smelled divine; fully ripe and just the right amount of tangy under Levi’s tongue. It was no doubt that they were extremely compatible as they felt themselves harden again even if they just had a hasty stop to climax. It was the most frustrating thing especially when Levi’s trying to get them out of the open as quickly as possible. Eren didn’t seem to give a single shit, too focused on getting the alpha’s dick in him right the fuck now.

“Fuck, would you stop that?” Levi hissed as he felt the younger mer suckle on the underside of his jaw, “We can’t screw here. What if the shitty Titans suddenly appear when I’m balls deep in you, huh?”

Eren growled menacingly, unlatching his soft lips from Levi’s jaw and looking straight at his alpha with golden ringed eyes, “I’ll fucking kill them if they touch you.”

“Hoh?” Levi smirked, wholly amused that Eren truly bastardized traditional omegan roles by refusing to be submit the role of protecting to an alpha. The captain was sure he would never love any other omega than his precious Eren. And wasn’t that something? An Ackerman finally admitting falling in love; a true historic moment.

Levi’s amusement was easily broken as the searing pain of his scarred arm finally caught up to him. The bandage was already worn and ripped, no doubt disturbed and wrecked by Eren’s wandering hands not too long ago. The captain hissed at the discomfort but pushed on until they were at the bottom of the coral walls of Krolva. The omega had already reached the end of his patience at this point, whining and thrashing in Levi’s arms as he demanded to be scent marked and touched. The alpha let out an annoyed ‘tsk’ as he pulled the insistent omega towards the entrance.

Thankfully, the soldiers stationed to make morning rounds across the outer walls gave them little
to no trouble. The scent of an omega in the early stages of heat and an alpha’s syncing rut was enough to tell them what the hell was going on. Levi was already exhausted by the time they reached the inside of the reef, and to the alpha’s dismay, Hange already took notice of them.

“Holy shit, Levi!” Hange coughed from afar, “I can smell your dick from miles away.”

“Shut up!” Levi hissed as he pulled Eren towards him in a possessive manner. He couldn’t help it, really. His instincts were already going haywire and Eren was slicking so much that it was turning the heads of the unmated alphas. Levi’s animalistic side was boiling with anger, heavily displeased with the fact that his young omega was vulnerable in a public place.

“I need—“ the captain winced as he stuttered and almost fell to the sand carpeted ground when the routine pains of his rut started clawing at his insides. Eren cried out worriedly as he chirped and crooned at his hurt alpha. The omega was in distress and it was making the alpha feel much worse.

“Eren, we need to move you and Levi in a safer place alright?” Hange instructed as the omega fretted over Levi, his big bulging eyes looked at the squad leader with deep worry when he nodded.

Eren sniffed at the beta before allowing them to get their hands on Levi to remove the two from the leather strap of the satchel. Levi growled, his fangs lengthening as the scent of another mer which was not his omega was sticking to his skin. Hange merely snorted as they clicked and directed Levi to his own territory. It took a lot of threatening and using Eren as leverage to finally get the alpha moving but Hange refused to complain. It’s not like the squad leader was lying when they said that a lot of curious and interested alphas were eyeing Eren intently.

What they didn’t say was that some alphas also secretly sneered and disapproved of the blatantly obvious sexual relationship between Levi and Eren.

The captain didn’t even make it to the creaky boards of the sunken ship when he collapsed and cursed in pain. Eren’s heat muddled mind went on a panicked frenzy as he rubbed himself against the writhing alpha, purring up a storm in an attempt to soothe Levi’s pains. Hange clenched their teeth and told Eren that they would have to nest where Mikasa and Armin had roomed in. It was recently vacated early in the morning when the two warm water mers made their way back to Shiganshina.

It wasn’t like the pair would have much of a say in the matter. Their heads were already screwed over by their need to be constantly touching.

The strong smell of foreign alpha and omega sent another wave of rage filling up Levi’s chest. He snapped viciously and eyed the alcove with much disdain as he rearranged the beddings and threw out those which smelled too strongly of an unwelcome alpha.

It was an insult. A challenge to his claim and Levi would tear apart anyone who would even dare look at Eren with malicious intent.

The omega cooed from the side, swishing his tail as he slumped at the entrance of the alcove waiting for his alpha to finish his mission to clean and rid their nest of anything unsavory or not up to Levi’s standards. Hange watched with barely concealed amusement but knew not to interfere with an alpha who has spent years of his life ignoring his rut. With a quick pat on the shoulder, Hange bid Eren a good bye and left the two to their own devices. They’d have to check on Eren later, of course. But any attempt to touch the boy now would most probably result to dismemberment or murder.

“Levi,” Eren whined as his feverish heat started to escalate again. The damn muscles of the hard
working alpha had been flexing and bulging as Levi relentlessly scrubbed and turned over the
goddamn bedding materials like it personally insulted him. The alpha was too worked up over his
pile that he failed to notice how his movements left Eren’s mouth watering. The omega wanted to
lick every part of his desired mate but Levi was being difficult.

“Levi!” The omega tried again with sharp high trill but the shorter merman only gave him a steely
side eye and went back to lumping his pile of cloth and pillows again. Eren huffed, annoyed that he
was being ignored and a bit too aroused to be thinking clearly so he did what he does best.

The omega comfortably sat himself on a patch of moss just by the mouth of their tiny alcove,
wriggling his butt enough to coax more of his amplified scent through the waters. Eren might have
hated being an omega but that doesn’t mean he was completely unaware of how to use his
dynamics to his advantage. The brunet licked his palm, more out of habit than necessity, and
coaxed his swollen slit to open more until he could wrap his delicate fingers around his cock. Eren
licked his lips, eyes permanently glued on Levi’s back as he stroked himself. The alpha seemed to
slow down just a tiny bit but he still refused to look at Eren.

The omega only grinned at the challenge and decided he would make his stubborn mate suffer just
as much as him. With slicked fingers, Eren trailed down until his fingertips brushed over his
throbbing hole. The brunet bit back a cry, his primal instincts begging him to keep prodding until
the pain goes away. A single slick finger eventually slipped inside, a curious little experiment that
made Eren mewl at the pleasure. He was still a bit tight, obviously a sign that he was every bit of
an unlearned virgin, but the walls of his hole were wet and slippery, allowing him to slide his digit
deeper and angle it in a more pleasurable way.

“Ah, ah!” Eren moaned, imagining that it was Levi’s calloused finger doing the fucking and not
his. Eventually another finger joined and the omega’s back arched when a tiny little bundle of
nerves were hit. Levi tensed, a low guttural sound vibrating deep in his chest as the intensified
potent smell of his intended reached his nose. The captain’s gills opened and closed in agitation.
The fresh scent of summer and home was calling for Levi.

“Ngh, Levi— so good,” Eren choked as his three fingers fit inside him and curled, leaving him
drooling and babbling in his native tongue. The alcove already reeked of his scent and the omega
almost wailed in relief when the alpha turned around and eyed him like he was some sort of prey
that would be devoured completely. Levi’s eyes darkened, his pupils turning into quivering slits as
he licked his lips and stalked the omega who was fingering himself. Eren mewed, increasing his
speed until he felt like he was going to cum but the alpha stopped him, swatting the omega’s hand
and pinning it to the wall.

“Mine,” Levi hissed as he nosed the soft spot under Eren’s ear. The brunet sobbed as the alpha
pressed into him, digging a possessive hand against the omega’s hip to firmly pin the boy in place
and prevent him from escaping. Eren immediately noticed the strong scent of his alpha, so much
stronger than his normal scent. Levi smelled like the ocean when it’s battered by a deadly storm; an
electric current ran just under the fingertips of the merman who was honoured with the title of the
strongest.

The alpha hummed, thoroughly pleased that his omega was being obedient. He wanted Eren to
cum by his hand, mouth, or cock. No other exceptions.

Eren chirped sweetly, exposing his tan flesh to the looming alpha above him. The raven haired
male wasted no time in pressing his tongue against the offered skin, licking and suckling bright
bruises until his devious lips enclosed around Eren’s engorged scent gland. The omega shuddered,
his free hand immediately grabbing at Levi’s back to anchor him. Eren did not hold back as he
clawed at the alpha’s back, leaving red streaks as he gasped and begged for the other to keep touching him. Sharp fangs immediately lengthened as a bolt of thunderous arousal spiked through Levi’s spine; the alpha felt himself give in slightly to the pull of his intended and bite Eren, marking him as Levi’s forever.

But Levi still refused to sink his teeth into Eren’s flesh; instead, he kissed the brunet lower until he reached Eren’s protruding collar bones up until the alpha’s teeth grazed the hardened nubs that sent Eren shouting and crying even more. Levi smirked, sneaking a pink tongue to play with the sensitive nipples and he swore Eren just cursed twice as crudely as Levi when he had been living in the trenches.

“F– Fuck, fuck, fuck, I swear to Neptune— Levi, you’re killing me!” Eren keened, arching into the alpha’s touch until he felt like his spine would snap into two. The feeling of fire got a lot worse as the older mer sunk his calloused fingers into Eren’s wet hole. The omega cried fat tears and chanted a frantic ‘yes, yes! Please!’ into Levi’s ear. The alpha crooned, coaxing the boy to relax and give in.

“So fucking pretty,” Levi hissed as he attacked another nipple, “You look so good like this, Eren. You got no idea what you’re doing to me.”

“Ngh, Alpha you gotta—” Eren wept openly as he tangled his golden tail around Levi’s own. It was how omega mers presented themselves; a non-verbal way of communicating to their mate that they are ready to be bred full of pups. The captain’s steel eyes widened when he felt Eren wrap around him. The feeling of pride and lust drowned his brain until his swift fingers fucked into the omega one last time before pulling out.

Eren let out a protest at the loss of his alpha’s fingers but Levi kept him steadily quiet as he made a show of pumping his swollen cock. The omega wet his lips as he eyed the hardened prick in between Levi’s hand. That huge thing was going inside him and Eren felt both thrilled and terrified. The alpha was huge, bigger than Eren as his kind was built for breeding. A small part of Eren’s brain told him that there’s no way that cock was going to fit but a much bigger part wants the boy to just take it like a good boy.

“Are you okay?” Levi asked gently, brushing his free hand against Eren’s crusted wet cheeks, “I’ll stop if this makes you scared. Just say the word.”

“I want you,” Eren answered determinedly as he pressed his own hand against Levi’s. There was no doubt that if there was ever a single alpha the boy would submit to, it was only Levi. The captain had him wrapped around his finger way before the brunet even met the older mer and wasn’t that something? Eren would gladly give his everything for Levi. His sweet alpha who went through hell and back, who saved Eren from death and trusted him with his own little family; the alpha who loved so deeply he was too scared to show it outright.

“It’s okay, Levi,” the omega assured his intended, “I’m right here. I won’t break.”

Levi smiled a tiny bit and swooped down to kiss the corner of Eren’s mouth. The brunet breathed in deep, angling his head to fully meet his alpha’s lips which were covered in Eren’s own oil. The omega growled possessively and licked at Levi’s open mouth. He was too distracted to notice that the alpha’s cock was slowly breaching his hole. The angry red tip of the head pressed in, leaving Eren gasping at the intrusion.

“Mnh,” Eren groaned, biting his lips until he felt like they were going to break and bleed. The alpha merely crooned gently as he tugged on Eren’s cock in an effort to distract his pretty little omega from the initial pain. The many screams of unfortunate omegas plagued Levi’s mind. The
Underground had been ruthless and uncaring of their omega’s fragile nature during sex and Levi would rather slice his neck before he does the same vile thing to Eren. If Eren were to scream, Levi wanted it to be because of pleasure and not pain.

“That’s it, Eren. You’re doing so well,” Levi encouraged, “All wet and open for me.”

Eren was too lost in the feeling of being full and stretched out to give a proper answer. All that he could do was make a little yip and hold on to Levi like his life depended on it. The burn was slow but oh so good and it made Eren’s base instincts sing with content. He was finally connected to a suitable alpha who would take good care of him, who was strong enough to give him healthy and active pups. Eren closed his watery teal eyes and imaged having a family with Levi. Just him and his alpha herding playful pups with jet black hair and turquoise eyes or perhaps a little pup in the mix with messy hair just like their mother. The image made Eren’s heart swell, though a little part of him was terrified of the responsibility it entailed. The omega was still so young and he wasn’t sure if he’d make a good parent when all he did during his childhood was to goad alphas into pointless fist fights and give his parents tons of headaches.

Levi smelled the distress from the omega and inquired with a short clipped trill. The brunet shook his head and kissed Levi’s ear to assure him that he was okay and there was no need to worry. The alpha grunted, eyeing the boy like he was about to say something but Eren shoved his hips upwards and buried the older mer deeper. The two gasped at the sudden electric bolt of pleasure, clinging to each other with trembling hands as they tried to come down from the initial high. Levi nipped at Eren’s ear for the trouble, causing the omega to chuckle and croon.

It didn’t take long before Eren had fully adjusted to Levi’s girth. The omega was already wet and open from his heat and his delirious want for his alpha. Levi wiggled his hips experimentally, trying to assess whether Eren would be ready for him to move. The pleased little moan that answered him had urged Levi to thrust in and out, leaving the brunet babbling more.

“Yes, yes, yes!” Eren screamed when Levi pulled out almost completely and thrust back in deep, “Mngh, Alpha—Harder, please!”

Levi groaned, trying to control the harshness of his movements but Eren wasn’t having it. The omega wanted everything Levi had to offer, every bit of strength that Levi hides within the depths of his core. If Eren’s alpha was a force to be reckoned with, then the golden tailed omega would like to personally witness it, to feel the cackling spitfire under his exploring fingertips.

The lewd slap of skin to skin filled the alcove, nothing but their little groans and curses left their mouths as the two mers lost themselves in one another. Their tails tangled and clung desperately, sliding and fluttering as the intensity of the pleasure rose above their wildest dreams. They were no longer alone in this world. Their quiet struggles in life of being an outcast; of being too different and having been cursed to forever lose their families have finally sunk into the bottomless pits of the abyss. Every touch and soft whispers of promise that they’re right here in the now had left their heart pounding rapidly with happiness.

Eren wrapped his arms around Levi as the alpha buried his nose into the crook of the omega’s neck; the older mer seemingly entranced by the overflow of the boy’s natural scent. In no time, the low warmth in Eren’s belly turned into a blaze; the frantic thrusts of his mate drawing the brunet into a tightly pulled string. The pebbles that lay disturbed under Eren’s back started to scratch his tan skin but the omega couldn’t be bothered. The pain made him light up even more.

Levi knew what was about to come. The strong scent of Eren intensified even more and the boy was shaking badly, unable to form any coherent words under the onslaught of the pain and
pleasure. The alpha could already smell his mate’s near release and that made him preen, effectively making Levi’s pounding deeper and harder than ever.

But that also scared him to death as the hind part of his brain was about to take full control. The alpha’s fangs were already in full length for the bonding mark and his lips were poised just above Eren’s unmarked throat. Just one bite and Eren Jaeger will forever be his. Just one bite and his omega’s life could forever be ruined.

Levi panicked when Eren’s arms pressed him in and prevented him from escaping. The omega was whining and thrashing as his incoming climax almost reached its peak. If the alpha did not find a way to prevent his teeth from sinking into the supple flesh, then Eren would be done for. He did not want this. Levi purposely courted the omega in the most traditional way for him to get the sweet answer of ‘yes’ before they bonded. He loved Eren. He truly did. There was no use lying anymore. It didn’t matter if the circumstances would’ve been favorable but this—it’s too much to ask of a young mer. There were still so much he could do; so much better things than Levi and this dark hellhole.

“I-I… love you— Levi,” Eren croaked and Levi was completely gone.

The alpha shoved his hands underneath the boy, pressing the brunet closer and punching a strangled cry out of the omega as Levi’s cock pushed in deeper. Levi pushed into Eren more and more, faster and almost in desperation as the swelling knot started to catch Eren’s rim.

So close, so so close.

With the obvious lack of sexual experience, Eren wailed loudly as he came in thick ropes of white that painted both his and Levi’s bellies. The alpha felt himself go wild, immediately pressing his knuckles against his fanged mouth and biting hard as his orgasm rattled his entire body, prompting the huge swell of the alpha’s cock and locking the pair together. Eren felt so overwhelmed, his insides felt so full with the sticky white cum that his alpha put in him. The brunet’s inner omega keened, knowing that in time the seeds of his mate will turn into little pups which he’ll have to care for in his swollen belly. The thought both excited and terrified him but it was the type of uncertainty that he would like to experience any day if he could be with Levi for the rest of his life.

The omega was too exhausted and pleasantly satiated to notice the shaking of Levi’s body. The alpha felt an overwhelming need to sob but he refused; his mouth twitching and almost gagging at the metallic taste of his own blood clogging his throat. He wanted to be with Eren. He wanted to be selfish and forget everything but he just couldn’t. The captain felt so selfish for stealing such a vulnerable and intimate moment from Eren; felt so guilty that he pounded into the boy yet deprived the omega of the assurance that he’ll be his mate and is not just a quick fuck.

But Eren did not consent to a bond. Not without the influence of his heat. Levi did not have the right.

“I love you, my little starlight,” Levi croaked through the thick cloud of his blood, carding calloused fingers into the omega’s hair as he kissed the side of his head. He truly did love his boy so Levi would give Eren his freedom.

It’s a scary thing, Levi realized, how love could make you feel hopeless under the spell of your lover. How you’d do anything for them even if it pains you or even takes you out of the picture.

‘Love is weakness, boy. Don’t catch the damn disease or it will kill ya,’ a cruel voice told him.
Levi shuddered in disgust as the vile memory crept in. Kenny always told him never to attach himself to an omega or even a damn beta cause it will be the shorter male’s downfall. It was the basic survival instinct Levi learned from the Underground and he was never proud of it. Now though, would Kenny gloat that he had been right?

The raven haired alpha snarled as if to ward off the imaginary Kenny. The fucked up old man was wrong. Eren is his strength; his light in this cursed dark place deep inside the belly of the ocean. The omega gave him a challenge and Eren’s unrelenting belief that he could rid this world of Titan made Levi a better merman.

Kenny will never get his dirty hands on Eren. He’d have to kill Levi first.

Hange had been patrolling most of the corners of the reef for the entire day. The squad leader made it a point that the mating season won’t be too troublesome and that the few omegas they have won’t be too distraught and therefore suffer the inability to carry. Hange knew what it was like for omegas to know that they failed to make a pup. It was a very depressing scene.

With a quick slap of their dark tail, Hange sped to Levi’s territory. It was their last stop after all and the heavy basket that they’re bringing was intended for the newly mated couple. It was strange, though, that Eren was already deep into his heat when the other omegas were just starting to nest or seduce their alphas. Some were already mating, the deep cries of orgasm echoing through the reef, but it was not heat induced.

Was something wrong with Eren’s body or was it just the stress that made him cycle early?

“Oh,” Hange gasped when they saw the sullen figure of Levi not too far away from the nest of the alcove, “Hey! Levi how are you?”

The alpha was seated on a slightly moss-covered stone, elevated enough to reach the top portion of their nest. Levi raised his head, his fins swishing lazily as he watched the beta approach him. The primal part of Levi wanted to bark and snap his fangs at the intruder but the captain knew better. There was also the brown woven basket to placate his inner alpha. Supplies for his omega were very much welcome.

“What are you doing here, shitty four eyes?” Levi grumbled as he eyed the rumpled state of his fellow officer. Hange’s hair wasn’t in a tight ponytail but instead was flowing freely with the current of the water.

“Just delivering food for my favorite fishcake and his grumpy mate,” Hange winked, “How’s Eren by the way?”

“Fantastic,” Levi smirked.

“Ew, gross. I didn’t mean how good he is while mating,” Hange wrinkled their nose playfully and set down the basket full of goodies. Levi sniffed at it before carefully inspecting each morsel under his keen eye. The captain grumbled about some fish not being clean enough but it was all in good humor.

Hange was about to excitedly report in detail everything that the captain had missed when their sharp eyes caught the bruised and wounded state of Levi’s right hand. It was swollen; a very distinct set of teeth marked the entry point. It looked so much like a bonding mark that Hange felt their stomach drop.

“Levi, what the hell—“
“I don’t know what you’re talking about,” Levi feigned innocence as he tucked the last fish back inside the basket and was prepared to leave. He honestly wanted to thank his friend for supporting him but Levi knew that Hange wanted answers.

“Wait a damn minute, Levi,” Hange pressed on, “Why are you hurt? Did you have a fight with Eren or is that what I think it is?”

The long piercing silence was enough to be a confirmation. Damn Levi and his stubbornness. Of course the little guy would refuse to bond with practically the most compatible and beautifully reckless omega! The guy can kill titans without batting an eyelid but he had the level of self-hatred as big as the very creatures he’s killing.

“Why would you do that!? Eren would very much like to be bonded to you, idiot! Unless you know… he expressly said he doesn’t want your emotionally constipated ass but if I learn that our sweet titan shifter did not say that, I swear to Neptune, Levi, I will—“

“Stop!” Levi growled, “Eren did not consent to a bonding, alright? I would not bind him to me for the rest of my pathetic life just because we’re both too fucking horny to think straight. Besides, I have other shit to take care of before we start making a family. I haven’t forgotten my place, Hange.”

The squad leader looked visibly upset but they allowed the alpha to swim away and crawl into their nest. Hange could hear a sweet little croon that was probably from a newly awakened Eren and the squad leader could not help but pity them. They were obviously made for each other, their tempers and stubborn determination and skill both empower the other, but fate was cruel and just had to put them in a complicated situation.

“We just want you to be happy,” Hange whispered sullenly. There was no way to convince Levi to bond with Eren now that he had made up his mind. The beta just prayed to whoever it is up there that Levi won’t regret his decision of forgoing the bond.

Regrets were always the worst.

Chapter End Notes

Hello! So this is only my second time to write smut... there's still a lot of room for improvement??

It took me separate days to write this (usually I just write within two nights once I have my ideas patched up) cause smut isn't my forte and I wanted to put as much development and feelings as possible and at the same time make it sexy?? idk if that makes sense.

This was fun to write tho! It's a good practice and I'm quite surprised I wrote this much smut. We'll go into the deep trenches of drama for the future chapters so I suggest you enjoy the sweet time between Eren and Levi. (fair warning oops)

Anyway, thank you so much for reading!
As always comments feed the author!

See you in the next chapter!!
Chapter summary:
Levi helps Eren relieve himself from the pain of his heat inside the cave. The two eventually make their way back home to Krolva in order to avoid the dangers of the ocean. The two mate passionately but Levi refused to form a bond as he struggled with his self-loathing. Levi also vowed never to let Eren be harmed by Kenny now that the brunet was somewhat attached to him. Hange appears when the two are resting and is disappointed to find out that Levi bit his knuckles to avoid biting Eren.
Affectionate touches were foreign to Levi Ackerman.

Most of the time, physical contact with him resulted to blows of pain and deeps wounds that would scar his body. The Underground had been unforgiving to Levi even when he was still a pup, forcing him to take a dagger and fight for his survival. Whatever little warm touches his mother gave him were all buried under the assault of painful memories and sharp nails digging into his flesh.

Being found by his only living relative did nothing to ease the child’s suffering as well. Kenny Ackerman was more of a lone predator than a father figure. He only took Levi in for his fickle amusement. The pup was too young to face the jaws of the trenches so it had been fun for Kenny to watch his nephew flail and crawl back, beaten and bloody.

When Isabel and Furlan came into Levi’s life, they were all too jaded to cave in to physical affection. Isabel might have been a little pushy at times but she had an ingrained instinct to be constantly wary, not that Levi could blame her. Eventually they just settled for hair ruffles and bumping of shoulders for the longest time.

It wasn’t until the trio witnessed their pod’s genocide that they learned how to huddle together and press comfortably against each other. Isabel’s hysterical crying still haunts Levi to this day.

Looking back, it seemed that the soft gestures of mercy Levi had experienced were born out of pity and grieving. It was unfortunate but the merman learned not to complain.

“Levi, stop.” Eren grumbled as he crinkled his nose at the smell of his alpha’s depressing thoughts.
The omega had just finished the last stages of heat after a frightening length of eight days and now the brunet lay rested on their moss nest, arms wrapped around the muscled stomach of the captain.

The raven haired mer snorted in amusement and jostled the irritable omega a bit, earning him a moody complaint and a nip on his collarbone. Eren huffed; keeping his eyes closed the entire time, and pressed his cheek towards Levi’s arm which served as his flesh pillow.

“Are you okay?” Eren blinked awake, his voice raw with all the screaming and moaning he did during his heat, “You look exhausted.”

The alpha merely closed his eyes as the brunet traced the dark bags under his eyes. It was true that the captain was bone tired but he was also content and happy that he got to spend this year’s mating season with someone he loved.

“Don’t worry about me, brat,” Levi smirked as he playfully nipped at Eren’s fingers, “I might be old but I’m not that old.”

Eren chuckled at Levi’s offended expression, his tan fingers delicately tracing the alpha’s top lip. Levi should be thankful, really, to experience such tender and young love despite the many things that he did. The omega had been a blessing in disguise; an equally stubborn creature who did not pity or fear Levi for what he is.

“Are you hurt anywhere?” Levi asked calmly as he brushed a thumb on Eren’s hip, “Nothing too sore?”

“Nope,” Eren answered with a pop and wriggled to press himself closer to the other, “It just feels like a good stretch after long hours of exercise but nothing too bad.”

The alpha hummed, his hooded gaze examining every inch of Eren’s skin and seemingly pleased by the bright marks across the brunet’s chest and neck, “Mhmm, maybe I didn’t pound you enough.”

“Levi!” Eren squawked indignantly which caused the older mer to laugh softly. The omega gasped, his turquoise eyes widened at the barely whisper of a sound that Levi made. The captain seemed surprised as well, like he croaked a foreign noise. Levi had the decency to look away with a deep frown on his face but his younger mate pulled him back with a sweet kiss.

Levi’s heart soared and it was the first time that the two became intimate without the influence of a heat.

Eren made sure to remember every second.

Taking an alpha away from their omega right after their heat cycle is most often looked at as a wish for death. With raw instinct and emotions running high, the couple would usually want to spend as much time together as possible. Skin to skin contact brought them comfort and reassurance.

That’s why the officers of Legion sent Isabel and Furlan to fetch Levi out of his den for a very important meeting.

“This is dumb!” Isabel pouted as she ran her tongue under her only fang, “If we die, I’m gonna come back as a shark and eat them.”

Furlan sighed as he massaged his aching tail which had a firm leather contraption strapped to his
side where the bite was located, “Let’s just get this over with. I’m starving and it’s not like Levi is going to kill us.”

“Yeah, you say that now but wait until I see you pissing yourself from big bro’s glare,” Isabel teased and blew a raspberry at Furlan who looked like he just wanted to sleep somewhere.

“Oi, so fucking noisy.”

Isabel and Furlan shrieked; their skin crawled at being surprised so badly. The shorter male smirked playfully at the two who cursed and shoved at each other after their instinctual clinging for dear life. Isabel smacked Furlan’s face feigning disgust.

“Big brother!” Isabel complained after gaining composure.

Levi remained unfazed as he swished his tail idly, “Well, you two shouldn’t be snooping around in other people’s nests. Mating season just ended. Do you want an angry alpha on your asses?”

“Believe us, we’d rather be somewhere else right now but Commander Smith has really bad timing,” Furlan answered as he scratched at his nape, a nervous habit of his.

The raven haired alpha snarled at the mention of another alpha’s name. It was pure instinct, of course, but his protectiveness was still running high with the after-effect of his rut, not to mention his mate was still snuggled in their nest. Said mate seemed to sense Levi’s tension and a sleepy brunet poked his head out of their little alcove.

“Hey, Eren!” Isabel greeted the omega.

Eren smiled sleepily at the mermaid as he rubbed at his eyes, “Mhmm what’s going on?”

“You can tell eyebrows to suck a dick,” Levi rumbled at Furlan, “I am not leaving Eren during his post-heat. Does he know how fucking dangerous it is to leave him here? They’ve been waiting for so long for me to finally mate with someone, why am I getting pulled out now?”

“I told him that much, Levi,” Furlan gently placated the fuming alpha, “but I don’t think Commander Erwin is doing this on purpose. It’s not just him who wants you to go. Squad Leader Mike and Hange are also with him and they strictly ordered us to fetch you— by any means necessary. I’m sorry, Levi.”

“Fucking—” Levi cursed under his breath as his skin tingled with anxiety. Leaving Eren alone was simply not an option and his inner alpha is howling at him for even considering it. The beast inside saw it as blatant abandonment and the alpha would never do such a cruel thing to his omega.

“Levi,” Eren gently whispered as he placed a calming hand on the captain’s tense shoulder, “It’s okay. I got this. You better go and find out what the commander wants.”

“You want me to leave you?” Levi asked disbelievingly.

“I didn’t say that, dummy!” Eren snorted, “I just think that the faster you leave, the faster you can come back.”

The alpha raised a questioning brow. Levi’s inner alpha just didn’t want to accept any logical excuse to rip him away from his omega. If the captain were in his right mind, he would have whooped his own ass for being a slave to instinct but right now, he was just swimming with worry and aggression.
“We promise we’ll keep an eye on him big bro!” Isabel butted in with a full grin, “Any mer who’d even try to look at him dirty would get a claw in the eye!”

Levi looked like he wanted to argue some more but he was helpless against the persuasion of his own family. Isabel and Furlan had sworn to protect his omega, while Eren had not so subtly promised to make it up to him when the captain returns. The red headed beta made dramatic gagging noises but Levi couldn’t give a single fuck as he deeply kissed his mischievous brunet before departing.

“You really had to traumatize us, Eren?” Furlan asked jokingly as he sat atop a moss covered stone to keep watch.

The omega shrugged though he couldn’t keep the smirk off his face, “He would have never left if I didn’t bribe him to go.”

“Well at least we know inter-species sex is his kink,” Isabel grinned maliciously, “judging by the amount of bruises Eren has on his neck!”

“Isabel!” Eren shrieked, his hands flying on top of his neck and collarbones to hide the possessive teeth marks. It was useless, of course, since his chest was not spared from Levi’s love bites.

“Gods, we’re going to have to agree never to talk about their sex life for like— forever!” Furlan complained and turned his back on the lewd comments of Isabel. He very much liked the level of sanity he still had and he did not want to lose it just because his family decided it would be nice to get involved in the older alpha’s— adventures.

_Nope._

It didn’t take much for the officers to know that Levi was nearing the office. The soft whispers and sounds of traffic of mers going to and fro outside the hallway had come to an abrupt stop. It would have been hilarious if the current situation was not as troubling as it was.

The short alpha knocked but did not wait for permission to enter. He was pissed and his skin was itching to crawl back into the arms of his omega so fucking sue him if Levi was more than irritable. It didn’t help that he was going to spend some considerable amount of time with two other alphas. Levi hoped he could get his shit together.

“Good morning, Levi.”

“You smell like cock, shitwin.”

Erwin raised a brow and threw the captain an unimpressed look. Mike had to bite his lips to prevent himself from snickering. Levi Ackerman truly is the only mer who could get away with such comments with Erwin. Hange merely grinned at the interaction, too interested in staying alive than goading two alphas.

The commander cleared his throat and decided to ignore the black tailed alpha. He understood the pull of instinct on Levi, having seen the shorter male try to resist it for years. It’s not easy to fight it when one has completely given in at one point. “Yes, well, scents aside. I would not have called you here for petty reasons. Apparently the outside of our territory decided it was the best time to be restless when we were at the brink of mating season.”

“Cut to the chase, Erwin. What the fuck is going on? I can practically taste the anxiety in this room.”
The officers looked at each other warily and it made Levi all the more uncomfortable. Something really bad was going on if the usually cool and composed commander would look at his friends for some sort of support.

Hange scooted closer to Levi who sat rigidly on the couch, “Two days ago, there was a messenger from Sina who arrived here at Krolva. He brought with him an urgent message from the king of Sina. Apparently, there was a huge Titan attack just outside their reef and it affected not only them...“

“—the neighboring territories were attacked too,” Mike added, “Shiganshina’s outer borders were breached again as well.”

“Shiganshina?” Levi asked in disbelief and looked at Erwin for confirmation. The commander pressed his lips into a thin line and solemnly nodded. The captain cursed lowly, not wanting to bring such terrible news to Eren at such a delicate time.

“The king sent a request for us to visit the palace of Sina,” Erwin stated as he pressed against his tense knuckles and cracked them loose, “I assume this is for a stable alliance so that Sina could garner more protection should Legion offer its services. The trip will take three days to a week at most and the king has specifically asked for you and me.”

“What the fuck?” Levi grumbled, “What does he want with me?”

“I cannot pinpoint exactly what it is he wants,” Erwin relented with a sigh, “At first glance, one might think he just wants your presence in Sina so that his subjects would have a sense of security. We are known hunters, after all, and it would be a major statement that the king truly cares for his subjects if he has called for merfolk like us.”

“I hate Sina.” Levi grimaced and crossed his arms in irritation, “Is Eren coming along?”

“I’m afraid not, Levi,” Erwin answered apologetically, “I don’t know what this foreign king wants. I almost have no prior background on him and what little I have just rouses suspicion. Making Eren be part of this trip would pose a possible threat on the boy. He’s a shifter and I’m pretty sure he smells claimed and bred. Should mass hysteria happen due to gossip, the merpeople of Sina would not hesitate to kill him if they suspect that Eren is carrying. I don’t want to risk it should that be true.”

“Sweet mother of Neptune, I want to punch something,” Levi snarled nastily. The alpha in him wanted to rip these merpeople to shreds for being a threat to his potentially pregnant mate. No one would deprive him of making a family. Anyone who tries would be dead before they could even blink.

“Don’t worry too much, Levi,” Hange smiled hesitantly, “We sent a message that it would take a while before our team could make a trip to Sina. Erwin bought you time to spend with Eren before you depart, so make it count, short stuff!”

“You can’t possibly be serious in asking me to leave my possibly pregnant omega out on his own?” Levi growled at them, “I know Eren can handle his own shit but he’s still so young! If I knocked him up, he’s going to need me there so he doesn’t pop the fucking pup out too early.”

The squad leader squealed and pinched Levi’s cheeks, “Aww! Daddy Levi is already so protective! Don’t fret my little one, cause I’ll be monitoring Eren’s health more strictly now that mating season is over. I know lots about pregnant mers and I’m pretty sure the other nice Legion omegas would assist him. It’s already dictated by nature!”
“That’s not it, shitty glasses!” Levi complained as he half-heartedly smacked the beta’s hands away, “Eren’s omega side will see it as abandonment and he’ll make a mess out of himself if he doesn’t control his emotions properly.”

“That can’t be right,” Mike butted in with a sniff, “You already bonded him so Eren should feel secure about your relationship.”

A steady awkward silence plagued the room as Levi tensed at the mention of a bond. The captain was more than ready to resume his abruptly hindered courtship and was genuinely going to ask Eren to bond with him a few days after the effects of heat has already left the younger omega’s system. The alpha didn’t really expect such an early departure from Krolva.

“You haven’t bonded with Eren,” Erwin stated carefully. It wasn’t a question.

“I was waiting for the brat to sober up, alright?” Levi sighed and threaded his fingers through his hair, “I didn’t want to take advantage of him while he’s suffering through, what, his first heat? I’m not a fucking monster.”

“You can try to bond with him before you leave?” Hange advised unhelpfully even if the squad leader perfectly knew it wasn’t that simple.

“It takes more than one time to stabilize a bond,” Levi grunted, “The few days that I have left won’t be enough for me to secure it. I’ll only end up hurting Eren in the process and that’s not an option.”

The commander looked carefully at Levi’s distraught figure. It was pretty obvious that his friend was truly bothered by the fact that he’ll leave Eren unbonded and possibly carrying. It’s certainly not the best situation and the fact that emotions are running wild on Levi’s face is not a good indication. However, there’s only so much that the blond alpha could do. Sina is not to be trifled with and he has no choice but to bring Levi with him.

“I’m so sorry, Levi,” Erwin hummed lowly, a technique used by alphas to indicate sympathy to other alpha males, “I know this is difficult for you but we have no choice in the matter. I’ll do the best that I can so that we won’t be delayed in returning. In the meantime, you have two days before we pack up and leave. I can personally explain to Eren the situation if you would wish it.”

Levi shook his head, his normally calm and passive mask falling coldly into place, “It’s fine. I can handle him.”

The blond smiled, “Eren has the utmost faith in you, Levi. I’m sure he’d understand.”

Levi merely grunted as he let Hange drone on about possible plans to keep Krolva and their team safe while the head alpha and it’s most dangerous captain was out in the warmer waters. Mike and Erwin did their best to supply brilliant ideas to accommodate most of their own merfolk but Levi was still distraught about his upcoming separation from Eren.

Erwin was too much of a realist to truly believe Eren would wholly understand the need for Levi to accompany the commander. The omega might have grown a bit during his time in Krolva but the kid was still new to a lot of things. Levi feared that Eren’s natural stubbornness and pure will to answer everything through raw emotions would lead the omega to do stupid shit; stupid shit that might harm him and their child.

For the nth time in his life, Levi cursed at Sina. The damn reef already made his life hard enough when he was just a runt trying to get out of the Underground. Now they’re going to try and use him again for their own benefit. He wouldn’t have been so angry about it if Eren wasn’t part of his life.
With a sigh, Levi tried to remember every little detail about the trip. Erwin had been obvious about showing his suspicion and concern, leaving Levi no room to doubt that he is being given an indirect order to intervene and use his skills should the situation call for it.

The captain made a confirming grumbling noise at the back of his throat.

He intended to come back to Krolva alive.

Levi tried his best to keep his shit together, he really did.

Most of the time he was known for being so unaffected and uncaring that Hange called him their ‘resident resting bitch face’ for a reason; now, though, he’s practically growling and snarling at any other alphas dumb enough to block his way.

Some younger alphas momentarily forgot themselves, wanting to impress their newly bonded omegas, and tried to snarl back at Levi. It only took one deadly glance before they scurried away with an embarrassing whimper.

Good.

Levi had double his strength with the rampant blaze of his after-rut. Anyone stupid enough to want to pick a fight with a purebred Underground merman would surely face death, rightly deserved or otherwise.

It was only when the alpha’s territory was nearing that Levi felt himself finally breath and relax. His two young runts were cosily sleeping at the entrance of the alcove, Isabel snoring softly while curled around Furlan who had a grimace on his face.

It didn’t take long before an unruly mop of chocolate brown hair popped out of the nest and snickered at the sleeping betas.

“They’ve been very good guards, believe it or not,” Eren chuckled.

Levi merely clicked his tongue and herded the groggy betas away from the alcove. Furlan had woken up first before promptly getting dumped with a lapful of barely coherent Isabel. The blond beta made a garbled complain but Levi swatted him away with a deep Underground native language. The boy huffed irritably and swam away, Isabel in tow.

Eren frowned at the abrupt departure but chose to keep quiet as the acrid scent of fear and anxiety clogged his nose and gills. Even Levi’s posture was tense, his back ramrod straight and mercurial eyes shifting left and right as if looking for a threat.

“Levi, come inside,” Eren coaxed the tense alpha with a soft chirp, “You look like you’re going to have a heart attack.”

The alpha snorted and forced his shoulders to relax. It’s very obvious that he could not lie to his Eren anymore. The intimate week they spent with each other had ingrained a deep sense of connection that was similar to a true deep sea bond. Eren would have never noticed the lack of bonding mark on his neck, him being a warm water mer, but it definitely rubbed Levi wrong.

Shit, he smells more distraught now.
Levi shook his head and slithered into the alcove. The heavy scent of mating had seeped into the walls and it brought a small sense of comfort to Levi, despite the disgusting fact that their nest is probably dirty as hell. The alpha couldn’t give a single shit though. It was a permanent mark of territory; a proof that Eren has willingly surrendered himself to Levi at his most vulnerable.

Eren fiddled with his courting gift between tan fingers. He was itching to beat the answers out of Levi but the older alpha seemed unnaturally distracted and Eren really didn’t want to make his mate suffer more.

“Come here, brat,” Levi ordered and opened an arm for Eren to plaster himself into. It was the heavily scarred one but the omega learned to swallow down his guilt over it.

The brunet wriggled into Levi’s personal space and wrapped his arms around Levi’s muscled stomach, “What’s going on? You look angrier than usual.”

“Yeah, well, maybe I just want to shit,” Levi smirked and earned a little smack on his chest.

Eren pouted moodily and fake snarled at Levi, “You’re changing the subject.”

“And you’re still a bossy brat like always,” Levi shot back plainly as he schooled a neutral face. Eren didn’t seem impressed but he stuck out his tongue just to be a little shit.

The alpha snorted and pressed Eren closer to him, afraid that he won’t say the proper words for the omega to understand. “Some shit went down in the upper waters. It was bad enough for the king of Sina to swallow his pride and communicate with Legion.”

“What!?” Eren gasped and pushed himself off of Levi, “Did my family—”

The alpha shook his head and tried to pull Eren back into his arms, “Only the outer borders of Shiganshina got affected. Last I heard from Erwin, it was just a minor break and no one died. Some of the Marians were injured but your family’s safe.”

“How would you know that?” Eren pressed stubbornly, determined teal eyes lighting up with a swirl of rage and worry.

“Trust me, Eren. Erwin would definitely know,” Levi grimaced, “I mean he fucked your childhood friend, right?”

“Gross! Why would you say it like that—you fucking crude ass—” Eren complained airily as he tried to contain the indignant and amused laughter bubbling from his throat. He was immensely grateful that his family’s doing well and weren’t affected by another Titan attack. The omega didn’t know what he’d do if something bad happened to them again.

“That’s not all though.”

“Oh, I don’t like the sound of that.” Eren eyed his alpha, though he was calm enough to lower himself a bit until their chests were pressed closely.

“Trust me, I don’t like it either,” Levi agreed stiffly, running a hand along Eren’s back in an attempt to comfort the younger. A few moments of tense silence passed before Levi finally found himself talking. He absolutely detested having to explain shit, especially to an omega whose brain is probably still fried with heat hormones, but there’s no point in delaying anymore. He just hoped Eren wouldn’t take it as badly as he imagined.

“The king wants to meet with the officers of Legion,” Levi breathed out, “and he specifically asked
for me and Erwin. We’re leaving in a few days and won’t come back for some time.”

“What the fuck!?”

Yes, that’s definitely not a good reaction.

“Eren—”

“No! I won’t allow it— what— I just bonded with you! Mating season just ended!” Eren protested hotly, his fangs elongating and the rings around his iris turning a sickly gold, “This is insane, Levi!”

“Fuck, I know that but we don’t have a choice,” the alpha spat out tiredly, “Sina is a powerful and influential reef, not to mention the fact that it really is urgent since it’s a security matter. Titans are out there and we can’t just let them attack the upper waters with your family in it. I haven’t even met your mother formally, damn it.”

“Commander Erwin must’ve thought this was a bad idea too,” Eren shot back with a barely concealed snarl.

The alpha captain snorted, “Shitbrows wasn’t thrilled about getting an invite from a creepy old man whose identity is dubious as fuck. We’ve set up some precautions and trust us when we say we’re extremely hesitant about this.”

Eren huffed angrily, his nails digging into Levi’s skin and scratching deep marks. The older mer let him do it if it meant his distressed mate could vent out and show his displeasure. It was obvious that the omega wanted to rip something apart but the distinct sour scent under all his rage proved that Eren was scared and worried.

“Come on, brat,” Levi cooed as his fingers crawled up to soothe Eren’s blotchy cheeks, “you know I’d never willingly leave you behind.”

“I fucking hate Sina,” Eren growled petulantly.

“A man after my own heart,” Levi smirked at the brunet who was just a tiny bit calmer.

“Those Titans keep on ruining everything too,” the omega cried out, “I will kill every single one of them someday! Those fuckers can’t keep doing this to me. If they weren’t around then you wouldn’t have to leave!”

Levi hushed the younger with a deep coo, forcing the brunet to lay limp and let the alpha run calloused fingers through the soft locks of messy hair. Eren was sobbing in pure rage, his fists curled and shaking from the intensity of his hate. Titan has robbed the omega of freedom; robbed his mother of her healthy tail; thrown him away as an outsider and forced out of his own home; stole Levi out of his hands just when they have promised themselves to one another. He will fucking kill them all; those damn Titans wouldn’t see what’s coming.

The couple clung to one another for the rest of the day, too afraid of the coming sunrises and what it meant. Levi had made it a point that Eren wouldn’t feel abandoned but the short hiccups and pearlescent tears that snuck out during their love making told volumes of how hurt Eren truly was. The boy was young, too easily swayed by intense emotions. It was what made Eren beautiful in Levi’s eyes, for the older mer was too jaded and cracked in by tough life experiences to succumb to feelings. The alpha fiercely wanted to protect this part of Eren, but he also knew that it might be out of his hands.
“I love you, I love you— please,” Eren sobbed brokenly when he felt Levi’s knot start to inflate.

The alpha growled in approval and pushed himself closer to his saddened mate. Their tails tangled together, soft golden ones scratching and soothing the dark coal scales of Levi’s tail. Their coupling now was harsh and filled with immense desperation to get each other off as fast as possible so they could meld together again. There were no soft touches or lingering kisses that soothed bruised or scrapped skin. Time was running out and Levi felt himself spiraling into helplessness. He couldn’t bond Eren and it pained him like a burning brand behind his ribs.

“I’ve got you, Eren,” Levi murmured softly as he brought the tear filled face of his mate closer to him, “I’m right here.”

“But you won’t be,” Eren retorted with a hiccup, his lashes fluttering as the heavy crusts of pearls clung to his eyes, “I don’t want you to leave but I know you have to— I hate it! I don’t want to feel this way.”

Levi had no words. He was the type of merman who would be blunt and did not play with his sentences like it was a game meant to give him an upper-hand. The alpha was honest and he just couldn’t tell Eren that the boy was right. Levi had to leave and there was no escaping that.

The burning sorrow and loneliness at the back of Levi’s head signalled him of his partner’s dilemma. The first sign of a bond was there; a whisper of his mate’s emotions and it mocked Levi to no end. Eren had already given himself up completely for a bond but it didn’t catch as well as it would have since Levi is a completely different type of mer. The alpha howled its agony like a sad song. Being robbed of time is cruel.

In a moment of pure desperation, Levi opened his mouth and displayed his fangs. The omega seemed to understand through instinct, immediately barring a perfectly unmarked neck for the taking. It wasn’t the real thing and Levi knew it. But he bit into Eren’s skin as he knotted and pumped his seed into the omega, like it was a real bonding. The captain felt disgusted with himself, knowing that he only gave Eren a pseudo-mark that was shallow and would easily fade away. It’s all he could do, really. In a time like this when a real bonding would probably push Eren’s body into shock; a temporary marking is all that they could afford. At least in some way, Levi is effectively shouting to Krolva that Eren was to be his bondmate.

The omega lay limp as he was cradled by Levi’s strong arms. The two had been relentless in their mating and Eren was still getting used to coupling with a very active cold water alpha. It didn’t help that his mate gave him a pseudo-mark; a bite that was effective enough to jumpstart Eren into a submissive state until he eventually succumbs to sleep. Levi smiled at the brunet, even if his heart felt like it was betraying his only love.

The dreaded morning came after two solid nights.

Isabel and Furlan had made it a point that the Legion’s newest couple could get as much privacy as possible. Sometimes the screaming and moaning had become deafening and Furlan was sure that he was traumatized forever, but the two betas knew well enough that the two needed time.

Unfortunately, the cycle of the earth would stop for no one. Levi was left to face the hard line of Eren’s back as he tried to coax the omega to come out of their nest. The brunet sniffled and refused to look at his alpha, too distressed and angry to properly make out words.
“Come on, Eren,” Levi sighed for the third time this morning, “I need to leave and I don’t want our goodbye to be like this.”

The omega stiffened and Levi could practically smell the rolling scent of salty tears already forming. With a stern glare, Levi pushed back inside the alcove and grabbed at the omega’s golden tail. Eren squawked loudly and tried to grab unto the rocks for dear life but the Legion’s captain was not called the strongest for nothing. The omega growled and hissed threateningly at Levi’s impassive gaze.

“Send me off properly, brat,” Levi muttered neutrally.

“Let me go, sir!” Eren answered back though his blotchy cheeks betrayed him.

The alpha remained unaffected. Eren might be hot-headed but the boy is incapable of lying to Levi now. The seedling of their bonding already told Levi what he needed to know. His Eren was angry at the situation and he did not know what else to do but punch something or someone in the face.

With a sigh, Levi grabbed at Eren’s wrist and forced the omega to follow him to the mouth of Krolva’s entrance, and stay with the group meant to bid their officers goodbye. Isabel and Furlan were already there with Hange and Moblit. The four mers waved at the couple, trying to hide their pity and amusement when they saw Eren struggling like the stubborn mer that he is.

The rest of Krolva stiffened and their gazes landed on Eren’s wriggling form. The omega reeked of Levi’s possessive scent; bright splotches of love bites scattered all over the boy’s chest and hips. The most scandalous of all was the fresh teeth marks on the shifter’s neck. The mers exploded into deep gossip, some omegas eyeing Eren with heated envy and disgust. Levi had always been an attractive alpha wherever he went even if his origin was looked down on. Of course, he was getting himself a unique omega. Just turns out that said omega was a shifter who most of the merfolk population despised.

“Right on time, Ravioli!” Hange cackled.

“What the fuck is a ravioli?” Levi snarled at the beta who made grabby hands at him.

The squad leader fake gasped and put an offended hand on their chest, “You uncultured thing!”

Levi simply rolled his eyes and dumped Eren into the arms of the awaiting group. He did not have time to console his omega but he hoped that the familiar scent of the merpeople he trusted would lessen Eren’s unsavory mood.

“My omega is being a snot-nosed brat so please take care of him while I’m gone,” Levi sighed tiredly and eyed his closest podmates.

“I can take care of myself just fine, captain,” Eren answered back with a nasty glare.

Isabel slapped a hand on her mouth as her eyes went wide while Furlan merely wrinkled his nose and gave Levi the ‘what the fuck?’ look. Eren was usually energetic and free-spirited but now he reeked of aggression and anxiety. Even the other mers started to stare at the scene.

“Eren,” Levi started, “I really don’t want to fight you. It’s exhausting and stupid.”

The omega was vibrating with indignation when a warm hand pressed on the brunet’s shoulder, “What the captain meant was he doesn’t want to waste the little time you have by just fighting. It’s ‘stupid’ cause you two will end up regretting saying mean things before parting for a long time.”
Eren’s turquoise eyes went wide but Moblit merely smiled kindly at him, the warm hand on his tan skin pressing comfortably like family would. The omega was still upset but he nodded obediently and understood what the vice captain meant.

A soft look crossed Levi’s face when Eren turned around to meet his eyes again. It was a bit ridiculous how Levi would sometimes forget how to form words but Eren knew deep inside he meant well. The omega’s anger was misplaced but it’s not like fighting off the pull of emotions was an easy battle.

Levi crossed the space between them and lifted a hand to press against Eren’s nape, pushing the brunet closer until their foreheads pressed together, “I’ll be seeing you again soon, understand?”

Eren’s eyes glazed over, “You better hurry.”

The two separated hesitantly, knowing that they could not be as affectionate as they wished while the rest of Legion were still watching intently. Levi could not afford one slip and let them think he’s incapable of keeping Eren in control now that he intended to bond his own charge. Even if the majority of them liked Eren well enough, there was still a healthy amount of doubting souls who could make life more difficult for Eren now that his alpha would be stationed far away.

“Keep safe, Captain Levi!” Eren cried out, slamming a fist on his heart in a passionate salute to his superior and mate.

Levi’s eyes went wide. The salute meant that a subordinate was giving his heart to his superior for the cause. It did not escape the alpha’s sharp mind that Eren was saying some far more than that.

‘I give my heart to you even if you are far from me.’

Isabel and the others followed suit, slamming a fist on their hearts as they wished Levi a safe journey. Their determined eyes shone with brightness and genuine concern. This was Levi’s family now; a bunch of lunatics who cared for him more than they should.

With a soft snort, and going against protocol, the captain responded by saluting back even to his subordinates. It was unnecessary and against practice, for a superior would normally never give his entire being to someone lower than him. But Levi didn’t care. He would willingly lay down his life, his title be damned.

Commander Erwin had waited patiently for Levi just at the edge of the mouth of the cave. He was murmuring something to Mike before he handed the approaching shorter alpha the share of his things which were placed in a brown leather satchel. The rest of the soldiers saluted their higher officers and bid them a safe trip. It would only be Commander Erwin and Captain Levi together with two other scouts who would be departing. Levi wasn’t sure why Erwin was purposely trying to keep their group’s number to a minimum but he wasn’t about to question the blond’s decision now.

It didn’t take long before the team left Krolva and Eren was left in the arms of someone who was not his alpha.

The days trickled so painfully slow that Eren thought that the gods must be punishing him for being a moody child when Levi left for Sina. There were no signs of Titan activity and Hange’s experiments were halted in favor of taking more care of Eren’s body after his heat. The omega was thoroughly confused until the squad leader unashamedly told him that he might be pregnant and they did not want Eren tomiscarry.
Needless to say, Eren freaked out many times before the situation finally sank in. It was common practice for mers to pay extra close attention to their omegas after their heat and especially if it synced with mating season. This was the one time of the year when fertility just shoots up and one mating could already cause an omega or beta to be pregnant. From Eren’s physical examination, it was no secret that he had a healthy amount of sex with his alpha.

“Eren, you sly little thing!” Hange cackled loudly while holding a needle meant for testing potentially pregnant mers, “I didn’t think you’d survive that much sexual intercourse! Oh gods, Levi must’ve really went hard on you if you had all that—“

“Can we please talk about something else!” Eren shouted, his cheeks burning a bright crimson as he hid his face behind his hands. He will never talk about his intimate moments with Levi; ever!

“Oh, please,” Hange snorted, “I’m just happy that our little sea urchin finally found a beautiful omega to settle down with. Add in the fact that you could actually survive the brutal force of an Underground alpha, and an Ackerman at that!”

“Why? Is there something about the Ackermans?” Eren asked innocently from the makeshift operating table he was sitting on, “My sister’s last name was Ackerman before she was adopted by my parents.”

“Ackermans are a thing of legend you see,” Hange sighed dreamily like recounting an old tale, “Some mers say their family line is as old and powerful as the Titans. That’s why the Ackermans were hunted down until there’s practically no one left. It’s only Levi, Kenny, and your sister apparently.”

“Powerful line?”

“Yep!” Hange laughed with a pop and pierced the blood covered needle into a cork sealed test tube, “They say the Ackermans possess this kind of monstrous strength that could almost equal a Titan. They’re like born to be perfect soldiers with no apparent weakness whatsoever. That’s why you two are probably compatible because your strengths just match up perfectly!”

The omega blinked and swished his golden tail in appreciation, “That’s so cool.”

“Just imagine the powerful Titan-Ackerman babies you’ll have!”

“Squad Leader, please!” Moblit reprimanded his superior, a crate full of supplies still in his arms as he entered the office. He couldn’t leave Eren to Hange for just five minutes without having another Titan offspring comment.

“I’m kinda nervous,” Eren confessed, “I don’t know if I’m ready to be a parent. Would Levi even want to have a litter of pups with me?”

Moblit smiled as he put down the crate near Eren’s side, “Don’t think like that, Eren. I’m pretty sure that captain would be more than pleased to start a family with you. He would be a good father to your pups, I’m sure.”

The brunet smiled shyly, too pleased of the mental image of Levi herding their pups and teaching them how to properly hunt and play safely within the reef. Eren might feel a little too young and inexperienced but he’s sure that Levi would take care of them no matter what.

“That’s a little weird...” Hange trailed off, tilting their head and swirling the swishy fluid inside the test tube like it baffled the researcher.
“What’s going on?” Eren asked in an unsure tone, “Is something wrong with me?”

“Uh—” Hange trailed off, “Well! I mean this might take a while, sport! Why don’t you go out and meet with the other omegas first? I still have to double check my findings, ‘kay?”

“Sure,” Eren raised a brow but lifted himself off the table before saluting the two and swimming away from the office. It was only when the door clicked shut when Moblit released a hiss and turned to face the squad leader.

“What the hell?” Moblit whispered harshly, “That’s not how the tests work. You usually have the result in no time!”

“Well, fuck, Moblit. What do you want me to say?” Hange groaned, “Do you just want me to break the news that ‘Hey, Eren it came out as a flat negative and I shouldn’t have excited you about Titan pups! Turns out you may never carry after all!’”

“W-What?”

The squad leader slumped dejectedly on the floor, cradling their head in distress. The test tube lay trapped between their fingers, squeaking like the glass was about to crack from the force of Hange’s grip.

“It’s not just a negative. The color changed into a dull violet and it showed that Eren might be barren because of his Titan blood. Their kind can’t reproduce, remember? Shit, how could I have overlooked that! Of course Eren can’t fucking get pregnant! Oh my god what will he say— poor, Eren!”

“Let me see that!” Moblit growled and looked at the tube. The dull color of the chemical stared at him mockingly as it told the vice captain that Eren would never be able to carry on the Ackerman and Jaeger bloodline. But the blond beta refused to give up hope. The color for barren mers was usually a sickly violet, strong enough to conclude that there’s no chance of reproducing. Eren’s result was pale and almost pastel in color. That isn’t normal.

Hange scrubbed their face violently and kicked off the leg of a wooden table, “Goddamn, I don’t know what to do now. This could affect him mentally and he’ll be in no condition to perform experiments or fight Titans.”

“We can’t make a conclusion about Eren’s situation so quickly,” Moblit encouraged the other and crouched so that he could lay a comforting hand on his superior, “The color is strange and it might mean something else. He’s the first ever shifter we studied, so it’s not too farfetched that we’re just misunderstanding something.”

“Yeah, I know,” Hange chuckled weakly, “but if he’s really barren, his omegan instincts might kick in and that’s a really nasty situation. Eren has to be really brave to face all of this.”

“He’ll come through,” Moblit chuckled fondly, remembering the many times Eren broke through their experiments through sheer will and stubbornness.

The squad leader hummed with a soft smirk and eventually brought the tube up to have it observed under the light. It was truly a strange color and if they were wrong about their suspicion, Hange only hoped that it didn’t mean anything more lethal.

Eren had formed a sort of friendship with some of the few omegas of Legion.
Most of them were either mothers or newly presented ones who looked up to the older omega as a brother. The brunet didn’t have the luxury to truly spend time with them but now that Hange’s experiments are on hold, Eren had nothing to do but sit around for hours with his newfound friends.

A shy omega named Mina had offered a spot for Eren in their little circle of weavers. Since there was no formal training yet after mating season, the omegas busied themselves by coming together and making baskets and mats.

“You’re very good at this, Eren,” Mina complimented the brunet as she stared closely at the woven work between Eren’s tan fingers. The pup that she was nursing made a garbled complaint until the little boy eventually lulled into half-sleep again.

Eren chuckled at the mermaid and merely gave a shrug, “Trust me, I used to suck at these so bad when I was little. Mikasa used to make five baskets in one afternoon and I only had one half-assed mat to present to my mom.”

Mina smiled softly, tucking a stray black strand of hair back into her thick pigtails, “Well, it doesn’t matter now ‘cause you’re really killing it.”

“Thanks,” Eren grinned and went back to work. The seaweed that Legion uses were a little too thick and scratchy compared to what Marians made use of, but the omega quickly found a way to make the stubborn things tie together. Thankfully, Mina had been patient with him even if he was sort of a klutz just a few hours ago.

The little pup on Mina’s lap eventually started making cranky noises again and the mermaid was forced to stop her work to jostle the crying infant into calmness. Eren watched the interaction, wide-eyed and unconsciously pressed a hand on his stomach.

“Being a parent,” Eren started with a lick of his lips, “Is it difficult?”

“Huh? Oh, it could be challenging at first!” Mina chuckled, “But when your pup gives you that gummy smile, it’s like all your problems would just wash away.”

The brunet smiled a bit and eyed the pup who was now biting and sucking on Mina’s index finger. Huge caramel eyes stared back at Eren’s turquoise ones. The pup made a soft coo which made Eren want to pet the little one’s soft black hair. It was the same color as Levi’s and that just made the warm water omega miss his alpha more.

“I-I think I want a litter,” Eren confessed discreetly, “but I also don’t want them to live in a world where Titans exist. I still want to finish them all but—”

“—but you also want a sense of normalcy?” Mina beamed as if she knew.

“Yeah,” Eren answered back weakly. He didn’t want to give up on his dream to rid the ocean of those cursed creatures, but he also couldn’t fight the innate need to have something stable. Was it wrong to want something like that?

The golden tailed omega was about to go back to his work when a startling smell of unpleasant foreign omega reached his nose. It was awfully too fragrant, like fruit about to go bad, mixed with the particular scent of sun that was strictly incorporated with warmer waters.

“Oh would you look at that!” cried a shrill accented voice, “ain’t that Eren Jaeger? The Titan shifter?”

Eren tensed at the way he’s being addressed. He could practically hear the singsong sarcasm in the
voice of the mermaid who is undoubtedly the pungent smelling omega. What the fuck is another warm water omega doing in a place like this?

“Oi, stop that!” reprimanded a male mer who undoubtedly carried the scent of alpha, “Have some respect. We’re not in our own territory.”

The brunet turned around and saw the stranger who was seemingly taunting him. She had short almost-blond hair cut unevenly that some strands curled inward; wide amber eyes that looked mischievous, and a tiny smirk on her pale face. Her tail was a bright mint green with speckles of white, an indication that she’s probably from Sina territory. What really gave it away was the pearl studded shells that covered her breasts; a clothing choice that is most common in inner Sina.

“Stop worrying, Reiner. It’s not every day that you get to see a damn shifter in the eye,” the omega mermaid leered, “right?”

Eren hissed at the girl but the alpha who is probably Reiner held the female back, “Sorry! She’s naturally burdensome. We don’t want any trouble.”

The alpha was a hulking image, made purely out of muscles that were sculpted through training. His blond hair was cut short and his eyes were a distinct hazel. Reiner had a very defined jaw that was nicked slightly with scars. His tail was an olive green.

The Marian brunet wrinkled his nose, “Just learn how to put a lid on it. What are warm water mers like you even doing here?”

Reiner puffed his chest proudly and offered a comforting smile, “We’re travelling mers. Our mission is to explore different reefs and territories to scout for food and supplies. I’m not sure if you already know but the upper waters just suffered a recent attack. Merfolk are suffering deep hunger because of it.”

“T-They have mers to do that kind of stuff?” Eren gasped, “Aren’t we forbidden from crossing the coral walls of the borders?”

The alpha laughed heartily which annoyed the omega trapped in his hold, “It’s a special circumstance and we’re not entirely thrilled to be swimming in Titan infested waters. Though it does sound pretty neat to be finally seeing a whole different world, right Eren?”

Eren’s eyes brightened as he scratched the back of his head, “I haven’t seen that much but it does feel nice to be somewhere different.”

“Ah, how rude of me,” the blond snorted, “The name’s Reiner Braun by the way, and this is Hitch Dreyse. She’s travelling with me, Bertolt and Annie with the rest of our team.”

The brunet looked behind the pair and indeed saw two more figures looming unsurely in the background. The other omega, Berthold, was frustratingly tall and had a blue-green colored tail with bright yellow linings on each side. He looked nervous but there was a kind smile on his face. The other, Annie, smelled weird, since she smells like both beta and alpha. The mermaid had light blonde hair tucked in a bun; her eyes were a frosty cold blue just like her tail. It strangely reminded Eren of crystals.

“Uh, nice to meet you,” Eren chuckled at the awkwardness of meeting fellow warm water mers again, “I’m Eren Jaeger but you already knew that.”

“Oi!” called a high ranking officer that Eren immediately took notice of, “You can’t be here. The
visitors’ area is only in the eastern area.”

“Yes, sorry!” Reiner apologized profusely, “We’re going back right away!”

The alpha nodded a goodbye to Eren, causing the omega to feel strangely flustered. It didn’t take long before the strange group hurriedly went to the other side. It didn’t escape Eren’s keen ears that the alpha reprimanded Hitch thoroughly. Eren smirked, he’s happy that the mermaid will learn her place. She’s so rude and rubbed Eren the wrong way.

“Wow,” Mina whispered from behind Eren, “I always thought alphas from Legion were much bigger but I guess I was wrong. That is a hell of a meaty guy.”

Eren squawked embarrassedly, his cheeks burning like he’d been caught staring.

“Oh my god, Eren,” Mina laughed, “I won’t tell Levi if you don’t tell my mate about what I said!”

“Shit, I wasn’t— Gods, of course I want Levi more! It’s just he smells so comforting and warm and I—“

The other omega bit her lip and her pup did the obnoxious laughing for her, “I was only teasing, Eren. There’s something really strange about them. There’s like a weird pull, no?”

“I just want Levi home,” Eren whined lowly, “everything’s getting weird and I feel like something bad is going to happen.”

The seventh day had already hit when Eren finally felt blood trickling from his fingertips due to excessive biting. The commander and his team should have been back to Krolva by now but there were no signs of their return. Mike had remained tight lipped no matter how many times Eren begged him to tell him something about his mate’s condition. No one in the reef was talking and it made the atmosphere tense than it had been when the walls were breached. Something was happening and they’re completely in the dark.

The omega was restless but Hange and the others tried their best to distract the brunet. It wasn’t an easy task. They were running out of activities to do despite the fact that formal training had started days ago.

In a desperate attempt to get any news, Eren fled to the travelling group of mers. They were about to leave in a day or two, and Eren would be damned if he didn’t get any information from them.

“Uh, hello,” Eren greeted unsurely when we swam down the cluster of caves where Reiner and his friends were staying in, “Is anyone here?”

“Eren, come in!” called a voice that was undoubtedly the alpha.

The omega obeyed and wiggled his way in. There was a mess of crates, nets, and other items Eren wasn’t sure he knew the name of. It seemed like they’re all packed and ready to go.

“Ohoh, look at what the catfish dragged in,” Hitch drawled, “What’s a good boy like you doing here? Aren’t you supposed to be waiting obediently for your Underground alpha?”

Eren growled at the mermaid, his fins fluttering in agitation, “What the hell is your problem!?”

“Oh, nothing much,” the mermaid chuckled and grinned at the other omega like she was going to eat him alive, “You’re so quick to agitate and life’s been pretty boring recently. So tell me Eren,
what’s it like to be a thug’s nest warmer?”

“Hey, stop that—“

“You fucking bitch!” Eren seethed heatedly as he released his fangs and claws.

“You got one letter wrong, sweet cheeks,” Hitch rolled her eyes and pushed Reiner’s reprimanding hand away, “It’s true though, isn’t it? You’ve been fucking an alpha who’s obviously not your mate. Why’s everyone so mad at me for telling the truth?”

The brunet lost control and pounced on the mermaid, hissing and punching as the other omega screamed and slapped him away. Reiner tried to separate the two, but the omegas were too quick and agile. Eventually, Bertolt prevented the alpha from going near the fight, knowing that separating them will only result to deeper resentment.

“It’s fucking true you psychotic monster!” Hitched yelled as she ducked a punch, “You’re too blind to even see it.”

“What the hell do you know about us, asshole!?” Eren screamed and destroyed two crates that were thrown towards him, “You don’t know jackshit so stop pretending like you can fucking lord over me!”

Hitch gasped and received a punch to the gut but she was flexible enough to catch Eren’s wrist and twist it, “Oh, yeah? Then tell me if I’m wrong. Isn’t it common practice for these cold water asshats to bite their mates and form a bond? Isn’t that how they tie the knot, so to speak?”

Eren stiffened, his wide eyes glowing and staring at Hitch with murderous intent.

“Forget, huh? Did your precious mate forget to tell you that important little thing? If Captain Levi really cared for you, he wouldn’t leave you here rotting just to wait for him to come back home. And to what? To be fucked again without being bonded? Don’t make me laugh! You’re being trained like an animal. Fucked to obey his superior,” Hitch grinned maliciously, “Who’s the bitch now, Eren?”

The golden tailed omega screamed in agony and contorted his body to escape Hitch’s hold. The mermaid yelped and felt the bones of her face give in as the crunch of Eren’s fist punched her cheekbone. Pain exploded all over Hitch’s head until the newly arrived Annie had pulled Eren away from her.

“Why you little—“

“Enough!” Reiner’s voice boomed, “We don’t want to hear anymore from you.”

Hitch glared at the alpha and spat out a tooth. Eren was still struggling in Annie’s hold, his eyes ablaze with genuine hatred and hurt for his alpha. The things that Hitch said were too painfully true but Eren refused to betray his alpha like that. Levi must have had a good reason. Levi would never—

“Eren,” Bertolt cooed as he pumped calming pheromones, “Please come away. Let’s get you somewhere safe and quiet, okay?”

The younger omega looked lost with pools of unshed tears drowning his eyes. Eren still grit his teeth and refused to retract his fangs. It was only when Reiner helped pumped more pheromones that Eren finally succumbed to calmness. Annie brought the two omegas in a fairly secluded area and left without a sound.
“I know saying sorry won’t change anything,” Bertolt started after minutes of them sitting on a cliff that faced a wide horizon of nothing but sand and stones, “but I’m going to say it anyway because you deserve as much. Hitch could be a bit too much at times.”

“s’kay,” Eren muttered, the inside of his mouth as swollen as his bruised knuckles, “I shouldn’t have exploded like that too but I just—I don’t like her talking about Levi that way.”

Bertolt chuckled and waved off Eren, “I know the feeling. I get really uncomfortable when someone bad mouths my alpha as well. I couldn’t intervene though. It’s so damn frustrating.”

“Is Reiner your—“ Eren trailed off.

The taller omega beamed at Eren and the boy immediately felt a jolt of happiness for them.

“It must be nice... to have a normal relationship with your alpha.”

“I don’t really know about normal,” Bertolt chuckled nervously, “And anyway, what were you doing out here? I’m pretty sure you didn’t come visit just for an idle chat.”

That’s right. Eren came all the way out here because fear gripped his heart and he wanted any information on Levi. He didn’t really know what the travelling group could tell him but the omega was desperate enough for anything. Now, he seemed anxious about hearing anything from them at all.

“I—Well, I just wanted to know how long it usually take to go to Sina from here and back,” Eren whispered, “Levi has been gone for a week and I haven’t heard anything from him.”

“That’s an awfully long time,” Bertolt frowned as he picked at the pebbles sitting near their tails, “You’re worried sick, aren’t you? I can’t really blame you for it. I would also lose my mind if Reiner went into Neptune knows where.”

“Do you think he’ll be back today?”

The other omega bit his lip and bowed, “I don’t know, Eren. He must be doing something very important, that’s why he couldn’t return to you immediately.”

Eren cursed and curled in on himself. It was unfair. He was trying to be good and wait for Levi’s return even if hated the damn excursion in the first place. It didn’t help that Hitch’s words were now eating up his mind, playing cruel tricks on him. He did not want to doubt his alpha. He really didn’t.

“Eren, if there’s anything that we could do for you,” Bertolt started earnestly, “anything at all, you come to us, okay? We’ll help you out in any way we can.”

“Thank you,” Eren mumbled from under his crossed arms. He just wanted his mate to be home.

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It shouldn’t have been this way.

It could have been handled better, Hange thought as they stared at nothing in the embrace of their messy office. Eren had been upset for days, forced into physical work just to burn off his worries. The officers were so focused on distracting the youth that they forgot how to treat Eren properly.

Now, a broken test tube sparkled in a small heap upon the wooden floorboards. Its dull purple liquid had dissolved into a thin cloud. Eren had broken in and demanded answers.
He got a heartbreak instead.

The omega was distraught and plagued with heavy sadness. Hange had tried to play it off but it only hurt more than necessary. The brunet screamed silently and stormed out with a heavy heart. Hange should have known better. Hange should not have to suffer the acrid scent of a depressed omega.

“Levi, please come home,” Hange pleaded and stared at the open ceiling, a weak curtain of light fighting its way to brighten the darkened enclosure.

Moblit had been quick to try and fix the situation, immediately racing into Levi’s territory and alerting Isabel and Furlan about the situation. The two betas, who acted like Levi and Eren’s own children, had felt shock and pity for the omega. Isabel cried earnestly as she pleaded to Furlan to go look for Eren with her. It didn’t take much convincing, really. Furlan was ready to bolt out of their home when Moblit had told them that Eren went missing.

The whole of Legion was immediately sent out to search for Eren when hours had passed and not one soul had seen a golden tail within the reef. Mike and Hange cursed as they barked out orders left and right. Eren wouldn’t just run away like that. The omega had no idea how to navigate through the deeper waters. He’d be dead before he even reaches another colony.

“Find him now!” Mike shouted at his team before securing a travel bag on his hips. Hange looked at him questioningly but the alpha merely gave a grimace.

“I need to snuff him out, Hange,” Mike gritted out, “We need to find him before word gets out to Commander Smith... and Levi.”

Hange shook their head in protest, “You stay here, Mike. It’s more important that our pod sees a higher up. Besides, I have so many things to say to Eren. I think I might be able to convince him to come back. Tell Moblit to follow me towards the trench trail.”

“You’re certain of where he is,” Mike sniffed.

“I know a bunch of warm waters mers who are also missing from our area.”

Chapter End Notes

That was... sad.

I can't say much but the next chapter is going to have... a lot of miscommunication.

So we're already touching on the more dramatic/deeper plot. It's going to be a whole lot of messy feelings before our boys finally have a break. Thank you so much again for sticking with me. Feel free to leave comments below if you have any questions or reactions. The second part of this is already half-written so I'll probably post that by tomorrow (which is just a few hours from now in my time oops.)
Till Death Do Us Part (Part 2)

Chapter Summary

"And no one answered his call."

Chapter Notes

Hello, everyone!

I have to admit... this chapter was extremely hard to put together. I've been so busy and the right words just weren't popping into my head so it was a struggle to fully finish this. Anyway, this chapter is full of angst. You have been warned. Also kindly check the updated tags so we won't encounter any trouble.

Here we go!

No one really knew that it was truly Eren’s decision to go. He felt suffocated in Krolva and he had to get out and see if Levi was safe. It didn’t take much, really; especially when Eren found out that he could probably never have pups. It tore him to pieces; he’d never felt more abandoned by the gods.

Eren had come crying to Reiner and Bertolt. He pleaded that they help him get to Sina just to see Levi again. The couple had been sympathetic while Hitch and Annie remained stoic about the situation. The omega was going to get them into trouble, Hitch said. But Bertolt remained steadfast in his promise.

They covered Eren with a deep green cloak before they discretely left Krolva.

It would take them a few days to reach Sina but Eren hadn’t felt bothered. The travel through the cold waters were nothing to him now. His mind was a mess, and he still definitely wanted to hit Hitch in the face but he pressed on. The brunet refused to eat a couple of times until Annie had coldly told him that all his efforts would be for nothing if Eren keeled over. The omega frowned and took his share of the shellfish they brought. Hitch still gave him shit about depleting their supplies. Eren couldn’t care less.

The pathways blurred into one. All that Eren ever saw were the deep blue of the ocean and the wide expanse of sand and corals. The marine life had been strangely quiet as well, as if picking up on the tension within the group. Eren sighed tiredly, his tail already suffering a dull color because of his current state. He was reminded of why he had hated being an omega in the first place.

“We’ll stop here for the meantime,” Reiner declared as he eyed an open space littered with sand dollars, “In a few hours, we’ll reach the borders of Sina. Make sure our supplies are tightly packed before we reach the walls.”
“Oh, thank fuck,” Hitch sighed in relief, “I thought I’d have to endure another hour of breathing in depression.”

Eren’s ears twitched in annoyance but he chose not to confront the mermaid. She was right, after all. He had been stinking up the place with the sour stench of his mood. He tried to hide it at first but when he saw Hitch getting really irritable, the boy could not resist making her more miserable by flaunting his scent.

It was a small sort of entertainment. Travelling with strangers would have been fun if Eren’s insecurities weren’t eating through his chest. Reiner, Bertolt, Hitch, and Annie were accompanied by three other mers and Eren had wanted to speak with them, seeing as they’re a stark contrast from the four. These mermen had darker tails, indicating that they’re not from Sina as the rest. It was strange, seeing this type of cooperation. Eren’s curiosity was piqued but he figured the reason behind the partnership was probably out of a desperate attempt to survive.

Annie had been the first to leave their small circle. She was called in by the group of cold water mers and they had spent their free time sparring. Eren’s eyes widened with fascination as he watched Annie brutally tear through the much bigger mermen. The mermaid had a sort of dangerous elegance in her movements. Eren wanted to learn how to do that.

An alpha grunted and cursed darkly as he was thrown into the ground, sand exploding into a thick cloud before it settled in and revealed the dark tailed mer pinned head first to the ocean floor. Eren wanted to snicker but he knew how sore alphas could be when they lose fights, especially in front of an omega.

“That was a really cool move, Annie,” Eren grinned for the first time since he left Krolva. If anything could distract him, it was good old roughhousing.

“Thanks,” Annie replied in a clipped tone, waving away the stray bangs that blocked her eyes. She didn’t seem like a talker like Eren.

Eren remained unaffected though. The boy burst brightly into an animated recount of how Annie locked the other alpha in a hold and used the other’s weight and momentum to his disadvantage. The blonde mermaid blinked fast and felt a tiny quirk of her lips at Eren’s antics.

“Ugh, it was so awesome, and your fists were poised up here,” Eren imitated Annie’s move and placed his own fists within the line of his eyes, “I’ve never seen anything like it. Where’d you learn that?”

“My father taught me,” Annie replied shortly, “does it really matter though?”

“Of course, it does!” Eren beamed although it was weaker than his normal smiles, “I didn’t get to learn a lot about fighting when I was in Shiganshina so it sucks to be really late in the game.”

“Fighting is not a game, Eren.”

“I know that,” Eren snorted, “but what I meant was I’m clearly lacking in technique and skill. I’ve seen mers smaller than me who could put down big alphas without much effort. I mean—you and Levi... you two are shorter than me but you could finish off your opponent faster than the rest of us.”

“You’re really attached to the captain, aren’t you?” Annie observed quietly.

Eren choked a laugh and rubbed at his arms, unconsciously curling in on himself, “Yeah. I’ve always looked up to him since I was a kid. He’s just so good at everything he does and I wanna
match up to that, you know? I promised to bring down Titan and I can’t do that if I can’t even stand by Levi’s side on the battlefield. I have to be stronger. There’s no other way out of it.”

A sparkle of interest twinkled in Annie’s cold eyes. Merpeople with a strong sense of justice and conviction always garnered her respect. It was obvious that Eren was truly genuine and driven by good intentions to be better at what he does, despite his status being an omega. It was now obvious to Annie how such a distant and terrifying mer like Levi Ackerman would willingly want to spend time with Eren.

“Trusting other mers so quickly, such a weird warm water omega,” Annie stated, “but if that’s what you truly want, I’m warning you that I won’t hold back.”

Eren grinned at the mermaid. It won’t be long before he would regret even challenging the other mer. Annie had constantly slammed him into the floor that Eren felt like he’s going to be permanently disfigured if not for his Titan powers. The other mers chuckled at Eren’s relentless will to try and attack Annie. It was futile, of course, but the more Eren punched and imitated the mermaid, the more Annie’s respect for him heightened. The spitfire within the brunet was truly blinding.

It was so strange that in their moments of struggle and beating each other up, a sense of friendship grew between them. It was very small, barely comparable to what he had with Armin and Mikasa, but it was there. They held mutual respect for one another; even if Eren looked like a beat up fruit after their sparring.

“Gods, I can’t feel my ribs,” Eren whined pitifully and shot Annie a half-hearted glare.

“I told you, I won’t hold back,” Annie smirked and crouched to observe the steam coming out of Eren’s tan skin, “though I wouldn’t worry about the wounds and bruises. It looks like they’re healing fast.”

“Yeah,” Eren whimpered as he tried to get up, “but that doesn’t mean that it didn’t hurt like hell.”

“Oi, you two,” Bertolt called out from afar, “We’re moving now so we could get to Sina before sundown!”

Eren grimaced and was bodily pulled up by Annie. Their team would be reaching the borders in no time and Eren didn’t know whether he was excited or terrified of seeing Levi again. There’s no doubt that the captain would be pissed and disappointed at the brunet for leaving Krolva without permission, but the need to know whether Levi was alright trumped over everything else.

“There’s no going back,” Annie whispered ominously.

The omega was afraid that she’s right.

Levi absolutely detested going to Sina.

The damn reef was bright and everything sparkled like it hated Levi’s eyes. It was definitely infuriating and the captain wanted nothing but to get this mission over with so he could return to Krolva and bathe in the intoxicating scent of his Eren.

Sina was known for its towering structures made entirely out of corals. The reef itself looked like a crown sitting atop a hill, a bright curtain of orange light draping over the structure made it pop out even more. Merchants were everywhere; rows and rows of stalls set up across the cobblestone
streets with displays of gold, pearls, and other rare items that Levi was sure he couldn’t afford.

The merpeople of Sina was just as obnoxious as their reef. They wore jewelry like it was some sort of competition. Mermen and mermaids had earrings, tiaras, hairclips, rings, bracelets, and armbands or belts made out of gold or silver chain loops. Precious gems stolen from human treasures were carved in and glowed like a thousand suns. Levi sneered at all of them; the pompous pod with the weird dramatic accent.

“Levi, please,” Erwin pleaded discretely, “We’ve been here for days and you still can’t get used to them.”

“Everyone looks constipated as fuck,” Levi growled, “makes my damn skin crawl. I hate it. They aren’t even looking at us properly.”

“It’s better if they don’t bother us, Levi,” Erwin sighed as he pinched the bridge of his nose. The commander wasn’t thrilled to be back in Sina but he learned the art of reeling in his emotions a long time ago.

“I like Shiganshina better,” the shorter alpha spat out and glared at a nobleman who made a mistake of looking at Levi too long.

“You like Shiganshina because that’s where you found your mate,” Erwin smirked, “We’ll get back to Eren as soon as you get yourself together.”

“We’re not going to stay here for another damn night, right?” Levi barked at the other, “I swear, Erwin, if I have to look at their goddamn faces again I’m going to—”

“No,” the blond alpha laughed as they snuck into a tight corner of a street, “We’re going home after we visit Petra. I’m sure she’d be very upset if we didn’t pass by. Wouldn’t want her to be angry, right?”

The raven haired captain made a pained noise at the back of his throat. Petra Ral had been a part of his elite team years ago despite the fact that the mermaid was half a warm water mer. The omega lady was a feisty one and could take down Titans alongside Levi and the others. She was also frightening when provoked, which Oluo had the unfortunate pleasure of personally knowing when he didn’t know better.

“She’s going to give me so much shit,” Levi grumbled as he picked on the healing scratches from Eren’s claws. He knew he still had the lingering scent of omega and it was the only source of pride and comfort Levi had. Eren’s scent on his skin made his alpha calmer.

“I’m sure Petra would be happy to know you’re finally settling down,” Erwin smiled fondly.

“Lovely,” Levi drawled mechanically and blindly followed Erwin into an opening. The small part of the reef where Petra’s been residing is fairly quiet, with no traffic similar to the main pathways. There were bright plants and stray sparkling stones that decorated the quaint territory. Small pots and half erected fences covered what looked like a caved in human cottage.

The commander made a move to knock on the door first, immediately smiling once Petra’s red head poked out of her nest. The omega laughed joyously and saluted the commander and captain, her eyes watery as she took in the image of her superiors in front of her doorstep.

“Oh my gods—” Petra gasped in delight, “I can’t believe this. Am I dreaming?”

“We’ll come back later if you need some time,” Erwin teased and the omega only laughed good-
“I can’t believe that you two are actually—” Petra trailed off, her nose twitching all of a sudden, “Captain is that...”

Levi shrugged and rubbed at his scent glands that he was sure still had Eren’s scent mark. The red headed omega screeched loudly and embraced the captain, immediately scenting the other merman and making delighted noises in her throat.

“Levi! Levi, oh my god— you’re mated!?” Petra burst out and embraced Levi again, “I’m so happy! It’s about time, captain!”

“Glad that you didn’t turn out as constipated as your neighbors, Petra,” Levi smirked at the omega who was happily clinging to him. Petra had always been very affectionate towards her team. It wasn’t a surprise that she would keep touching Levi and Erwin; it was how she showed happiness.

“A little too much, huh?” Petra laughed and released Levi in favor of showing them inside, “Come in, you two. I’m sure the light is hurting your eyes. I’ll draw up the curtains so it’ll be darker inside.”

“Thank fuck,” Levi sagged in relief as Erwin made a deep laugh.

The burning sensation from the horrid sunlight sank its nasty claws into Levi’s skin. The captain could already feel himself losing his mind to the biggest migraine he had ever suffered through. The pain was relentless, beating down on him until he felt internally weary. But something different clawed through him; a silent scream of agony and loneliness. Levi thought it would go away once he finally enters the cottage, deeming the pain as an effect of the sun.

What he didn’t know was that huge turquoise eyes were watching him in grief.

Eren prided himself in being steadfast and unbreakable. No matter how much the world turned on him, he never yielded nor gave up his beliefs and hopes. He might have shed a lot of tears but it didn’t mean he truly crumbled into nothingness.

This day, Eren thought he might have been slapped with a painful reality. He felt like he was finally reaching that breaking point.

The fast swim to Sina was nothing to the omega. He was very restless and wanted to see Levi as soon as possible. The fact that he’d be able to see Levi still alive and well had pushed Eren into a frenzy of search. The other mers he was with tried to match up with his speed. Only Annie, Bertolt and Reiner caught up to him.

It should have been a happy moment albeit a little bitter, to see Levi after such a long week. Eren was desperate for any kind of contact but he hadn’t imagined that it would go down like this.

The other warm water omega was beautiful.

She had short cut strawberry blonde hair, soft rounded face and thick lashes that framed honeyed orbs. Her tail was mesmerizing; a full gradient of peach and orange with billowy fins that looked like curtains of white.

Eren felt his mouth go dry as the two officers of Krolva smiled warmlyly at the girl who was determined to touch the two cold water mers as much as possible. The golden tailed omega suppressed a growl and a whine. Levi was allowed to have friends—
But the mermaid had scented his mate and Eren lost himself in blind jealousy. Annie and pinned him down and growled at him to keep silent and not make a scene. The omega wriggled helplessly and watched as Levi smiled and joked with the other prettier omega like he was very fond of her. That couldn’t be right. Levi hated it when other people touched him. Captain Levi Ackerman never smiled so effortlessly for anyone except Eren.

“Eren, don’t,” Bertolt pleaded. The overwhelming scent of distress and agony was already affecting the other omega so much that Bertolt’s voice was shaking. A quiet little cry tore out of Eren when his mate disappeared into the mermaid’s home.

The omega was shaking terribly from the secluded area where he sat. His large eyes were glazed over, seemingly pinned to the closed door where his mate went into. This wasn’t right. Levi was supposed to be going home; supposed to be in Eren’s arms and smiling at his young mate. Levi was supposed to mark him as his forever. But why—

“No...” Eren whispered; pearlescent tears finally falling as the omega’s heart sank. He should have known better, really; should have known better that mers like him were cursed. Eren was a Titan shifter who didn’t deserve to live.

Levi deserved better than a brat like him; a damaged omega who was doomed to be alone from the beginning, nothing to offer but pure stubbornness and a smart mouth. Eren can’t even carry Levi’s pups. Honestly, he can’t blame the alpha for not taking him. The omega was more of a liability than an asset. All he was good for was fighting.

“I—I wanna go,” Eren cried and bit his lip. His instincts were screaming at him to go after Levi and demand an explanation. He wanted to tear that cottage apart and challenge anyone who wanted to take his alpha away from him, but Eren did not have the right. He loved Levi and he refused to do anything that would give the older mer more reason to leave Eren.

Eren’s tan hand instinctively pressed over his neck where the phantom mark of Levi’s teeth sunk in. The brunet patted the area and found himself panicking even more when he realized that it was close to gone. He noticed that it was diminishing every single day but he refused to believe it. It wasn’t really a mark, he knew that. But it was one of the only things he could cling to and now—

The other mers looked at each other with barely concealed worry and distress. A depressed omega fresh out of heat would usually trigger other merfolk to be more protective. Annie and the others were already on edge and itching for a fight out of instinct. Eren remained oblivious and continued to scrub his tears away with a broken growl.

“We need to get out of here,” Hitch hissed between her teeth, nose twitching at the increasing scent of sadness that was sure to grab attention.

Reiner hesitantly agreed and tried to pry Eren away but the brunet snarled and thrashed against the alpha’s hold. At one point he bit Reiner’s arm out of feral desperation to get away but Eren was subdued by the combined efforts of thick calming pheromones released by the others.

“No, no. I don’t— Don’t make me sleep,” Eren pleaded and shook tiredly, “I haven’t even— Levi...”

He wanted to say he haven’t even talked to Levi yet; haven’t told the other how the alpha was such an ass for making Eren worry constantly over his safety; haven’t told Levi how he failed the other. Eren wanted to do so many things and yet his insides were frozen with grief. For too long, he tried to keep himself together but it’s as if fate hated him. His one chance at normalcy was grabbed away too early.
Will Levi ever forgive him for this?

With a quiet murmur, Eren succumbed to a restless sleep. His cheeks crusted with pearlescent tears that were slowly being peeled away by the current of the ocean. Reiner pressed his lips together and observed the weakened omega in his arms. The blond alpha really did not want to do this but he had no choice. Protecting his own mate was more important to him than expressing basic decency. He could only hope that Eren would survive to make his life better after everything.

The group had left Sina under the cover of long stretched shadows. They brought nothing with them but the hooded cloaks on their heads and a body covered in thick blanket. There were times Eren would blink his eyes open but the extreme stress that his body and mind were subjected to had affected him harder than normal.

The omega dreamt of nothing but darkness.

“Levi,” Petra cooed as she sat next to her former captain, “You’re acting strange. Is there something wrong? Are the lights still bothering you?”

The raven haired alpha shook his head but still continued rubbing over the back of his nape. There was a painful pull that was dragging his head downwards. The back of his eyes were already burning and there was a strange hole in his chest. He felt increasingly sad as he continued to stay anywhere near Petra and it made the alpha more agitated.

Erwin looked at his friend with a knowing glint in his eyes, “I think I have an idea on what’s going on. Petra, if you would, we’ll wrap this up as fast as we can. Levi needs to get back to Eren as soon as possible. It’s been far too long for newly attached mates to be separated.”

The mermaid nodded with a little smile. She never imagined that Levi would truly settle down with anyone. Back in the day when she still worked actively with the pod, Captain Levi Ackerman was untouchable. He barely spoke more than a few words with his fellow soldiers; always suppressing an irritated glare whenever someone tries to even touch him. The merfolk of Krolva thought Petra would be Levi’s intended, seeing as the female caught a soft spot in Levi’s heart. The mermaid thought so too and blindly fell for the alpha’s mysterious persona but gradually, Petra discovered that Levi held no romantic interest in her. It was fine, actually, since the heartbreak led her to her mate.

“We’ve been hearing very little news inside the palace,” Petra started with a serious tone. She can’t afford to reminisce now. “But there’s been unrest within Sina since the depletion of food supplies. Shiganshina and Trost had been close trading partners but the recent attack had left everyone almost nothing. The nobles are getting greedy and they’re pressuring the king to do something about it.”

“The king doesn’t look too bothered by it, though,” Erwin stated clinically, “Even if he is a beta, he’s bound to express some level of protective instincts and concern not only for his people but his current position in power. His proposal to work with us is also a little unnerving. It’s almost too easy. I can feel that they’re making a move underneath the fiasco.”

“We thought so too,” Petra nodded grimly and picked at the threads of her floral couch, “I’m also quite surprised that he didn’t express much disdain for the presence of a shifter within your ranks.”

With the mention of a shifter, Levi snarled and his muscles tensed as if poised to attack and defend his mate’s honor. Petra instinctively barred her neck to appease the alpha and show that she meant no malice. Erwin watched as Levi visibly sank back and muttered an embarrassed ‘sorry’ for his
weird behavior.

“I didn’t mean anything bad about it, captain,” Petra smiled easily, “I’m pretty sure Eren must be a wonderful person for him to capture your heart, but a lot of people here are biased and they don’t take well to anything related to Titan.”

Levi sniffed uncomfortably, “I know.”

The mermaid stifled a chuckle and brought back her attention to the commander, “It’s mostly just fear of the unknown but it’s been getting worse recently. There have been rumors of cold water merfolk sightings around Sina and sometimes Shiganshina. We haven’t verified this yet but it’s driving the people here a little stir crazy.”

“Cold water mers?” Levi quirked a brow and glanced at Erwin with worry.

“Yes,” Petra answered grimly, “Though that would mean they’re from Legion or—“

“That can’t be fucking right.”

“As I feared,” Erwin pressed his lips thinly, “The most recent attack on Krolva brought up a disturbing detail as well. It seems like the genocide of the Underground wasn’t entirely successful. If this rumor within Sina proves to be true, then it seems like we’re battling far more powerful merpeople with a complicated plan.”

Petra’s fins wriggled agitatedly, “What? What happened down there?”

“Kenny Ackerman.” Levi hissed in disdain. The captain always guessed that his bastard relative would survive the massacre of their pod. Kenny was just too slippery to fall victim to such a tragedy. Of course, some bitter part of Levi hoped that the older merman had perished that faithful night.

“You’re right, commander. Something’s not quite right about this,” Petra sighed worriedly, “We’re going to do our best to broaden our resources on intel but— Captain Levi!”

The blond alpha was startled out of his inner stupor. The smaller alpha had fallen off the couch, muscles taut and breath labored in horrid pain. Petra immediately knelt beside Levi and tried to soothe him with her softer pheromones but the alpha was too strung up. Levi’s hands clutched at his chest, already making scratching marks.

“Levi!” Erwin shouted and moved closer to his fallen friend, “What’s going on?”

“I—I, fuck!” Levi hissed, his eyes glazed and unfocused, “Don’t touch me!”

The commander tried again with determined eyes, “We can’t help you if you don’t tell us what’s happening, Levi. Make up words to describe it. You have to do better than this.”

“Hurts, burn,” Levi panted heavily as his weight was already drawing him further down the floor, “E-ren.”

Petra immediately straightened, her honeyed orbs looking directly at Erwin’s icy ones, “This Eren. This boy is from the warm waters, right? And you said he mated with Levi.”

“Eren tried to,” Erwin answered guiltily. He didn’t want to bring up this issue when Levi was in obvious pain and distress but he had to find out what’s causing the other alpha to act strangely, “The bond probably didn’t catch as well as it should have, since they’re both different species. Levi
wasn’t also able to claim Eren through a bond bite.”

The omega hissed and clenched her hands, “This is— this is probably the effect of the incomplete bond. Eren had already imprinted himself on Levi but— Levi should be oblivious to this unless...”

Erwin seemed to have caught on to the implication, “Levi! Goddamn— did you bite Eren? Did you pseudo-bond him!?"

The captain gasped as another wave of fear and desperation slammed through his ribs. It wasn’t his emotions but it echoed and thrummed through his entire being. It took a few seconds before the question finally registered. Levi could only nod weakly.

“You stupid son of a—“ Commander Erwin shook his head but he held pity in his eyes. Levi must have not known the full consequence of his actions. A pseudo-mark was barely anything. It was a promise but it faded easily. Yet it was just as deadly as a bond itself. It amplifies what is already between the pair. If Levi had, in his inner alpha’s desperation, marked Eren who in turn imprinted himself on Levi—

Suddenly, flashes of blurred images raced in Levi’s head. The alpha felt like he was thrown into a whirlpool. The urge to vomit was strong but he held fast. There were echoing voices which blurred into one until it all faded into a singular familiar voice.

It was Eren’s.

The boy’s scared voice cracked. He was trying to get away from something. The omega was terrified as he fought off a foreign alpha.

Levi immediately snarled and barked. Eren was his and no alpha should touch his omega in such a harsh way. Levi wanted to sink his claws into the meat of the foreign alpha and watch him bleed to death.

Then suddenly a huge net was cast.

There was a needle and Levi felt like his blood was on fire—

“LEVI!” Erwin’s voice boomed loudly and Levi was suddenly thrown back into reality. He didn’t even notice that he lost awareness of his surroundings. Petra had moved herself far away, a haunted and scared look on her face. It was only then that Levi realized that his claws and fangs extended, his forearms covered in black poison like the saliva dripping from his mouth. Shit, he was at his most feral. Levi didn’t usually have the need to secrete poison through the mouth; only when he was— enraged.

“E-Erwin! Something’s happened to Eren!” Levi spoke through the flood of black poison in his mouth. It’s probably disgusting as fuck to look at but he couldn’t care less. His brat was in danger and he was stuck in the middle of godforsaken Sina being a useless fuck. Levi had to get to Eren or it will haunt him forever.

“Commander, if there’s anything—“ Petra trailed off, trying desperately to fight off her omegan instincts to cower and bow at the seething alpha in her home.

The blond alpha shook his head and directed Petra to stay in Sina and alert the others. It would not bode well to get the mermaid involved in fights again when she’s more useful as an insider in Sina. The captain growled aggressively to get the commander’s attention again; the potent smell of urgency and boiling worry reeked inside the little home. They had no time to waste. Looks like Erwin was right about his assumptions.
Eren immediately regretted leaving Krolva.

The brunet had always been reprimanded since childhood that he always acted before thinking. He thought very little of it in the past and now he has to suffer the consequences.

He had awoken in a strange place with only Reiner to welcome him back to consciousness. Eren could vaguely scent the others but it was muted and too far away. The omega had obviously been lost in distress and grief that he did not notice he had been moved. Eren cursed at himself for not seeing this as an early red flag. He was too caught up by his own emotions that he didn’t realize he was trapped.

It was only when Reiner started planting ideas in his head that Eren started to get defensive and angry. The omega surely felt lonely and sorrowful but it was not enough to throw away his stubborn love for his alpha. Reiner had the nerve to suggest that Eren leave Legion behind and start a new life as a wanderer; a free spirit who is not trapped within the confines of coral walls.

Such an idea would have been welcomed if Eren was younger. Now, he had someone to cling to and he had responsibilities that he must face. Besides, permanently leaving Krolva meant he would abandon his mate. Was Levi even his mate—

“No!” Eren yelled, his eyes growing wide and ablaze with indignation and fear. This alpha had the fucking nerve to induce sleep through excessive pheromones, drag him in the middle of nowhere, and tell Eren to leave his alpha behind. Is this guy asking for a fight? Eren is sure that he’ll take the alpha on and punch his goddamned teeth in.

“I don’t understand, Eren,” Reiner stated with a frighteningly calm tone, “Your alpha had left you and you’re still willing to go back to him. He’s responsible for your capture and yet you won’t fight it?”

“Stop fucking lying!” Eren yelled as his fins quivered in a threatening manner, “I don’t appreciate the bullshit coming out of your fucking mouth, so if I were you I’d shut my damn trap. Levi might have— fuck you! I don’t care. I’m getting answers and it’s not going to come from you!”

“I’m afraid you have no other choice.”

The omega hissed, “what’s that supposed to mean, asshole!?”

It took a moment before Eren realized that a meaty grip had clutched his wrist. Eren growled and fought off Reiner but the bulky alpha had a surprising strength in him. In a moment of panic, Eren’s omega instinct started to yell at him to drop and submit but the brunet refused to listen. The boy tried to transform to overpower the alpha but he couldn’t. The panicked scent coming from Eren increased as he tried to wriggle out of the tight grip.

“We hoped that it wouldn’t be this way, Eren,” Reiner muttered with a sliver of guilt, “we did try to make it a bit easier on you to decide to come with us.”

“Yeah, with what? Your charming personality of disregarding fucking consent!” Eren yelled back and tried to punch the alpha’s face but he missed.

“Don’t make me hurt you,” Reiner warned.

Eren grinned eerily with murderous intent that was enough to startle the alpha, “Well then, easier for me to kill you with my bare hands.” Reiner was momentarily startled before he noticed a whistling punch coming his way. The intent
of murder clearly painted on an omega’s face cost him a gash to the side of his face. The blond alpha tumbled back and mistakenly released his hold on Eren.

The omega growled and released his claws. Eren kept pulling at the back of his head to force his body to shift but he couldn’t. It’s the first time he encountered such a problem and he didn’t know why. The brunet cursed and spat in anger. He had no choice but to fight the alpha hand to hand.

Reiner finally shook off the shock and aimed his attack on Eren. The two crashed into each other with Reiner trying to choke the golden tailed omega into submission. It worked for barely a few seconds before Eren rammed an elbow at Reiner’s nose, causing a sickening crunch and a nasty cloud of blood to erupt. The alpha hissed and slammed Eren towards the stone walls twice. Eren felt like he was going to lose consciousness from the blow at the back of his head.

“You fuckin’ piece of shit,” Eren garbled and ran his sharp claws down Reiner’s forearm.

The blond roared in pain and moved away, cradling his wounded arm while glaring at Eren with frustration and disgust. He underestimated the omega and now he paid for it in blood and flesh.

“What the fuck do you want from me!?” Eren hissed, his eyes a feral dark ocean blue with golden rings trying to rise like blood seeping through throbbing veins. His shifter side was trying to come out but it needed a trigger that Eren wasn’t aware of. Eren always thought he could shift freely but maybe he was mistaken.

Suddenly, the waters felt electric and uncomfortably hot. Eren blinked and scented the area, finding the rising scent of chemicals and dead meat filling his nose and gills. The omega gagged and tried to ward off the scent.

“It’s not us who wants something from you, Eren,” Reiner steadily explained as crackling yellow bolts crept along his wounded arm, “Some very dangerous people would want you on their side. We’re just unfortunate to be caught in the net as well.”

“What the hell are you talking about!?” Eren demanded; his heart beating heavily like war drums as he noticed that something was happening to the alpha’s body.

A loud screech echoed from the outside. The two stared at the direction; the steady increase of sounds of fighting and struggle made them more anxious. Reiner cursed to himself, knowing that his mate and the others were the ones who have to deal with whatever backup Legion sent to find Eren.

“Eren, surrender now and no one would have to get hurt!” Reiner bellowed, his skin shifting until armor-like plates started forming over exposed muscles.

The brunet looked torn as his huge eyes took in Reiner’s transformation. He wasn’t alone. He wasn’t the only shifter. That has got to be the only explanation to all this mess. But why the hell did they want him? Eren wasn’t fully trained by Legion and he hasn’t even fully reached the peak of his powers.

A loud garbled scream broke Eren from his thinking. It wasn’t like they weren’t already hurting other innocent merpeople. Besides, Reiner would be delusional if he thinks he can easily make Eren surrender just like that. Clearly they’re going to take him so that someone can take advantage of Eren’s Titan powers. The omega refused to be anyone’s mindless tool.

“You can eat shit,” Eren snarled and charged at Reiner in full force. The alpha easily caught him since the blond had already been halfway through his transformation. Eren wriggled out of the
alpha’s reach and grabbed a stone slab, dislodging it from the ground and hitting Reiner’s head until the stone split into half. The alpha kicked Eren away, effectively sending the omega flying to the opposite side and exposing his back. Eren screamed in agony as he felt long claws dig into the meat of his back.

At once the alpha was on top of him, now fully transformed and reeking of dominant pheromones. The omega in Eren whimpered and wanted to crawl into a safe nest; wanted to crawl into Levi’s arms and just forget everything.

“You are coming with us,” Reiner declared and Eren could only groggily whimper in protest. The claws were still digging into his back, forcing the open wound to sting even more and prevent Eren’s shifter powers to heal his body.

“Oh boy,” cried a sing-song voice, “You really should know when no is a no, buddy.”

The two looked up and saw the darkened image of Squad Leader Hange wielding twin swords bathed in blood that was quickly being washed away by the current. The beta smiled eerily and pointed their weapon at the alpha, “Get off or I’ll make you.”

Reiner snarled and deepened the claws into Eren’s back, making the omega cry out and curse. The squad leader frowned and shook their head at the action. This alpha was clearly underestimating them.

“Suit yourself, boy,” Hange smiled darkly before diving into the bottom of the trench and swinging the deadly blades towards Reiner’s head. The alpha was quick enough to avoid the blow and was effectively driven off of Eren.

Hange hummed as they stole a quick glance at Eren, “You and I have a lot to talk about, Eren. For now, I’d appreciate it if you’d allow me to help you.”

Eren immediately felt like he was being reprimanded. The boy felt regretful as tears sprung up from his saddened eyes. He had said so many hurtful things to Hange in a fit of anger. The squad leader did not deserve it and Eren felt like an ass for letting his emotions control him like that. Yet, despite his stubbornness, his superior still wanted to protect him.

“I-I’m sorry—“

“Nah, sweetie,” Hange laughed, “I understand completely. Help me kick this alpha’s ass and we’ll call it even. Levi would want to cuddle with you in your nest, right? Fertile or not; monster or not; different or the same, Levi would choose you all the same— yes?”

“Yes...” Eren answered brokenly. He wasn’t entirely sure if Levi would still accept him after the alpha learns of everything that happened but Eren could hope. He would be the luckiest omega if he was to be Levi’s mate but even if that’s not the case anymore, he’d rather spend his years within the arms of a pod which had taken him in when nobody wanted Eren to still be alive. Legion might have some doubtful mers, but at least Eren experienced a level of acceptance from most of them.

Hange gave him a tight nod before speeding towards the alpha. Reiner had already a changed appearance at this time; his muscles were showing in blood red and there were bone-like armor plates surrounding most of his body. The squad leader panted in effort as they swung their sharp blades but the weapon could barely cut through the bone armor.

The beta cursed when the alpha blocked an attack and pushed Hange to the floor, effectively grabbing one of the twin blades and stabbing Hange’s shoulder and pinning them to the ground.
“Squad Leader Hange!” Eren yelled in distress and threw Reiner a murderous look; like the alpha was a disgusting vermin meant to be exterminated.

The armored shifter merely looked at him with cold dead eyes.

“Eren, fight!” Hange yelled through their pain and used their claws to break the metal sticking out of their shoulder.

The omega immediately registered the order; the blinding pain shooting from his back cackled and burned through his veins. Eren instantly recognized his body contorting as his skin tingled with a familiar burn. The pain from his deep wound now lay long forgotten. Only the howling anger and hatred against Titan flooded Eren’s consciousness until the boy could barely recognize his own deep roar.

Eren attacked Reiner with feral swipes and punches. The alpha blocked most of them effectively but he was driven up to the wall until his armored back cracked the trench walls, creating a massive dent.

Hange struggled momentarily with their bloodied hands and pulled the weapon free. The squad leader sat up and immediately noticed another form approaching them. It was a fierce Titan female with most of her muscles exposed, like skin fallen off her body. Crystals grew from various parts of her like some sick version of freckles. What the fuck was going on?

“Eren, look out!” Hange screamed as they lunged for their only remaining blade. The female Titan was fast approaching, its claws covered in blue crystal was headed straight for Eren’s exposed back. The beta pushed off the jagged floor, ignoring the frightening pain of their shoulder as they blocked the female.

Hange was smart enough to avoid the crystal and had sliced through the bare flesh of the female Titan’s waist and forearms. The Titan staggered momentarily before slamming a crystal covered tail against Hange. The squad leader hissed and ducked as they threw the blade into the female’s ribs like a fast harpoon. The female ignored the wound and reached for Eren who was still struggling with the shifter form of Reiner. The omega shifter bellowed angrily as female sunk its crystal covered fingers into Eren’s neck and tried to yank him away from the armored shifter.

Hange was about to make a move to assist Eren when a foreign cold water mer shot out harpoons with thick metal wires. Where the hell did they get weapons like that?

“Shit!” Hange cursed as their movements were restrained. The cold water mer smirked at the trapped beta and made a show of pumping poison into his forearms— just like Levi.

The beta balked at the realization that these mers were Underground mers. Levi and his family weren’t the only ones to survive and now—

“Squad leader!” Moblit shouted but he was too late when the poison covered claws reached Hange’s eye. The beta screamed as the searing pain flooded their face; black liquid oozing sickeningly until it ate through almost half of Hange’s cheek. It took all their strength just to stay conscious and watch through a haze how Moblit swam down and beheaded the cold water mer with a swift crisscross of his blades.

In the middle of the commotion, they failed to see the speeding form of another cold water mer. He was a beta holding a net and something else hidden in a cloth. Moblit was about to reach towards the other mer when the loud boom of Eren’s shifter body slamming to the floor froze them with unease. The armored Titan was heavily injured but the female Titan had pinned Eren down. The
combined forces of the foreign shifters finally proved to be too much for Eren.

Eren gasped and roared as a net fell over his form. The omega’s tail twitched and swatted at any solid body it could reach until a long needle was jammed into Eren’s neck, filling the omega’s system with a fluid that forced him to lose hold over his shifter form. The brunet panicked as his muscles loosened and his consciousness started to fade away.

The boy’s shifter form made garbled strained sounds that sounded like a plea for help. Deep groans and grunts of what sounded like a ‘Levi!’ escaped the shifter’s throat. But no matter how much Eren struggled, the enemy made sure there was no escape.

It wasn’t supposed to end this way.

He just wanted to see Levi alive again.

‘L—ev... i— I’m... so—rry’ Eren stuttered one last time, his hands reaching out into the void as his soul screamed for his mate. He begged over and over for the alpha to forgive him.

No one answered his call.

Levi stared blankly at the mess of strewn bodies covering the ocean floor.

The wretched scent of blood and death clogged his nose and gills like a plague. The bodies that lay still belonged to unknown survivors of the Underground massacre. But the rows of dead bodies weren’t the most horrifying for the alpha.

It was the lone blade embedded on a rock. Right across its handle was the familiar leather string of Eren’s necklace looped carefully. The quiet little ring of the key hitting the blade made Levi completely numb.

For the first time in all its glorious history, the ocean became a witness to the most painful agonizing scream of a man who never outwardly showed his emotions.

It was plea that failed to be heard.

‘EREN!’

And no one answered his call.

Chapter End Notes

I may or may not hate myself for writing that.

Quick explanation for the bonds:

Warm water mers bond by imprinting on each other. Basically, no biting involved so that means the bonding process isn't as powerful as cold water bonding.

Cold water mers bond through bites so the emotional and mental pull is much
stronger. A pseudo-bond is basically like the bond itself but it will disappear after a short span of time. (think of it as merely an engagement than marriage). Basic imprinting also doesn't work on cold water mers so it's only the warm water mer who would technically be bonded to the other.

With Eren's imprinting and the pseudo-bond: a whole tangle of emotions that would have been solved through proper bonding.
Tell Me Who Your Friends Are

Chapter Summary

Levi’s starting to think that the saying "tell me who your friends are and I'll tell you who you are" has a bit of a point.

Chapter Notes

Hey, guys! I'll just insert my blabber at the end notes.

We're going to be plot heavy for the rest of the chapters so stay tuned.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Eren felt nothing but pain.

There were times when he would not know the beginning and the end of his agony. Phantom hands gripped him everywhere like steel vices, leaving him bruised and cut open. The salt of the water stung harshly and the smell of copper blood made him gag. The enemy was creative and cruel; a combination that spelled a slow and agonizing death.

‘My name is Eren Jaeger! I will not yield!’

If only Eren hadn’t been cocky, the omega would have had the perfect opportunity to observe his captors and their weak spots. The endless days turned into gruelling months would have been enough time for him to plan his escape. But Eren was stubborn, his spirit cackling like spitting fireworks. The enemy wanted him to surrender, so he spat on their faces.

‘My parents are Carla and Grisha Jaeger! Mikasa is my sister! I won’t surrender!’

The boy couldn’t even remember the first time he got here; wherever ‘here’ means. It was a scalding hot barren land with huge roots of mangroves crawling from the skies and down the jagged rocks. The water was murky and suffocating; it was hell. Eren could vaguely remember a soft omegan voice trying to keep him calm. The voice belonged to a mer who had warm blue crystals for eyes.

Crystals...

‘Please, calm down. They’re going to hurt you more if you keep fighting them!’

The voice was weary and sounded scared. It was a female and smelled compliant. Eren hated it. He could smell it’s wrong on her skin. The golden tailed omega didn’t know the reason why. Maybe this crystal was lying to him too.

Crystal? Krista?
That’s when the pain ended up raining down on Eren’s tan skin. At first he gritted his teeth and continued to taunt his captors. Their faces were blurred; Eren could barely remember what he said to them, but whatever it was, it worked. Their fists landed everywhere and they didn’t care where it hit; all they wanted was for Eren to cave in; break him down into pieces and be remade into a weapon.

‘No one is coming for you, boy. Why do you even resist? Is it that scum alpha?’

His captors laughed and spat on him but Eren remained steadfast. He knew his alpha was coming. The alpha was strong and caring, who wielded his blades like they were an extension of him. Levi—it was Levi, wasn’t it? That Levi was coming to save him and these idiots will pay for what they did.

‘You’re not even his mate and yet you expect him to come looking for you? Fuckin’ delusional bitch.’

Every damn time they’re finished with him, Eren would hiss and chant to himself that Levi was coming. The other omega, Krista, would assure him the same thing. She would always say nice things; how this Captain Levi must love Eren so much to go against orders and get himself romantically attached to his charge. Eren could remember himself smiling despite his missing teeth and swollen cheek. Krista’s words made him remember what it feels like to come home. So Eren slept with the firm belief that his mate would come for him. For that, Eren must remain strong.

‘My name is Eren Jaeger and my mate is Levi Ackerman! He will fucking tear you to pieces, you shitstain!’

Except, his captors didn’t like Eren referring to Levi as his alpha. So they tried to make him forget through fists and blades, just like how they made him forget everything about himself. The evil chemical flowing through Eren’s veins prevented him from healing fast. One time the omega felt himself passing to the other side. For one moment of weakness, Eren was relieved. He would be spared from the pain but then he remembered Levi. What would Levi feel if he found Eren’s lifeless body in the middle of nowhere, bruised and beaten?

‘Levi is my mate. I will never forget.’

Eren never forgot and he made sure his captors knew. The brunet clung to the endless mantra of ‘Levi’ and it worked for as long as he could hold on. However, there was a man who grew too tired of his smart mouth. The man smelled like Levi but his attitude and his grin was all wrong. The stench of death followed him and it scared the omega. Eren couldn’t remember anymore after that.

The word ‘Levi’ seemed to surface into his head but he had difficulty grasping what it means to him.

‘Levi... is the captain of Legion. He is— someone I know— I think.’

The man with the broken fin asked him again who would come for him. Eren would answer a name but he didn’t know what it meant.

‘What does ‘Levi’ mean?’ Eren had said and it made the man happy.

That was the night he first witnessed the omega, the crystal eyes, look at him with a dead expression. He doesn’t think the word crystal fits her anymore. She had another name, the girl said, but Eren didn’t remember.
Because tools have no use for names.

There was a terrifying silence that stretched out across the lands of Krolva. News of Eren’s kidnapping had quickly spread from one mouth to another, like a festering disease that threatened to tie a noose around one’s neck. Every single Legion merfolk feared the unknown adversary and what the kidnapping meant. Eren was born and built as a weapon of mass destruction; only the gods know now the evil plan that lingers in strange waters where the boy was presumably kept.

The few omegas who were close to the shifter had wept in stony silence as alphas and betas scrambled to get the balance back into their pod. They feared that one wrong word, one wrong move, and everything would crumble like sand slipping through one’s fingers. Everyone was especially careful and no one bated a breath when around Levi.

The alpha’s face was an impressive mask of detachment and coldness, but not a single mer failed to sense the brewing storm underneath the captain’s skin. Levi was the definition of the calm before the storm; the eerie silence before the sounding beat of war drums. His power was rippling through his veins and every alpha cowered and lowered their head to placate the shorter merman.

Legion trusted their head alpha to handle their captain. Erwin could only do so much though. It was common knowledge that stealing an omega from an alpha was a grave sin, and Levi most certainly had been robbed of his. Erwin found the least bit of pity for those who were involved in the kidnapping of Eren. They surely wouldn’t be recognizable after their brutal deaths.

A few short knocks woke Erwin from his internal brooding. The blond alpha muttered his given permission to enter and was greeted with the sight of Levi with Hange in tow. The two sported extra gears of hooks and leather straps that firmly placed their twin swords just a line below their hips, and shark tooth blades hidden in their back pouches. The alpha and beta had been the head of the expeditions to search for Eren but their efforts for the past few months had been fruitless.

“When was the last time you two had eaten properly?” Erwin gently admonished as his eyes continued to follow the twists and turns of every pathway etched on their stone map.

Hange laughed nervously and threw their aching body to an empty couch, “Well, if you count a handful of shrimp, then we probably ate properly like— yesterday.”

The blond alpha sighed and made a soft clicking noise at the back of his throat. Erwin was still the head alpha and he felt responsible for each and every single one of the merfolk living under his leadership. The blond’s alpha instincts were feeling especially worried and protective over his close friends and their obsessive need to track down their missing omega shifter.

“There’s not much information we could find,” Erwin sighed and turned to look at the two dead in the eye, “whoever our enemy is, they’ve planned this out entirely well. There are no available witnesses or any type of connection to whoever might have done this. It’s been weeks since our last hit and I think it’s now time for the two of you to return to your homes. I’ll call for you when needed.”

Hange and Levi remained in rigid silence which prompted Erwin to quirk a brow. The beta bit their lip and scratched at the bandage that was covering their damaged eye. Furlan and Isabel might have been helpful in sucking out the poison but it still itched like hell. Hange wanted to bitch about it but Levi’s mood was helping them shut up.

“Hange can go,” Levi croaked out, his voice raspy from disuse, “I’ll look around more and probably meet Petra if she has any updates from the upper waters.”
Erwin shook his head in annoyance, “Levi, I suggest you stop this at once. There’s no use in having a captain that is half-dead. You’d keel over right before you can kill those who—“

“I can’t!” Levi yelled, his fists balled up tight and quivered like they were itching to punch something.

The blond alpha regarded the other steadily, allowing the shorter alpha to breathe and calm himself before coaxing a proper answer. Levi was never good with translating his emotions into words after all.

“I can’t go back in there,” Levi continued though his voice was nothing but a whisper. Hange whined lowly, their one uncovered eye expressing so much anguish for their friend. Ever since Eren went missing, Levi turned into a sharpened and unfeeling tool. It was very disturbing to say the least.

“Is Eren’s scent stopping you from going back home?” Erwin asked steadily.

Levi scoffed and met Erwin’s icy blue orbs with his gunmetal ones, “Eren being fucking kidnapped is what’s stopping me from coming back. You can’t seriously ask me to stay anywhere near the vicinity where I mated with him, right? If you wanted a feral alpha, you could have been more direct you son of a—“

“Then clean it out if you must,” Erwin replied with a sharp tone, “I am your superior, above and beyond being your friend, and I need your head to be clear. Cleaning had always calmed you down so do it all day if you must.”

Hange screamed as they watched Levi pounce at Erwin. The shorter alpha was snarling, barring his lengthened fangs as he pushed Erwin against the wooden desk, effectively splitting the furniture in half. The blond alpha grit his teeth as he held off Levi’s incoming punch and threw off the captain hard enough that Levi’s back hit the ceiling.

“Stop it!” Hange cried out but Levi’s mind was completely devoured by anger, guilt, and heartbreaking sorrow. The shorter alpha howled and continued to hit Erwin with blinding precision. Every last bit of Levi’s frustration was finally leaking out and the commander took every single blow with graceful stride. The two alphas fought it out until Erwin overpowered Levi and pinned the black tailed alpha to the ground, both arms crossed and plastered on Levi’s back to prevent him from moving. Erwin’s other hand had also pressed Levi’s face unto the floor. It was obvious that the captain was seething, his grey eyes glowing with rage and bloodlust.

“Let go of me you son of a bitch!” Levi shouted as he breathed heavily through his nose and gills; the stench of aggression and grieving made Hange want to gag.

“Stop doing this to yourself, Levi!” Erwin shouted back, refusing to loosen his hold on the other alpha, “Do you think Eren would be happy to see you like this? Do you honestly think that your mate would rest easy as you slave yourself away and slowly kill yourself in the process? Have some goddamn sense and consider your health for a moment. Do you want Eren to die of grief too?”

Levi felt his heart crumble, his eyes quivering and getting misty as the telltale sign of tears began to emerge. He was devastated and felt responsible for losing his omega to the foreign shifters. For strings of countless, sleepless nights, Levi kept telling himself that Eren would have been safe in their nest if Levi had been a better alpha. He knew. Gods, he knew that he was condemning his love by tying the young omega to him but Levi was just too selfish to think. He never wanted anything so badly in his life and now he had lost it because he was undeserving.
Erwin slowly released Levi when the scent of despair reached his nose. Hange remained uncharacteristically quiet as they watched the alphas recover from their fight. It was strangely nostalgic, really, since this scene was so similar to how Levi and Erwin first met; bloody fists and Levi being forced to submit while his face was plastered on the floor.

The blond alpha carefully peeled himself away from Levi as he felt the shorter merman relax under his firm grip. The captain was not an unreasonable mer but it did not mean he is impervious to raw effects of emotions. Perhaps this momentary fight between the alphas managed to ease whatever primal need it is that’s torturing Levi from the inside. Erwin would gladly fake a fight with Levi again if it helped the other.

“Go to sleep, Levi,” Erwin commanded, his tone making no space for arguments, “We’ll find him and I’ll do whatever it takes to get Eren back. Just trust me on this.”

Levi got off of the floor and nodded in automatic response. He was still seething and the natural bloodlust in his veins were pumping rapidly but the captain managed to hold it at bay. The whole room was already stinking of his aggression, there’s no need to make it more disgusting and messy.

From that day on, Levi turned into a ghost.

Nobody heard from him except when he was needed. The captain disappeared every night and if he didn’t want to be found, he would be nowhere in sight. Every alpha who would be unfortunate to meet his presence would cower and curl themselves into a submissive stance. Some male adults even smelled like they were on the verge of tears.

It would have been funny, really. But Levi already forgot what it’s like to laugh.

Another month had passed and yet no word has come up regarding Eren’s whereabouts. The ocean was deathly silent. Legion couldn’t risk a full coordinated search with the other pods and reeves as it would cause panic and mass hysteria. Erwin was also getting the feeling that Sina would profit from the news of Eren’s disappearance. The pod had been pressuring Legion to surrender their autonomy and join the king’s army. It has come to the point where even Trost and Shiganshina were supporting the idea of the king.

Commander Erwin did not like it one bit so they bought as much time as possible.

Levi, true to his word, had not lost his mind completely. The captain had a sharper tongue and shorter patience but he was quick and efficient as ever. Isabel and Furlan obediently followed their older brother in a show of support and sympathy. The red headed beta had been one of the most distraught when the news of Eren’s kidnapping had spread but her unparalleled optimism did not fade. If anything, she probably knocked some senses into Levi when the alpha male finally came home.

For some time, the quiet continued. The blanket of uncertainty lay heavy on everyone’s shoulders, a cold grip that never went to sleep. But as days went by, the lulling repeat of every day work had become a welcome distraction. Krolva was busy and the weary hearts of its leaders were thankful for the facade of normality. Even Levi’s temper eventually simmered into a hushed silence.

It took another painful week before Petra had come swimming into Krolva.

The pod immediately tensed as the normally composed omega sped through the cold ocean floor. A panicked expression was painted on her face as she barked at the mers to make way and tell her where the commander and the captain were.
Erwin was thankful that he was sitting when Petra reached him. The news confirmed everything that the blond alpha was thinking.

“What the hell do you mean by that, Petra?” Levi snarled as the rising smell of agitated alphas and betas reached his nose, “The king is as good as sagging balls. He’s shit at making decisions even if his life depended on it and now you’re telling us he made an elaborate plan to get all the pods to surrender to him?”

The other officers that gathered around a slab of stone table sniffed and looked uncomfortable. Things were getting complicated by the second and the telltale signs of a major outbreak of war were whispering through their consciousness.

“I know, I know!” Petra huffed tiredly as she smoothened her frizzy hair, “It’s just that we’ve been hearing from the Royal guards, okay? One of our insiders heard that their superiors were barking orders for them to prepare for a fight and store as much food as possible. And guess what? The next few days, there was a Titan attack near the shoals of Akenheim just north of Sina. The merpeople came flooding through Sina’s gates after that. Don’t you think that’s too convenient?”

“Are you implying that the king has control over Titan?” Erwin asked the question that was burning at the back of everyone’s heads. Mike looked sternly as he cracked his knuckles; a nervous tick that never really washed away through countless battles with Titan.

“Either that or he’s taking advantage of the situation that’s obviously worsening,” Petra replied tiredly, “It seems to be working. A few weeks ago, Shiganshina’s troops were officially turned over to Sina. Trost is preparing to do the same. It’s only a matter of time before they pressure Krolva through force.”

Levi stiffened at the mention of Shiganshina but barely anyone noticed. Erwin merely glanced his way and let the captain get away with it.

“There’s also uh— well, there’s just gossip concerning Eren,” Petra started nervously as her fins fluttered, “Nothing official obviously but it looks like Sina is not completely unaware that the boy is missing.”

“Explain.” Levi pressed urgently.

“This meeting is giving me anxiety!” Hange cried out from somewhere near Levi’s right side. The beta had been nervously biting their nails as they listened intently to Petra. Moblit and the others gave a soft laugh at the sudden break of tension. Levi didn’t know if he would be thankful or he would rather stick a silver fork far up their ass.

Petra chuckled and shook her head fondly. She did miss the squad leader very much.

“Well, Oluo was speaking with some guards of Sina; low-ranking officers but one higher-up managed to stumble into their little drunk party. He started talking until it got really weird.”

“Wow, classy.” Hange muttered under their breath and Levi struggled to contain a snort. It’s not his fault that he thought of the same thing. Oluo had really weird ways of making someone talk.

Petra managed to catch Hange’s comment and pouted at the two. Levi made a disbelieving face for being lumped with the beta but the squad leader merely cackled and patted Levi’s back in mock sympathy. The omega still gave him the stink-eye while proceeding with her report.

“The officer started talking about what he eloquently called ‘a golden tailed bitch’ that was making his men nervous. He kept complaining how it was a bad idea to try and control freaks of nature.
Unfortunately, his subordinates were sober enough to shut him up after that.”

“Filthy bottom feeder,” Levi snarled venomously in his native language as his eyes turned into frightening pin pricks.

Some of the officers backed away as the scent of aggression filled the waters. Hange merely hummed and swished their tail nonchalantly, “They’d look so good opened up on an operating table. You think I’d find a brain, Levi?”

“**There’d be no insides left when I’m finished with them,**” Levi hissed.

Hange grinned like a pleased cat, “Ah yes, classic aggression-filled homicide! I like your style, my friend!”

“This does not bode well for us,” Erwin interrupted in an alarmed tone, “If Sina truly has some sort of control over Titan, consequently Eren as well, then we’d be going against most of the merfolk population if we contradict them outright.”

“Erwin’s right,” Mike grumbled as he sniffed cautiously, “Sina already placed itself perfectly. Merpeople from all around see them as some sort of savior for providing food and shelter. Their call of unification won’t be seen as what it truly is; a way to conquer.”

“Allright, hold on, we need some serious intel before we panic,” Hange urged with a slight nervous energy under their voice, “It’s kinda complicated to just accuse a whole pod of full blown colonization with a slice of murder and betrayal. Didn’t Petra say that troops from Shiganshina had already been absorbed by Sina?”

Erwin raised his head and gave Hange a knowing look, “What are you insinuating, Hange?”

“What I’m saying is that quietly observing from inside Sina isn’t going to cut it this time. Sorry, Petra! You’re a real darlin’ but we gotta go balls deep” Hange looked apologetically at Petra who only waived them away with a tiny smirk. “Anywho, isn’t Eren’s sister a Marian soldier?”

Petra blew a breath as her fins ruffled agitatedly, “Oh, boy. Last I heard she’s more than just that. They say the higher ups were really impressed by her skills that she’s going to have her own designated team.”

“Then let’s speak with Grumpy Captain 2.0!” Hange cackled with a manic twinkle in their eye.

“This is the dumbest shit you’ve ever come up with,” Levi grumbled to Hange under the cover of his dark green cloak. It wasn’t that he thought the beta was a complete idiot but dragging their asses near possibly-enemy territory was too risky. The captain respected Hange’s intelligence but there were times he’d rather choke on sand than cooperate with their weird shit.

“Shush, Levi!” Hange hushed the smaller alpha but there was a tinge of excitement in their voice, “This will help us get to Eren. I just know it! Also keep your voice down, we’re doin’ a snoop.”

“Oh fuckin’ Hades, they’re doing the stupid talk again.”

Erwin sighed from behind Levi and pinched the bridge of his nose. He was blessedly thankful that Levi wasn’t stinking of helpless and aggressive alpha anymore, but he also wasn’t thrilled to meet the full force of a snarky Levi. It didn’t help that Hange lived off of irritating the poor merman.

“This is the reason why I don’t send the two of you to do covert missions,” Erwin glared at the pair
which was only answered by an oblivious smile and a pissed off scowl.

Levi shrugged the cloak closer to his chest and wiggled his fin in irritation, “Why are you even here, shitwin? The head alpha should be staying in Krolva or else we’d lose a commander.”

Erwin remained disturbingly quiet, keeping his icy blue orbs permanently glued to that pathway where Petra disappeared into. The other alpha quirked a brow as Hange threw a silent laughing fit and squeaking noises.

“Don’t tell me you’re here to get laid.”

“Wow, Levi, you think so lowly of me—“

Levi snorted and punched Erwin’s arm for good measure, “And you have no respect for me. I don’t have Eren yet so you get to suffer with me. That’s what friends are for, right?”

The blond commander eyed Levi with contempt. Yes, snarky and sarcastic Levi was a whole lot of other hell but Erwin would rather deal with this poor coping mechanism than have the captain shred through miles of flesh and tear the cadets a new one. One day, the gods will repay Erwin well. Today is not that day.

“I swear, when Eren comes back, I’ll personally order him to give you blue balls just for that,” Erwin retorted.

“That’ll be soon.” Levi replied with conviction as his scent rose from annoyed to protective. Those assholes who kidnapped Eren woke up a whole new demon. Levi will make sure that every last one of them would be greeted kindly. He only hopes they have a taste for slow death.

It took another hour before Petra reappeared. The trio looked at her questioningly as she had no Marian in tow. She was supposed to fetch Mikasa and Armin but they were nowhere in sight. Did something bad happen to them? Levi hoped for Eren’s sake that his family’s alright.

“I already talked to Eren’s sister and Erwin’s little boyfriend,” Petra smirked, looking smug as her eyes twinkled with mischief. The blond alpha tried to keep a straight face, really. The omega was just so infectious. “Although, I could not bring them with me because a certain someone was adamant that you guys visit the Jaegers’ territory.”

“And who’s that?” Levi asked.

Petra winced and fiddled with her fingers, “Eren’s mother, Carla.”

Well, this was it. This is how Levi’s going to die. Spread all over whatever was left of Shiganshina with not even a stone in honor of his memory. It was already bad that he had failed his mate but now he has to bring such news to his only living family as well. This job was so reminiscent of all the times Levi had to visit omegas and betas who lost their mates from missions. Levi tried hard not to think of it as the same. His Eren is still alive. Eren is not dead.

“Meeting the parents is always a tough part,” Hange smiled at Levi as their group made their way to the reef. The smile was strained but Levi returned the comforting gesture with a soft call from his throat. What was left of their light mood now instantly disappeared like bubbles. Not even the ocean made much of a sound.

Shiganshina was not nearly as vibrant as it once was. The blinding mixture of explosive colors of marine life and vegetation had declined into a dominant dust of grey, with only tiny pinks and
yellows poking out from the little cracks beneath towering boulders. For once, Levi wished that the
overwhelming life and heat of the old reef could return, even if it cost him a headache.

The group remained silent and hidden, following the pre-planned pathway Petra slithered into so
that they’ll avoid the main traffic of Shiganshina. Legion cannot be seen anywhere within the
upper reef, especially now when Sina has control over Shiganshina. If anyone found out about their
presence, Eren could get killed. This is why Levi doesn’t understand why Carla would insist that
they talk to them in her home. The black tailed alpha almost smirked at the stubbornness. Eren
must have really taken in a lot of his mother’s features. Hopefully, the older omega mother would
be accepting of Levi as her son.

The key that was hanging from Levi’s throat made a soft tap at his chest, as if to comfort the alpha.

Finally, they reached Eren’s childhood home, sitting sadly atop a hill covered in dull sand and
crumbling stones. Levi felt a sense of nostalgia hit him just by looking at it. This was the very
place where Eren first shifted to save them from Titan. It seemed like such a long time ago.

“Mother,” Erwin greeted using the native tongue of Marians. Carla, who was sitting patiently on a
wooden chair, smiled kindly at her guests and gestured for them to come in. She looked painfully
like Eren that Levi felt himself falter. Her face had aged, lines running under her eyes and her laugh
line deepening but the old flame of honeyed eyes still remained.

“Mother, I see you,” Levi bowed deeply and mimicked the gesture of alphas presenting themselves
as the intended of their omegas; his pronunciation of Marian words a bit crooked. There was no use
hiding his relationship with Eren. Levi was pretty sure that Armin and Mikasa already informed
Carla of this progress. His thoughts were confirmed when no scent of surprise erupted; only the
scent of comfort and home that an omegan mother could emit.

“I see you as well, Levi Ackerman,” Carla responded in a soft tone but as Levi was about to raise
his head, Mikasa’s fist came whistling and punched the alpha’s jaw hard enough that there was a
resounding crack of bones.

“Mikasa!” Carla exclaimed with alarm as she tried to reach forward to stop her adopted daughter
from harming Levi further but her injured tail prevented her from reaching them. Armin came
barrelling in from outside the home after hearing the commotion, ready to stop his friend but Erwin
grabbed him by the arm. The blond alpha shook his head.

“You lying bastard!” Mikasa cried out with unshed tears and hit Levi’s head against the floor,
“You said you’d protect him! Undeserving scum of the ocean! How could you fail Eren like that!
He’s truly better off without you! You only bring him misfortune, sea serpent!”

“Mikasa!” Carla shouted, emitting the scent of distress and disapproval, “Let go of your brother’s
intended! He was already chosen. We have no right to judge him.”

“But—“ Mikasa looked back at the omega with betrayal written all over her face. Her crimson fins
flared and trembled, matching her raw emotions at the loss of her beloved Eren. Carla shook her
head and commanded the young alpha to release Levi. It didn’t escape the attention of everyone
that Levi did not even move to defend himself. The black tailed mer remained incredibly still and
accepted the blows. Hange felt so sorry for their little captain. Levi must have been ridden with
guilt and thought that he deserved to be physically harmed for his lapse at being an acceptable
alpha for Eren.

The crimson tailed mermaid made a rebellious noise and pushed herself off of the smaller captain.
Levi calmly collected himself, wiping away the blood from his mouth where he accidentally bit
himself. He can’t do much about the incoming bruise. The alpha hopes it’s not something unsightly for the mother of his Eren.

“Come closer, Levi. Let me see you,” Carla cooed softly. The other mers watched as the alpha obeyed the mermaid and sat beside her dull fin. It was truly a sight to see such a dangerous creature be so docile and obedient to a warm water mer who is just as helpless as prey.

The old omega placed slightly calloused hands on the sides of Levi’s face. She looked at him directly, as if trying to see through Levi’s soul and know what this alpha’s true intentions were. Satisfied with her inspection, a weak glint of faded gold caught her eye; a gasp left her mouth as she eyed what’s underneath Levi’s green cloak.

“This is—“

Levi unclasped his cloak and thumbed at the key, “My courting gift for your son. It was the only thing I have left of him after—,” the alpha croaked, unable to continue with the tremble in his voice.

“I have failed you and your son, mother. Your daughter is right to say I am undeserving but I hope I could be bequeathed another chance to prove myself. I will find him and bring him back. If you choose that I do not continue with our mating, I will respect your wishes.”

Of course, that doesn’t mean that Levi will not suffer. Breaking off their mating, when the two are already in the middle of it and is just a bite a way from sealing their souls together, would result to excruciating pain and perpetual loneliness. It will be like carving into Levi’s flesh slowly; a death that has nothing but agony. However, Levi will endure the pain. He will respect the wishes of his mate and his mother.

This conviction seems to emanate from the glint of his eyes. Carla smiled toothily at the protective and loyal scent of the alpha. Her son was blessed with a determined mate. Even if the mermaid originally did not think kindly of Levi’s pod, they have proven themselves to be more understanding than what she considered her own pod for so long. Eren is in good hands, indeed.

“My son has picked well, I see. Finally! I thought he’d never settle with an alpha,” Carla chuckled with unshed tears as she was allowed to hold the courting gift, “Don’t think I’m not a little mad at you, Levi. My illogical motherly instincts dictate that I nag you to death but there are important matters at hand. I’d like to have the situation fully explained to me; then we’ll have to talk about my grandchildren. I expect at least five!”

Hange lost control of what little decorum they had and laughed sympathetically at Levi who was fighting a blush. Petra was no better as she hid her laughter from behind the squalling beta. Armin grinned from the side, holding Erwin’s warm hand against his own.

Their family was getting weirder and weirder.

Never in a million years would Levi even consider that he’d be in charge of multiple brats. Sure, the cadets back in Krolva were still young and full of determination to make mistakes but overseeing a bunch of Marian soldiers the same age as Eren, with the same level of maturity, was really pushing what little is left of Levi’s patience.

However, there’s not much Levi could do when this is what Mikasa’s team is composed of. As it is, they were all huddled in a secluded area with nothing but crumbled ruins. There was at least one more alpha brat together with an omega and two other betas. Their tails swished unsurely, fins
opening and closing in apprehension as they tried to adjust to the natural dominance of the cold water mers that joined them.

“Shit, Mikasa. Is he your dad or somethin’?” the brat with the two-toned hair that matched his brown and yellow tail, whined as he examined the captain. He was being held back by an omega with freckles who sported an apologetic look; his tail was a dark green. Mikasa may or may not have mouthed ‘I’ll kill you’. Levi tried very hard not to be amused by it.

“You must be Kirstein,” Levi drawled as his hooded gaze took in the form of the other younger alpha. He looked familiar, like he had met this mer back in Shiganshina but Levi couldn’t remember.

The brat grinned, “It’s Jean Kirstein, sir. I see I’ve got some reputation!”

The captain looked unimpressed and crossed his arms, “Eren told me he had a friend who looked like a seahorse. It’s not that difficult to connect the dots from there.”

“Fuckin—” Jean cursed heatedly and the freckled omega made a disappointed sigh, “Damn bastard pisses me off even if he’s fucking kidnapped. Are you shitting me!?”

“I’m so sorry for my ill-behaved mate, sir” the freckled omega apologized, “I’m Marco Bodt! I could introduce the rest of us if you’d like.”

Levi hummed, not missing the worried pointed look that the omega gave their squad leader. Mikasa refused to say a word, her face looking ill and annoyed that the black tailed alpha was reminded of himself.

“Don’t sweat it, Marco! We could introduce ourselves!” cried another brat who smelled like a beta. He had a shaven head, big eyes, and a wide smile. His tail was a color of brown though it reflected slight tints of yellow. The boy called himself Connie Springer while the other beta hanging off him with a bushy ponytail and an orange and green tail was named Sasha Blouse.

The captain was about to turn his attention to something else when something clicked in his mind. This Marco kid is an omega.

"Aren't omegas forbidden from joining the military in Shiganshina?” Levi questioned the group and they all collectively looked uncomfortable.

The freckled omega spoke up, though his mate gave him a concerned growl, "I'm not technically a Marian soldier, captain. I was assigned to my mate's squadron since he could get assigned to foreign reeves and he wouldn't be able to go through a rut on his own. Also, there's really not much of us left in Shiganshina. Us omegas were offered a small place in the military for the sake of our alphas."

Levi had a dark expression on his face at the explanation. Even Erwin bristled at omegas being treated so lowly by the warm water mer people, to the point that they're assigned as mere company for their mates.

"The military of your pod took you in to be a fucking whore?” Levi spat in irritation.

Jean barked at Levi in warning, "Hey! Watch it, bastard!"

The black tailed alpha remained unfazed and the younger alpha bit his lip as Levi's imposing aura doubled, "I wasn't insulting your mate, you little shit. I just can't stomach how your pod treats omegas so lowly. You there, Bodt!”
Marco stiffened and made a weak salute, "Y-Yes, sir?"

Levi snorted, "I won't give you any special treatment, kid. In our eyes, you're as much as a soldier as your mate is, so we'll whip you back in place if you dare to slack off."

"Yes, captain!"

Hange made a giddy smile and cooed about how Levi was actually encouraging the runts. The warm water mers seem a bit confused but Marco's eyes shone with unshed tears of appreciation. The captain duly ignored the squad leader's ribbing and faced Mikasa.

“Is this everyone in your team?” Levi asked Mikasa directly. The crimson tailed mermaid nodded as an answer but added that there were others who formed as their extension but these were the only mers she trusted. Apparently, the whole bunch grew up with Eren and Mikasa. There’s already an unbreakable bond between the young mers even if Jean most likely would rather punch Eren in the face, omega or not. Surely this team, no matter how rowdy, would put their lives on the line just to save their friend.

The leader of Legion then briefed the small group regarding their suspicions and Eren’s disappearance. Jean wrinkled his nose when they realized that the relationship between Eren and Captain Levi Ackerman was more than just purely professional. Thankfully, he didn’t comment as he understood what it’s like to almost lose an intended. Marco held the alpha’s hand after that.

Eventually the topic turned darker and more serious. The faces of the young mers looked grim and frightened as they realized that they were under the control of a government that was potentially dangerous. Commander Erwin made sure to lay out all the facts even if it was brutal and depressing. He needed these young soldiers to know what they’re up against; else, they’d swim right into the trap of the enemy.

When the meeting was finished, Sasha and Connie breathed heavily and whined about how unfair the world is. They genuinely thought that they were fighting for the benefit of everyone but now they might be leading their whole pod to their deaths. Erwin and Hange smiled with sympathy and consoled them just to calm their nerves. Levi remained steadily quiet alongside Mikasa.

“Don’t worry, sir!” Connie stated with conviction, “We’ll find Eren for sure. Can’t let anything happen to our friend, ya know.”

“For true love!” Sasha exclaimed to which Marco smiled at.

Levi nodded thankfully and warned them that it was important that they do not let anyone know that the group had their suspicions. Their first mission was fairly simple. Observe the movement of Sina’s military force closely and report their patterns. They were not allowed to act on anything that has to do with Eren until the leaders of Legion are fully informed.

Mikasa bristled at that and verbally tore Levi a new one at how stupid it is. The alpha mermaid felt very protective over Eren and she’d not allow herself to just sit there and do nothing if there’s even a tiny chance anything could lead to the brunet.

Levi merely levelled her a piercing glare, his alpha pheromones dominating the whole area. The warm water mers trembled and mewled in terror as they hunched themselves in half as a show that they won’t fight the alpha. Jean snarled at the natural reaction of his body but he couldn’t fight the need to bow. The captain was clearly a powerful alpha and his scent made it clear that he’s not shitting around.
“I’ve given you your chance to fight back,” Levi started with a growl underneath his voice, “This time, it’s about Eren. I don’t care if you fucking punch me in the goddamn face again but if you do anything to jeopardize this mission, I will skin you alive. Eren’s my mate even if I had not fully claimed him so. I won’t let your insolence get my omega killed, understand?”

Mikasa’s nostrils flared, her alpha pheromones reeking of an animal looking for a fight. Erwin gladly intervened and separated the two with his own dominant pheromones. The mermaid looked like she wanted to say something but Armin looked at her sternly. The blond omega pulled her away before the mermaid could even snarl at Levi.

“Wow, drama.” Connie sighed as he blew a breath and hunched forward.

“Anyone else?” Levi asked in a strict tone that everyone flinched. Petra politely averted her eyes while trying to hold back a sympathetic smile for the young Marians. The captain can be very territorial and protective of those he calls family. Clearly, Eren is a number one priority now and Mikasa touched a sore spot.

“No, sir!” Jean squawked like he was going through puberty again. The rest of them laughed at the embarrassed Marian alpha while he threw a very colorful and highly extensive set of curses at all of them.

Levi and Erwin shook their heads while Hange good-naturedly joined the fray.

It looks like Legion just adopted another set of warm water Marians. May the gods have mercy on their aged souls...

...and may Eren be found soon.

Chapter End Notes

I have been on a break for so long! I think it took me 2 months before I finally stitched this chapter together.

There's just been so much going on both the emotional and financial level that I couldn't find the motivation to write this. I have to admit I reached that point where I almost put this fic on an indefinite hiatus. Thankfully, I got back the creative juices to continue and I hope it would stay with me until I end this fic. We're already reaching the half or near half of my intended plot so weew. Wish me luck!

I'd also like to thank all of you guys for continuing to read this despite my painfully sloooow updates. I am eternally grateful for the patience. The kudos and comments I keep seeing everyday in my email encourages me a lot. Love you my little titans!
We Come Back Like Waves

Chapter Summary

"Eren, don’t cry....
...we all come back home like waves."

Chapter Notes

Warning: implied torture and mind control

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Hell was said to be a pit of endless darkness; jaws of icy cold teeth gnawing into your bones. Others would disagree and say hell is blinding with its flames sprouting from the ground and licking the skies of blood covered clouds. For Jean Kirstein, hell was dealing with Captain Levi Ackerman.

The alpha showed no mercy towards the younger Marian soldiers. Every small slip of a hold and miscalculation of distance was dealt with severe correction. Jean’s inner alpha was howling in irritation. It was simply not natural for another alpha to bow and submit to another. However, he really couldn’t act so recklessly when the alpha he’s dealing with is a mer like Levi Ackerman. The younger alpha knew deep inside that one look from the cold water mer would send him barrelling into the realms of the Underworld.

So they all pushed on.

The group suddenly realized how sloppy and ill-equipped they were; like their superiors were purposely skipping lessons so that they would not be ready for hand-to-hand combat. Levi merely hummed at the observation, his grey eyes taking in their every move. It had been gruelling weeks but Levi eventually softened, especially when he saw how earnest and hardworking Eren’s friends were. It was a miracle they were even awake during their rounds for Sina.

Eventually, training quieted down and the warm water mers were allowed rest for the whole day. Jean had never been so thankful in his entire life. The male alpha’s body was in so much pain that he believed he was about to go numb. His omega mate, however, smirked at him and said he was merely exaggerating.

“What the fuck, Marco!” Jean yelled and winced when he got up from his sitting position too fast, “You saw how he trained us! I thought I was going to lose a limb.”

“I’m starving!” Sasha cried out for the tenth time that day which was duly ignored by everyone else. Connie merely made a sympathetic clicking noise but he was too exhausted to even comfort the other beta.

“Captain Levi is a very fierce merman who just wants us to not get killed,” Marco smiled serenely,
“It’s kinda cool that we’re getting personal lessons from the strongest mer in the entire ocean.”

Jean grunted weakly and let himself fall gracelessly on the light brown sand, “You and Eren will definitely get along well. The jerk probably has moon eyes when Captain Levi whips him into place. Fuckin’ masochist. This is why he got kidnapped! His brain is the size of a plankton.”

The group merely made weak agreeing noises at the complaining alpha. They couldn’t say much when their bodies and dignity had been used to wipe the ocean floor. Levi had no ounce of sympathy for them even if their main purpose was for spying on the soldiers of Sina. The alpha captain justified himself by telling them that they could not be caught unprepared. It was a common gossip that soldiers from Sina used traditional torture on their prisoners especially when such criminal was a threat to the throne. The young Marian soldiers hastily gulped and agreed to Levi’s plan to secretly train them but never have they imagined that physical pain could be this awful.

“You know,” Connie groaned as he lifted himself up from the floor, “I never thought that Captain Levi would be Eren’s type. I mean, ain’t the captain too— uh, strict and stuff?”

“Maybe he provides Eren with lots of food!” Sasha drooled without shame as she made a star fish pattern on the sand.

Jean made a disbelieving noise, “No amount of food is going to make an omega swoon badly; especially when that alpha looks more like a murderer than a potential mate.”

“Captain Levi might not be soft and soothing to a regular omega but I could see he’s extremely loyal and protective,” Marco answered contemplatively with a hum. “Have you seen his face whenever Eren’s name is mentioned? That man is ready to slaughter an entire pod if he has to.”

“Oh man, don’t I believe it!” Jean muttered, “Whoever caught Eren surely is a bigger idiot if they knew they’d cross with the captain— and we’re also a big idiot for saying yes to this torture exercise!”

“Jean, stop it!” Marco hissed with a reprimanding tone. The two other betas laughed at the couple, calling them old like their grandparents. They eventually exploded into a deep banter which dwindled into echoes of chuckles and snorts. The past few weeks were a pain but they secretly enjoyed bonding with each other.

Not far from their secluded place, Mikasa stood watch with careful ebony eyes.

Time passed torturously slow since Eren’s disappearance. The five months worth of looking left and right felt like years to Levi. Everyone tried to keep their hopes up; a desperate attempt to keep their alpha captain calm. The truth was that most of Legion were beginning to fear that Eren could no longer be found. Whatever adversary they were facing had planned the kidnapping thoroughly well. There were no traces left behind except the description of the travelling mers who were last seen with Eren.

Levi had been furious when he found out about them. It was safe to say that he’s still planning their painful deaths until now.

Thankfully, Petra arrived with Armin and Erwin in tow. They managed to find a mysterious pattern going on with some of the units from Sina. The strange routine had been deemed as nothing at first but Oluo began to realize that something was not quite right whenever the assigned units returned. It was obvious they tried to hide the haunted look on their faces but the keen eyes of those who
trained under the heavy hand of Commander Erwin and Captain Levi would not be easily fooled.

It was a strangely warm afternoon when the three met with Levi and Hange. They converged near a quiet corner of Krolva; a few meters away from the mostly undamaged mouth of the cave entrance. The mixed scents of apprehensive omega and alpha reached Levi’s nose before he saw their hardened faces.

Whatever news they had, Levi mentally prepared himself for it.

Petra was the first to open her mouth, the distinct smell of a worried omega increased as she relayed routine information. Erwin and Armin would inject some intel of their own here and there but they allowed the older omega to take over. Levi had the feeling that the three felt like the best course of action was to have such heavy news be relayed by a mer of gentler nature, if only to appease a distressed alpha. It seems to work until Petra mentioned vital information regarding Eren’s whereabouts.

“There was a kelp farmer near the borders of Sina,” Petra started as her wary eyes darted to each present mers, “He was dubbed as the village crazy by most of his pod since he started claiming that he saw cold water mers passing through a dangerous terrain far out the borders. Of course, it made sense that they doubted his story since that place was known for its high temperatures but we looked into it nonetheless.”

“What did you find?” Hange pressed on, their beta pheromones starting to smell of apprehension and excitement.

“Nothing good,” Petra answered grimly, “The unusual routine from some of the lower and higher ranks from Sina started to make sense. They disappeared or were sent into missions at the same time the cold water mer sightings started. It also doesn’t help that Mitras is just a few kilometers away from said sightings. If our theory is correct, and there are indeed some survivors from Levi’s old pod, then it would be possible for a cold mer to swim up across the borders and simply retreat to Mitras when the temperature proves too much.”

“What of Mikasa’s team?” Levi inquired with bored, hooded eyes. The alpha was trying so hard to control his temper so as not spook the other two omegas. He must keep himself level-headed or one wrong outburst and Eren would be killed. He would never let that happen.

This time it was Armin who swam forward with a determined look on his face, “We managed to pinpoint the weak links within the army, sir. Mikasa and the others will be ready to comply as soon as orders are given.

“Good,” Levi snarled, “Because I’m itching to have a little chat.”

Apparently, ‘chat’ was too kind of a word. Armin felt himself gag a little bit at the smell of fresh and old blood mixing together. Mikasa doesn’t seem bothered but at least she didn’t have a manic grin like Squad Leader Hange. Thankfully, the other Marian soldiers were under strict orders to not approach the interrogation site until Levi and Hange were done. Armin was sure that Sasha and Connie would shriek to high heavens while Marco would probably throw up on a distressed Jean. Yes, it was truly better that their childhood friends be spared from this art of getting to the truth.

“You can leave if you want,” Mikasa told Armin with her gentle alpha voice. The omega smiled appreciatively and pumped calming pheromones to ease the crimson tailed alpha’s worries.
“I’m fine, really,” Armin answered just in time with the horrifying scream ripping from a soldier’s throat. The omega flinched and whined but carefully avoided to cower just so he could prove his point. “I’m just getting used to it s’all.”

“I really don’t want to leave Eren to a mer who could torture so efficiently,” Mikasa blandly murmured as her hooded gaze followed the trail leading to where Levi was carving flesh like a professional butcher. Surprisingly, the stench of aggressive alpha was barely there. One would think that Levi would be in a frenzied rage but it looked like Hange took over that particular part. For some reason, it’s even more unnerving that Levi wasn’t showing any outward reaction to the gore.

“I’m worried for Captain Levi too,” Armin sighed as he tucked a stray blond hair behind his ear, “He and Eren are in the middle of a permanent mating and they suddenly got ripped apart. An ordinary alpha would be driven into mad rage just for that. I’m afraid the captain’s straining himself too hard by keeping it together.”

“He’s not the one who got kidnapped, Armin!” Mikasa hissed with barred fangs.

“I know that!” Armin shot back with a pleading look, “but Captain Levi also loves Eren very much. I’m sure he’s extremely hurt by all this but he’s not venting it out properly.”

Mikasa snorted and wriggled her crimson tail agitatedly, “How do you even know he loves Eren that much?”

The blond omega smiled sadly and touched the alpha’s wrists with gentle fingers, “Because I saw the way he looked at Eren, like he’s the only one who brought light in Krolva. I also noticed that he’s been killing himself slowly with sleepless nights and long days of scouring the ocean just to find our friend. If that’s not love, then I don’t know what is.”

“Yeah, well, I’ll still beat his ass for losing Eren,” Mikasa muttered with teary eyes. Armin clicked a joyful tone even if the eerie sounds of muffled screams echoed in the background.

Levi and Hange came out of the interrogation site reeking like blood and piss. The alpha made a face at the cracked tooth stuck in his hair. That was totally Hange’s fault. He was not sloppy when it comes to torture but the beta was a little too enthusiastic. It didn’t help that the soldiers from Sina were cocky and looked down on betas and omegas like some shit smeared on the floor. Hange had been more than happy to teach them just how powerful an enraged beta could be. Their shorter male companion tried not to be too proud but he truly was. Those pigs deserved it.

Erwin emerged when the two were finally done, looking at Hange’s too-pleased expression with quirk of a brow, “I’m guessing you two finally cracked down where Eren is?”

“Sang like a fucking whale when I broke his nose in,” Levi answered as he wiped down their blood crusted blades with efficient strokes of ragged cloth, “Petra was right. They took him outside the borders but within Mitras’ reach. The idiots didn’t really know who was the top head but it’s clear that only soldiers from Sina were trusted with the information. The rest of the soldiers from Trost and Shiganshina were merely used as either extra working hands or Titan fodder.”

“Looks like the disease runs deep too,” Hange commented as they twirled a carved dagger, “might as well accuse the king for all of this if he weren’t such a moron in the first place. Can he even come up with this?”
Erwin hummed and scratched at his chin with a clawed hand, “Whoever it is, their plan must be stopped. The best way is to recover Eren first. There’s a high chance that we’ll get further information if we get to him. I’ll send in Mike when we head out for the retrieval mission.”

Levi nodded with a firm gaze. Finally, a major step into finding Eren has been made. Truth be told, Levi hated it when he had to carve through merpeople just to get answers. There was no joy in ripping apart flesh from bone and hearing the shrill cries of grown men just to get a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’. Kenny was the more insane one. The older Ackerman taught him everything that he knew with a look of pure glee on his face. The mere fact that he had to resort to Kenny’s method made Levi’s stomach churn. But he’d do it again if only for Eren’s sake.

However, what bothered Levi the most was the potential that Kenny roamed high enough in this twisted plan. The older Underground merman had no particular agenda in mind when the two still lived within the confines of Underground Mitras. The hit jobs and other dirty work were simply for the sake of survival or Kenny’s way of passing the time. The merman held no political opinion. He’d willingly kill a previous employer if it meant a more interesting payment.

There was no proof that Kenny had anything to do with Eren’s disappearance but Levi knew well enough not to underestimate his uncle. The mere fact that his scent was traced by Mike near the shores of Krolva meant something big. Kenny Ackerman was never sloppy. If it is true that Kenny is deliberately doing all of this, then the fact that a scent was left and soldiers were easily plucked out for interrogation meant that the old alpha wanted to be found.

That couldn’t be good.

If this is really Kenny’s work, then Eren is truly in hot water. The crazy alpha took joy in playing with his food before devouring them whole. They needed to get to Eren fast.

“Erwin,” Levi warned with a growl as the dark threads of his thoughts sank deep within his bones, “We’re going to need all the help we can get when we go up there. I have a feeling this isn’t going to end well.”

The commander looked at the smaller alpha with a sharp gaze, “I understand. We’re taking Eren’s friends as well. They have a higher chance of withstanding the boiling temperatures—also, there’s no harm in bringing another Ackerman, is there?”

Levi shook his head with an amused grin, “You fucker. We did our best not to acknowledge that we’re related, you know? The kid already hates me as it is.”

Erwin laughed and patted Levi, “Well you better work hard not to make her hate you more.”

By the time the group was ready for extraction, Jean was about ready to punch a dick. It didn’t help that Sasha and Connie joined him in their weird war cry as they helped each other get pumped up for the incoming fight. The older alphas and betas from Legion watched with an amused twinkle in their eyes as the young mers yowled and did weird punching moves. Marco wanted to bury himself in a cave somewhere far away.

“Lively bunch, aren’t they?” A kind omega nudged at Marco with a knowing look. The warm water omega smiled and watched as the Legion omega disappeared within the rows of soldier mers who looked like they were made of pure muscle. Sometimes Marco felt a little envious of Eren for being accepted into a pod that respected omegas as equals.
“Fuckin’ brats are noisy as fuck,” Levi sighed irritably from the sides which prompted Marco to yelp. The two younger betas behind Levi laughed and cooed at the poor omega who was startled by the captain.

“Sorry about that!” Isabel grinned wobbly with a missing fang, “Big brother lost his manners somewhere in Mitras. Nice to meet ‘ya! I’m Isabel and the blond weirdo is Furlan!”

The warm water mers crowded together and exchanged pleasantries with the betas. Levi would have never introduced Isabel and Furlan to the Marians if he had known that the two would join in their mission to make the most godawful noises in the goddamn ocean. Hange was no good at disciplining since the beta was more than happy to watch the fray. Thankfully, Mikasa barked and hissed at them to stand at attention. Jean looked like he wanted to say something but he resorted to sullenly kicking a conch shell out of the way.

With a nod, Erwin began his short morale boosting speech and another refresher on the important points of the mission. This was mostly done for the benefit of the Marians who joined their ranks. Each one of them wore the same belts with sharp blades sheathed at each side. Coming from a slightly more pacifist pod, they originally weren’t used to weapons bigger than a sharp dagger. Levi, however, balked at the blunt weapons and taught them how to handle twin blades like Legion. It was still a wonder how none of them lost a finger or two.

Now, though, they wore the weaponry with confidence. Even Marco was given a set of his own. The omega stood proudly beside his alpha, hands brushing occasionally as they rested on the hilt of the blades. It didn’t take long before they finally moved out of the boundary and treaded through the waters with stealth. As the temperature increased, the more it became difficult for Legion to move. They had a short time frame. The rest of the mission would lie heavily on the shoulders of the warm water mers who were more adept to the boiling waters.

It would take a few days to reach the outside border of Sina but they had to move fast. The kidnapped and tortured soldiers might not be insanely high ranking but other mers would start looking for them once they’re gone for long enough. There were barely any breaks as they passed border to border, slithering into the shadows and making minimal noise as they passed under the noses of Shingashina and Trost. The wide field of endless sand leading towards Sina is tricky. There were no visible covers for them so they had to move during the night, much to the disappointment of the Marians.

Eventually they reached the beginning of the rubbles of Mitras. The stench of old remains and shit still lingered within the walls. Ever since the tragic genocide, Mitras had been nothing but a skeleton of what it once was. Sina didn’t even bother to try and take the underground city since they dubbed it as a desolate wasteland. Levi couldn’t argue about that.

“It’s so freakin’ cold out here!” Jean hissed through clenched teeth, “how is this even within the territory of Sina!?”

“Enjoy the frosty cold now, Jean,” Armin laughed with sympathy, “I heard the heat is going to be intense outside the borders. I’m pretty sure the mangroves will be starting to appear from there.”

“The hell are mangroves?” Jean squinted at the blond omega. Connie rolled his eyes and called the warm water alpha a heathen. It was only when Mikasa’s firm grip clamped at their napes that they finally stopped hissing curses at each other.

“Shut up or die,” Mikasa stated with an expressionless face. Jean denied the high pitched squeak that came after.
Levi let the Marians argue amongst themselves as he took in what was once their shithole of a home. Isabel clicked a soft tone and pressed comfortingly against the alpha. It was hard to go back to the city which caused them so much pain. The nightmares of having to stab, kill, and eat weren’t easy to forget.

“If Kenny Ackerman is there,” Levi started with a strange tone in his voice, “I want you two to get Eren and swim as fast as you can.”

“Big brother, no!” Isabel cried, “We’re not leaving you with him! He almost killed you the last—“

“That’s why you need to get out quickly!” Levi bit back with a hiss, “Kenny doesn’t discriminate. If he sees prey, he’ll rip it apart with no questions asked.”

Furlan grimaced and pressed closer to the two, “Levi, you can’t seriously ask us to leave you behind. Eren would be distressed if he gets separated from you again.”

Levi smiled, that soft delicate little quirk of his lips as he remembered the feisty omega. Eren who was always so ready for a fight; who didn’t care if he was an omega and that biology placed him at a disadvantage, or so the elders of Maria told him. Eren is a strong and determined mer. Levi believed that his little mate would be able to withstand just a little more of this if it meant saving both of their hides.

“Nothing will break Eren,” Levi answered with confidence, “not even love.”

After a few hours of rest, the group finally made a move to swim upwards. The sudden change in temperature was excruciating and burned at their skin like liquid fire. Even Mikasa was starting to breathe strangely.

It was then that they noticed that the humble home of the kelp farmer had been shredded to ruins. Ornaments and nesting materials torn and spread across the top of the huge mushroom-like boulder where the old merman used to reside. Someone had been there and they weren’t friendly.

“This is not good,” Mikasa hissed as her alpha scent started to smell like wet copper and tangy fruit. The mermaid was distressed, angry, and worried at the same time. Armin was having a whiplash.

“Move, now!” Erwin shouted and the rest of them swam as fast as they could towards the lines of mangroves just a few meters ahead. The enemy worked fast. And it looked like they also did not like loose ends.

Suddenly, screams were everywhere. Levi dashed through their own lines and moved forward in blinding speed. A nearby cluster of warm water mers were shouting for help, most likely refugees seeking shelter from the increased number of Titan attacks. The putrid scent of rotting Titan flesh made the mers gag, but there was also a distinct scent that smelled purely of chemical.

“Spread out and assist!” Erwin ordered as Legion split into several groups and shot at opposite directions. The Marians stayed together as they uncovered wailing pups from fallen debris and sliced off napes from low level Titans. Levi, by some instinct, swam over the crying pleas and went directly to the one direction his instincts have been screaming at him to go to.

A loud crash and the sickening crunch of wood and bone forced Levi to stay still and look at where the horrid noise was coming from. The water was thick with blood and flesh, distorting his line of
vision temporarily until he saw the familiar glowing orbs staring right back at him.

“Eren,” Levi gasped, his hands shaking and gripping his blades so tightly that his knuckles went white.

The omega was stuck in his Titan form, rows of his sharpened fangs sank deeply into the spine of a wailing mermaid who was crying desperately for help. The feral look in Eren’s eyes was unnerving, almost as if daring Levi to come closer.

“Let her go, Eren!” Levi screamed but there was no recognition in Eren’s eyes. The shifter looked straight back at him as the omega purposefully bit through the mermaid’s spine and killed her instantly. Levi’s eyes went wide as the poor girl made a gurgled sound before she slumped to the ocean floor, silent and unmoving.

This couldn’t be happening.

Eren wouldn’t do this; wouldn’t hurt people without good reason.

“Eren, please!” Levi pleaded but the omega didn’t even blink. Whatever they did to Eren, the young omega was now nothing but a husk of his old self; a mere vessel for the weapon that every leader wants to get a hold of. The golden tailed shifter didn’t even recognize his mate. It was like Levi was staring at his worst nightmare.

With a push of his tail, Eren pounced at Levi with frightening accuracy. The captain was pushed back bodily into the large wall which undoubtedly sprouted upwards and broke the waterline. The shifter hissed and used his clawed hands to try and rip Levi’s face off. The alpha didn’t want to fight his mate but he had no choice. With frightening precision, Levi cut into Eren just enough to make the younger release him.

The omega hissed but backed off enough for Levi to strategically get himself away from the wall. There was no doubt now. Eren’s mind was broken enough that the omega was forced to act on instinct. It’s like the youngest Jaeger was carved into and broken down from the inside, his memories blurring into nothing but mere specks of sand, forgetting the most important people in his life. Levi felt his blood boil. What have they done to his young mate?

How fucking dare they.

“Eren you better fucking wake up or I’ll drag your ass across the entire ocean if I have to,” Levi snarled.

“Nice to know your mouth is still as dirty as a shithole, small fry!” cried a distinct voice with a familiar drawl. Levi’s blood immediately felt like ice in his veins. He knew that son of a bitch’s voice anywhere.

“Kenny,” Levi hissed in his native tongue.

The older man tipped his head, a sickening grin permanently plastered on his face. The stubble on his chin had grown but his signature greasy slicked hair was still swept back. The scars on his body had increased, no doubt the result of endless odd jobs he worked for scum merpeople. The alpha’s scent was a mix of death and despair. He hadn’t changed a bit.

“I told you not to get attached to a whore of an omega, Levi,” Kenny drawled once again as he approached said omega and draped his arm over tan shoulders, “but you just can’t keep your dick in your slit, can’t ya?”
“Get your hands off of him!” Levi barked as he brandished his blades, ready to kill any moment Kenny tries to do something. The omega made no move to swipe the arm off his shoulders. He merely stood there like a lifeless doll, waiting for its master to tell him what to do.

“And give you the most powerful weapon in the entire ocean? Hell no, little guy,” Kenny grinned and ruffled Eren’s matted brown hair, “besides, my business isn’t finished yet with our darling little thing. He’s still got a lot of shit to do for me.”

The shorter alpha shrieked wildly, “He’s not yours to control!”

Kenny chuckled in amusement as he pushed the omega roughly away and blocked Levi’s blades with what looked like a loaded harpoon gun. The shorter alpha growled and barred his teeth, angry at himself for not quickly noticing the concealed weapon behind the older merman’s back.

Soon enough Levi was thrown away by sheer force. Eren remained unmoving as his golden eyes tracked their movement. The omega wasn’t called to fight yet, so Eren stood where he was pushed off. Levi looked at him pleadingly but when no part of their tattered bond struck Eren’s heart, the younger Ackerman pushed himself off and fought Kenny with barely concealed rage.

It was only when Kenny fired the harpoon towards Levi that the other finally woke from his bloodlust and was pinned to the ocean floor. Eren made no move to help but his nose twitched and his eyes went entirely unfocused.

“N-ngh...” Eren whined, his golden orbs getting wet as he made more distressed noises.

“The bitch is waking up,” Kenny noted with an impressed nod, “Your boy must be something after all, Levi!”

“EREN!” Levi shouted at the same time as Mikasa, causing the omega to instantly jolt and look panicked. The older Ackerman cursed as the crimson tailed mermaid rammed into him with her twin blades, a dangerous snarl impressed on her face. Out of nowhere Isabel and Furlan pushed forward, with heavily barbed whips in hand. They both threw the end of the weapon in sync and dragged Kenny further down the remains of the old village.

Levi struggled with the harpoon, its hook forged in a way that would make him bleed faster if he pulled it out. However, raw instincts told Levi to protect, protect, protect! The biting pain of metal eating through the flesh of Levi’s shoulder felt like nothing but a nip compared to his desperate need to get Eren to safety immediately.

“Are you Captain Levi!?” cried a blonde omega mermaid with worried blue orbs. She was petite with a light pink tail that disappeared into an elegant gradient, fading into a frosty crystal white. The mermaid had the same Titan markings on her face that obscured what would have been a cherubic appeal.

Levi blinked again, blood loss making his mind go woozy, “Yes. Who the hell are you, kid?”

“My name’s Krista,” she answered desperately after looking behind her and watching the ongoing fight with fear and horror, “Please, I know Eren! We’ve been captured at the same time. I can get him to wake. Just— get us out!”

“That’s the plan,” Levi winced as he dug his claws into the hilt, “We’re trying to get him out but Kenny won’t be an easy opponent. I’m guessing his other goons are around.”

The omega, Krista, nodded with teary eyes, “We won’t be able to defeat them! He’s too strong of
“You haven’t met me,” Levi growled and broke the steel like melted butter as the poison that seeped through the alpha’s forearms dissolved the hilt into liquid metal. “I don’t know who the hell you are, but if you’re as much of a prisoner as my mate, then I’d trust you to get him to safety. Try to escape with him and I’ll kill you myself.”

Krista mewled in fear but resolutely nodded, her face contorting back into its Titan shifter form. The alpha tried to follow her but winced as the open wound on his shoulder pulled at his muscles painfully. Instantly, Hange was at his side, one blade in hand which was covered in both Titan and mer blood.

“Holy hell, Levi!” Hange shrieked as they tried to make Levi sit upright, “What the hell happened to you?”

“Fuckin’ Kenny and his damn harpoon,” Levi hissed through clenched teeth. He might have melted through the hilt but a large part of the hook was still stuck inside. He felt like he’s just a few minutes from fainting due to the pain and blood loss.

“You can’t fight like this!” The beta worriedly pointed out as they tried to put pressure on the wound, “you’re going to die if you lose blood then I’ll have to fucking bring you back to life so I could stab you in the face myself! So stupid!”

“Quit whining and get to Eren!” Levi commanded, his alpha voice lacing every word, “The brat called Krista is going to help him. Make sure they’re out of here before Kenny realizes one of his own double-crossed him!”

“Alright, fucking hold on!” Hange sighed heavily and shot off towards the direction of the two shifters. A loud yell and scream could be heard as Kenny ripped Isabel and Furlan away and threw them across the field. Levi pushed himself off, gripping his blades in shaky hands, and barrelled towards Kenny’s direction. Along the way he noticed several piled bodies of Legion mers. Throats ripped apart or a harpoon sticking through their skin. Levi’s alpha instincts immediately went on rage and pushed Kenny off until the younger soldiers were safe from him.

Fists and blades came flying in, a deafening whistle accompanying every attack as the two Ackermans scrambled for dominance against the other. Levi felt his breath knocked out of him as Kenny punched him on the stomach and then clawed at his open wound. The shorter alpha screamed in agony and blindly kicked Kenny off. The older Ackerman spat out a tooth and snarled at his nephew with spitting rage.

From a distance, Levi could see Erwin approaching. The blond commander had his blades poised to strike, pointing directly at Kenny’s exposed back. The alpha captain growled darkly as he pushed himself and trapped Kenny into a choke hold, keeping the older alpha still so that Erwin could deliver the final blow.

“This isn’t the end, boy,” Kenny coughed through bloodied lips; a shark tooth dagger in his hand, “ain’t no advantage for you getting cocky.”

And everything went black.

Levi felt himself choking on warm blood.

The waters were unbearably hot and stung his alabaster skin into a bright red. He felt himself dying, passing to the other side like a helpless limp puppet being dragged by its strings.
No. He can’t go yet.

**Eren—**

There was a faint tinkle of a bell, or was that metal falling? Levi can’t be too sure. His hearing has been shot to shit, the gurgle of the current messing up all sounds coming from left and right. His body was numbed and too stiff, not even his fingers could wriggle and move.

There was a warm body on top of him; its scent was a pleasant mix of tropical fruit and warm sand. But there was also a whine accompanied by a soft sob. Two bright golden eyes peered at him; a plea. This person was begging Levi for something the alpha couldn’t understand. His vision is going dim.

**What’s—**

*Come back! Please, come back!*

Ah, that sounded like his Eren. Levi missed that voice so much. His dreams would be filled with his mate’s laughter every night. It was a cruel trick, really; to have to replay your single most favorite memory over and over again, only to realize that it’s something you can never have.

*I just got you back, Levi! Please don’t leave me alone again!*

*I’ll do anything!*

But even if this is just a cruel memory, Levi would never allow Eren to cry like that. His heart is breaking just from the sound of his omega begging and begging until his voice cracked with effort. No, he couldn’t leave his Eren like this. That would be too cruel of him.

So with the last strength that captain had, Levi forced himself to lift his heavily scarred hand and searched for Eren’s face. The familiar soft cheeks were crusted with tears and were shaking as the omega hiccupped, pressing the calloused hand closer.

**Eren, don’t cry....**

*...we all come back home like waves.*

Chapter End Notes

I really tried to finish this even before December came; unfortunately, I couldn't write anymore because my father passed away just a month ago. I apologize if this chapter sounds sloppily written or has a lot of spelling/grammatical errors. I wasn't able to heavily review this before posting.

This was supposed to be a bittersweet Christmas gift—Eren’s finally back in Levi’s arms but there are a lot of things still happening. Much of the chapter would be explained in the next. I’ll probably start on it tomorrow.

As always, thank you so much for the continued support. I can’t believe this fic
reached the 1k mark. You guys are amazing! Happy Holidays and may you have a joyful New Year ahead!
Knowing You Again

Chapter Summary

The omega might not have the bite mark he always wished for, but now he knew deep in his heart that no brand could outweigh Levi’s love.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Levi woke up with a dull ringing in his head.

His throat felt like it had been scratched by sand while his limbs pinned him heavily against what felt like a meticulously made nest. The soft touch of weaved kelp, soft cotton cloth, and cushion of moss was heaven against the alpha’s aching back. His body though, probably wanted to cuss at him for all the lacerations and deep wounds it received. There was a faint smell of healing ointment, thankfully. Hange probably managed to get to him fast and stopped his goddamn bleeding.

That only means one thing—

He’s not dead yet.

“Oh, thank fucking Poseidon,” Levi grumbled though his tongue felt heavy inside his mouth. The alpha’s vision still hasn’t returned fully; only blurred colors and shapes blended together. What the hell happened to him?

It took several tries before his limbs started to cooperate. They creaked from pain and disuse but Levi bit through all of it just to heave himself up to a sitting position. It was then that he noticed that the water wasn’t burning his skin anymore; instead, it lapped up against him in cold waves. Legion must have been able to get out of Sina. Levi didn’t know if they were in Mitras or Krolva.

After a few minutes of getting himself together, Levi noticed a small curled form resting near the mouth of the entrance to the little alcove he was put in. He immediately recognized the golden tail, spotted with green tints and little dusts of Levi’s own tail color.

Eren rested and curled into himself, a small snore occasionally escaping his slightly chapped lips. His omega was as gorgeous as Levi remembered. The alpha must be dreaming again, then. He remembered dying in Kenny’s arms but he cannot recall ever having successfully rescued Eren. The alpha felt like a complete failure at that. He’s almost guilty that he’d been rewarded with such a soft dream like this. Levi didn’t deserve to have Eren this way.

Except, his dream-Eren stirred and woke up. The omega’s eyes were no longer a solid gold but it looked like his cerulean orbs were bleeding into it. The distinct smell of apprehension and intense relief reached Levi’s nose before the full weight of his mate drove him back to the nest.

There were cooing noises and broken crying before Levi realized that this made-up Eren had pressed himself desperately against the alpha. The scent of distress mixed in with Eren’s distorted natural scent of warm sand and chemical sent Levi reeling.

“Shit, I don’t want to wake up,” Levi muttered as he finally allowed himself to wrap his arms
around the omega. Eren preened and wriggled into him more, almost like he wanted their bodies to become one. This felt right. It felt like coming home from a long, torturous journey. The alpha’s body slot perfectly against Eren’s own, creating a pocket of heat and warmth that made Levi’s spine tingle. He missed this. Touching Eren so intimately felt like an important purpose in his life.

Then suddenly the brunet bit him sharply at the shoulders.

“What the fuck?” Levi groaned as he glared at the younger. Okay, maybe this isn’t a dream then; that bite felt way too fucking real to be a dream.

Eren glared back at his alpha and gave him an impressive frown. The boy’s ears wiggled in agitation, his eyes almost saying: ‘You are a moron! Don’t scare me like that again!’

The alpha softened a bit. It’s good to know that no matter how much Eren suffered, he’d always still act like a brat to Levi. Not that the alpha minded too much. Eren was Levi’s brat.

“Hey! You’re awake!” Hange excitedly announced, a foot away from the alcove. The omega hissed at the intruder and pushed himself off of Levi, placing his body right in front of the entrance and warning the beta to stay far away from his mate.

“Eren— stop!” Levi yelled as he was about to peel off his mate from the entrance, when suddenly the injury left on his shoulder acted up. The alpha hissed at the blunt pain and he could feel that the hook dug deep enough to render Levi almost immobile. It was bound to be one ugly scar reaching across his right pectoral muscle.

The omega made a worried whine as he looked back and forth between Hange and his injured alpha. Eren looked torn between warding the strange beta away and getting to his mate to assist him. Hange smiled kindly and edged further away, though close enough to hear the two. It made it easier for Eren to dart towards Levi and nose at the bandaged wound.

“I’m fine, brat,” Levi chuckled at the frustratingly worried brunet, “I just pulled a muscle but I’ll heal.”

Eren looked up from under long, thick lashes and made a disapproving sound. It was obvious that the omega didn’t trust a word he said or maybe he didn’t comprehend any of the words at all. It was strange, really. Eren refused to utter a word since Levi woke up. Was his mate angry at him?

“Levi,” Hange called from far out, “I really need to speak with you but Eren has been guarding you like a bullshark for three days already! Please come visit me and Erwin when you have the time. Thanks!”

The alpha blinked momentarily as he processed the information, “What— wait a minute—“

Eren then growled long and deep, his eyes burning a bright gold as he glared at the entrance. This was really weird. It’s almost like his mate was stuck in his most primal and base instinct. Clearly at this point, Eren could not be reasoned with. His mind was focused on the singular task to protect his mate. Perhaps witnessing Levi’s latest brush with death sent Eren into an overdrive.

It didn’t take long for Hange to finally disappear but Levi was thankful for Eren finally relaxed his muscles and took a deep breath. The omega was stinking of vile aggression, more potent and vicious than what Eren used to produce before. It must be that chemical scent that laced his mate’s natural scent.

“Are you going to keep snapping like that at everybody?” Levi asked with a quirked brow. Eren merely looked at the alpha owlishly before plastering himself against Levi, purring up a storm that
will definitely put the alpha to sleep. It was odd, really, to be taken care of this way. For the entirety of Levi’s life, he’d always be the one to look after himself or others after his mother died. Nobody considered that maybe that strong boy hunting by himself needed affection.

For now, Levi’s calloused heart is content with the simple gesture of Eren’s love. The sweet sound of purring was slowly healing and soothing Levi from the inside. Maybe that’s the reason why he fell in love with Eren in the first place. The omega’s love was brash yet kind and honest. It was the kind of warmth that melted Levi to the core.

With a huff of breath, the alpha pulled his mate close to him. The blissful escape of darkness was welcome after their long journey apart.

“This better be good,” Levi glared as he sat on a cushioned chair in Erwin’s office. At first he thought that maybe Legion stayed in Mitras temporarily but the alpha was shocked when he found out that he was unconscious for more than three days. During that span of time, Levi’s team worked together to get the alpha home as quickly as possible. Levi made a mental note to thank Oluo and the others later.

“Not good per se but definitely necessary,” Hange answered distractedly as the beta tinkered with a mechanical sort of device. It had weird cogs and springs at odd places; must be another human thing that they found.

“Have you noticed Eren acting strange?” Erwin cut in straight to the point. He was sitting up straight with his lips pressed in a tired firm line. The alpha looked like he needed a week of sleep.

Levi blinked slowly and adjusted his posture, “Besides the fact that he basically reverted back to his primal instincts? Nothing. He’s still bratty and stubborn.”

“That’s what we’re worried about,” Erwin hummed, “We don’t know what kind of physical and psychological torture Eren went through but it was bad enough to force him to depend on his animalistic side.”

“Is there anything we can do about that?” Levi asked agitatedly, his pheromones slowly changing as he felt defensive and protective.

“Not unless we have a clear picture on what kind of method they used to alter Eren’s mind,” Erwin answered grimly, “For now, we have to put Eren under observation. It would be too dangerous for him to go around Krolva unsupervised in this state of mind.”

Levi quirked an amused brow, “Isn’t that my job from the beginning?”

The blond alpha smiled crookedly, “Well, yes, but it’s obvious that you’ve turned more of a lover than a guardian now. Your arrangement with Eren won’t change. He’s still your responsibility but of course we’d leave you some time to recover. The only thing we ask is that you report to us his status so that Hange can figure out a way to reverse whatever was done to your mate.”

“Yeah, sure,” Levi coughed and felt stupid for feeling slightly bashful at the word ‘mate’, “Is there anything else you want me to do?”

“Yes,” Erwin answered seriously and then cracked a pleased little smile, “Please properly claim Eren, for our sake at least.”

“Oh fuck you, shitwin.”
Levi was given another time off for as long as his deep wounds needed to heal. Normally, the alpha would bitch about being trapped doing nothing but this time, Levi knew well it wouldn’t be smart to move around too much. It’s not like the alpha could leave the alcove too. Eren, pumped up with his omegan instincts to cling to his mate, had refused to let Levi out of his sight. The omega would always whine and growl at the alpha if Levi ever attempted to leave. This was probably triggered when the poor omega woke up alone only to find Levi missing. Erwin apologized profusely after finding out.

Eren’s irrational need to plaster himself against Levi lasted for two days. After which, the omega would make a happy gurgle sound indicating that he was okay with Levi to move around. It was like some fucked up honeymoon period that no one asked for. Though, truthfully, Levi was more than happy to spend his days with Eren after months of losing his omega.

Closing in on the fourth day, Eren grew bored. The omega had done nothing but feed and groom his alpha. There was the occasional cleaning frenzy which would get Levi riled up. The brunet was confused at first but when he learned that cleaning equated to Levi getting handsy, Eren kept doing it more and more until the alpha finally figured out his omega’s dirty plan. Sadly for Eren, it never truly ended up with a full blown mating. The alpha would always refuse, saying that Eren was still unwell and Levi’s shoulder was still busted.

Hence, Eren’s temper tantrum.

“Eren, I don’t know what you want from me.” Levi sighed, looking annoyed as ever. Eren was pouting like a pup at him, crossing his arms in defiance.

“Do you want to eat?” Levi tried again but Eren turned him down with a wounded bark. The omega still refused to talk so the brunet made a lewd hand sign, indicating what he truly wanted from his alpha.

The captain sighed and pinched the bridge of his nose, “For the last time, Eren. I don’t want a blowjob— no, handjob is also included. Stop that! I can only cum for a few times a day, alright?”

Eren huffed indignantly and turned away. The omega was bored out of his mind and Levi can relate to that. They love each other so much but they’re both adventurous creatures. The pair shared the mutual desire to see the extent of the ocean without Titan, for fuck’s sake. Levi and Eren needed to get out but there’s nowhere else to go.

It doesn’t mean that Levi won’t cater to his omega though. His alpha instincts are screaming at him to do something to ease his omega’s distress. Seeing the golden tailed brunet be so upset made Levi upset as well.

“How about I go get you some human stuff from shitty glasses?” Levi coaxed the omega who was already turning slightly to him in interest. “They have all these weird shit they keep around them. I know you’ve been eyeing some for a while when you’re with Hange. I’ll go get them so you have something to play with.”

Eren’s eyes sparkled in delight as he wiggled and slapped his golden tail in excitement. Levi felt like he just won the world at that one. Never mind that Hange can be so anal about their human stuff collection. He’ll tear every piece of item he could find for Eren.

“Oh wow, you sorry son of a bitch!” Hange laughed, still in their weird karate pose, “You’re really in too deep to fight me for my collection.”
“Move or I’ll make you,” Levi growled though both of them knew he wasn’t completely serious about his threat; though, Levi is not above tying Hange to a boulder. “Eren is bored and I can’t keep letting him suck my dick. I’m fuckin’ dry, Hange!”

“TMI!” Hange shrieked delightedly, “Bunch of pervs! I knew you two would bang each other to the next month the moment you got your hands on each other. True mates are sexy like that!”

“Are you going to keep on talking or are you moving your ass so I can get to the good shit?” Levi muttered with a glare at the obnoxious beta.

“Yeah, yeah!” Hange waved good-naturedly and moved aside, “You can borrow some of my stuff but I require some compensation, ‘kay?”

“If it’s anything related to fluids, you can go fuck yourself,” Levi groaned as he weaved through the huge piles of human trinkets. There were all sorts of gadgets and items that the alpha didn’t even know the name of. Hange’s collection were either piled on the floor or stacked and kept on stone shelves reaching up the roof of the narrow cave Hange has come to call as their home. There were odd trunks and boxes, some locked with golden clasps. Music boxes of all sorts of sizes were piled together with sets of utensils and porcelain cups. Toys that looked like humans and animals perched contently on quilts and laced cushions. Levi picked up a shiny emerald music box together with some hairpins made out of silver and gold, designed to swirl into a shape of butterflies and flowers.

“I’m taking these,” Levi stated as he showed off the items in his hands, “Warm water mers love shiny things, right? I saw Eren’s pod wearing jewelry.”

“Yup,” Hange answered with a soft little smirk.

Just then, Levi remembered that Eren’s courting gift was still hanging on his neck. The alpha was intensely relieved that the cord managed to pull through the horrendous fight with Kenny. Levi didn’t know what he’d say to Eren if his family heirloom went missing.

“I should probably give this back to him,” Levi muttered as he rubbed at the metal with his fingers.

“Give it back when he knows what it means again,” the beta suggested and crouched down to fetch some dusty wooden box, “Take these with you as well. I’m sure Eren would love them.”

The alpha received the box with a grateful nod. In time, it will be a routine between the two of them as Eren’s growing collection spread through the alcove. Hange would complain about their missing items but the beta was secretly happy that Eren was starting to get his personality back again. After a while, the alcove of the pair was filled with sparkling toys and accessories. There were about two hobby horses stuck on the walls while three yoyos rested on top of the wooden box filled with building blocks given by Hange. A neat little line of matryoshka dolls were placed near the entrance. The alcove now truly looked like a lived in nest and it made Levi proud. The fact that Eren was happy about the arrangement made it even better.

Unfortunately, not everything went well. There were times when Eren would forget his name or where he was. The omega would lash out and try to escape whenever it happened. Levi tried his best to not let it get to him but seeing his omega lose himself was just too much to ask from him. The most painful times would be when Eren would stare blankly at him, no recognition flaming behind his eyes. Levi would croon at him and tell Eren that everything would be okay and that Levi doesn’t mind if the omega forgets as long as he’s safe; as long as he won’t leave the alpha’s side.

“You’re safe,” Levi would murmur into Eren’s hair when the younger mer would shake in fear and
piss himself. The wary and frightened look on the omega’s face was heartbreaking; Levi tries not to look too much or he’d also break.

It was a trying and difficult time, that it almost pushed Levi to just extend his fangs and bite into Eren’s skin to mark him as his own. Just thinking about it made the alpha want to vomit. Eren is clearly unstable and unfit to make decisions for himself. Add in the fact that the bonding mark would surely take a toll on Eren’s body, considering that warm water mers aren’t used to a bond bite. However, that didn’t stop the ugly voice in the alpha’s head to just get on with it so that Eren would never be able to leave his side.

Levi duly ignored that dark voice. He and Eren are going to get through this. There’s no need for drastic measures.

It was the morning after Eren’s intense mental breakdown. Levi had been up all night trying to soothe the omega to a calm state. The alpha had been worried because Eren refused to eat and was mostly averse to any physical contact. Levi watched helplessly until the strain of fight-or-flight drained Eren of his strength and lulled the brunet into a restless sleep. The alpha kept faithful watch until his eyes began to droop and his body fell on the floor. It wasn’t a good way to get rest.

The weak stream of light filtered into the alcove and illuminated the familiar soft face of the brunet omega. Levi blinked steadily as the colors and lines finally cleared and showed Eren’s face. The omega’s eyes were misty and his lower lip was trembling. It was like Eren was seeing Levi for the first time.


“Le... vi—“ Eren wobbly sobbed, “My— Levi.”

The alpha immediately bolted up, ignoring the clawing pain of his shoulder, and stared at Eren with barely concealed hope. The omega was crying openly now, his hands shaking as he slowly reached for Levi’s face. Warm fingers touched the alpha’s cheeks, light enough that Eren must have thought that Levi would disappear if he pushed too much. Eren heaved a relieved sigh, almost disbelieving that his alpha is real, that he is finally here and there will no longer be lonely nights.


Levi hushed his trembling mate and placed his own calloused hands atop Eren’s tan ones. He pressed their foreheads together, breathing in the smell of his mate and pumping out comforting pheromones of his own. Eren only cried harder and babbled in broken tones. Levi could barely understand but he felt the surge of emotions that his little omega was trying to tell him.

It was a mix of sorrow and relief; a chant of ‘I love you’ and ‘please don’t leave me’.

The alpha smiled at his crying mate and finally pressed their lips together. It was sweet and unhurried, like a wave of assurance that they would be fine, that all is well. Eren’s lips were soft and tasted tangy and bitter due to his tears but Levi didn’t care. The alpha swallowed everything his omega can give him. Eren shuddered at the intensity of his emotions and opened his mouth, leaving Levi with the clear opportunity to plunge his tongue into Eren’s wet cavern. The omega sighed happily and pressed closer.

‘I want to be with you always,’ Eren’s heart shouted and Levi felt every word.

‘I won’t leave,’ Levi’s thundering heartbeats screamed back, ‘You’re a part of me now. No one will ever hurt you again.’
Eren smiled into the kiss and embraced his alpha, knowing that this time he wasn’t just dreaming. He was no longer enslaved and trapped within the prison of his own mind. Eren wouldn’t have to endure the stinging pain of being separated from his mate and his home. Levi had found him and brought him back. His alpha loves him so much he had almost given up his life to give Eren his freedom.

The omega might not have the bite mark he always wished for, but now he knew deep in his heart that no brand could outweigh Levi’s love.

Chapter End Notes

I hurriedly tried to post this because my brain suddenly got creative juices and I couldn't let it slip! (I just watched Howl's Moving Castle. I totally blame that movie for this.) Also school just started so I'll be extremely busy for the coming months.

This little chapter is shorter than what I usually post (about like 4-5 pages shorter) but it's just literally a truck load of fluff as payment for all the angst.

As always thank you for the support! This chapter is entirely unedited but I'll try to get back on that.

Have a Happy New Year, everyone!!!
Eren’s eyes fluttered open with the sound of chimes ringing softly with the ocean current. Their nest was decorated with multiple human trinkets that grew from Hange’s collection but most of them were gathered by Levi when he escorted the hunting group of alphas for food. The omega smiled and tapped his tail softly to the moss lining of their nest as an indication of happiness.

Levi groaned and shifted from his position. The alpha was spooning Eren, covering his mate with warmth and the alpha’s natural scent. Eren thought it was a bit funny because he’s definitely taller than his mate; not that it would stop Levi from spooning the brunet.

“G’morning.” Eren yawned sleepily and was amused that Levi made an annoyed sound. Usually the alpha would be up and early but he had rare moments when he’d just want to sprawl around and do nothing.

“It’s not morning ‘til I say it is.” Levi growled sleepily and buried his face into Eren’s hair. The omega laughed and made chittering sounds to coax his mate to wake up. He was getting a little hungry and maybe Eren could convince Levi to allow the omega to hunt with him.

The alpha finally woke after a few minutes, extracting himself from the lump of omega who was definitely in a playful mood. Levi was tired, though. The dark tailed alpha had to calm Eren in the middle of the night when the omega started thrashing around in panic after a nightmare. Eren was getting better but of course the younger mer would still have traces of trauma in him.

“Levi!” called a familiar female voice from outside. Said alpha would know that voice anywhere. True enough, a redhead poked inside of the couple’s alcove. Isabel was grinning so wide, Levi was a little concerned that the younger beta would rip her face in half. Eren made a soft greeting noise to acknowledge the little lady.

“It’s time to eat you lazy asses!” Isabel chirruped with glee, “Come on! We can even chow down with Commander Erwin and the others!”

Levi hummed and glanced at Eren to see if the other male was interested in eating with other people. The omega seemed content and made a confirming clicking sound at the back of his throat. Isabel laughed and quickly made her way out. The mermaid knew that the two would be joining the feast.

“Are you sure you’re up for it, brat?” Levi questioned smoothly as he groomed his scales back into place, “No one’s going to pressure you, so you can say no.”

“M’fine.” Eren answered shortly but he still had a tiny smile on his face. He was still getting used to communicating through speech. Levi really didn’t want to think about the reason why.
The pair stretched a bit before heading out into the open. The waters smelled like a mix of foreign alphas and omegas with the occasional weak scent of betas. It was the only clue Levi needed to know the identity of the mers he’s probably going to eat with. Erwin could have been a little considerate in giving him a forewarning.

The alpha led Eren to a semi-secluded rock area where the concentration of the scents was most potent. From afar, there was already the steady sound of chatter and friendly bickering. Jean’s arrogant alpha voice was trying to win an argument with Connie, while Sasha loudly backed up whatever it was her fellow beta was trying to point out. Armin was scratching furiously at a stone tablet, no doubt making notes on whatever it was that caught his interest.

The new omega girl, however, looked a little timid and lost among the fray. Her blonde hair was tied loosely at the back of her nape and she was hunched in a way to make herself smaller and less noticeable. The mermaid’s tail fluttered nervously, its milky white color fading into translucent pink. Eren blinked rapidly as his brain tried to figure out who this familiar mermaid was.

“Eren!” the mystery mermaid exclaimed, causing all noise to die down. The other mers thought that she disliked getting attention but she was acting very differently now.

Eren made a confused sound and raised his brow, ready to question who the hell was this other lady but before he could utter a word, Eren was thrown back bodily into the sand. The mermaid made happy noises and punched Eren’s arm in a familiar manner.

“Who—“

“Eren! I was so worried about you!” the mermaid with crystal eyes said and then whispered, “You didn’t tell me your mate was this hot. No wonder you were fighting so hard to go back.”

“Krista!” Eren squawked disbelievingly as his memories went flooding in. He remembered being imprisoned with a fellow omega who looked scared to death and spoke in quiet tones.

“Uh, no!” Not-Krista said, “That’s not my real name, remember?”

“Princess Historia.” Erwin offered graciously while he sat at the far end of the stone slab they had turned into a table. He was watching the interaction with keen eyes but there was a gentle smile on his face. It had been somewhat easy to figure out that the girl who went by the name ‘Krista’ was of royal blood, judging from the pattern of scales on her forearms. Erwin had been a small boy when the Royal family paraded through reeves to formally introduce themselves; an event that the young Erwin would never forget. They all had scale patterns on their arms.

Levi made a confirming sound as he crossed his arms and watched as the two omegas reunite. Eren finally warmed up to Historia and they were making heart-warming omega noises while roughhousing. This was how omegas played or comforted each other in the warmer waters. Levi smirked at the scene, thoroughly amused with how different cold water omegas did their bondings. Legion omegas were rougher and preferred racing.

On the other hand, Mikasa was vibrating like mad on her seat. Her hair was cut short that it was almost like Levi’s without the undercut. There was a nasty gash below her eye that made her look older and more experience as a warrior. Her own eyes, however, betrayed the tough facade and showed gentle concern for her adoptive brother. She really wanted to greet Eren as well.

Finally, Krista released the golden tailed omega and swam sideways to allow Eren’s childhood friends to greet him. Eren’s eyes watered with pearlescent tears as he watched the group approach him with barely concealed relief and excitement. Mikasa was the first one to dive in for a hug,
followed by Armin and the rest of the team. Jean looked like he was getting allergic but Marco dragged him down for the group hug.

“You had us all worried!” Mikasa cried shakily.

“Not all of us!” Jean retorted back and was smacked in the face with a tail.

Armin made cooing sounds while Connie ruffled Eren’s hair with his knuckles. Sasha was bawling hard and kept complaining about how tiring everything was and how she’s glad they can finally eat together without worry.

“Guys, knock it off!” Eren complained though he was laughing as he swatted his friends away. The citrusy scent of happiness was so strong that it was affecting even the cold water mers who were watching. Mike politely breathed through his mouth because he was getting a little overwhelmed. Hange was fake crying on Levi’s shoulder before the beta was shoved away with a snarl.

“Get your shit together,” Levi glared at the beta who cackled at him.

Isabel snorted, too busy stuffing her face with fish and shrimp to say anything, while Furlan wrinkled his nose and flicked away a stray piece of meat that fell on his lap. Isabel can get a bit gross when hungry in the mornings.

“Wa—it a minute!” Eren cried out as he struggled to wiggle out of his friends’ embrace, “Why’re you guys all he—re!? W-Won’t you get in trouble? And why'rnt— you freezing cold!?”

“Uh, long story there.” Connie muttered sheepishly before peeling himself away from the group.

“Which is why we’ll eat together so we can discuss everything,” Erwin interjected with a clap of his hands. The younger mers immediately straightened at the command of a powerful alpha. Levi rolled his eyes at his blond friend. He really can’t help his own instinct hating it when another alpha’s imposing his power and dominance.

“Show off.” Levi muttered under his breath, making Mike bite his lower lip to stop himself from laughing. Hange had no qualms about being loud, though.

Once everyone was finally settled, the noise had died down to a tolerable level. The warm water mers mostly kept the chatter among themselves but eventually they started joining in with the crude jokes of the cold water mers under Mike’s team. Marco felt himself going gray as Jean kept getting fed enough ammunition to send an old lady fainting due to the scandal of it.

Eren purred a happy noise and sat cosily near his alpha. He was vibrating with energy but the temptation of food and Levi’s scent was more motivating than his need to play with the other warm water mers. Levi was kind enough to have them seated near Eren’s friends so that the omega won’t feel too ostracized. The omega was very grateful for the gesture.

“You doin’ alright now, Eren?” Connie asked first with an obnoxious amount of skinned fish in his mouth. Levi glared at the beta for his disgusting eating habits to which was responded by an audible gulp.

“Okay. I think.” Eren responded shakily and tried so hard not to let them know how heavy his tongue felt like when he uses words instead of sounds. Mikasa frowned with worry as she glanced at Historia as if asking so many questions about her brother.

“Don’t get kidnapped again, you dumb shit.” Jean called out from the far side of the table but there was no heat in his voice, “I almost lost my arm, Jaeger. If my mate leaves me for not bein’ pretty
enough, I’ll come for your ass.”

“Sorry,” Eren replied with a shit eating grin, “M’taken already.”

“Oh gross!” Jean complained, prompting the rest of the mers to laugh. Levi let the little flirting banter slide since it was one of the rare times Eren finally displayed his old cockiness. If it had been any other time, Levi would have snarled at Jean to back off.

“But seriously, Eren,” Armin started and it was a bit odd for Eren to see his childhood friend sport an impressive braided bun, “Are you sleeping well? We—uh, we had an idea of what you’ve been through during your captivity. We all just wanted to make sure you’re coping well.”

Eren pressed his lips together in a thin line as he played with his share of shrimp and seaweed. Levi was staring at him intently before the alpha pressed his sleek tail against Eren’s golden one. The omega smiled slightly, touched by his alpha’s concern.

“Can’t talk much. I don’t— can, uh, cannot ‘member.” Eren explained as best as he could. It was a little frustrating that his memories were distorted and shot to shit. Even some of his childhood memories were too vague. Eren really didn’t want to tell them that sometimes he forgets his own name when frightened.

“Do you want to know what happened?” Historia asked from where she’s sitting next to the warm water mated couple. Marco pumped calming pheromones as he scented the distress from Historia’s skin.

Eren gulped audibly with frightened teal eyes. He wanted so badly to know what had happened to him since he first woke in the presence of his mate. The omega had so many unanswered questions which sometimes kept him up all night but he was also afraid that he won’t be able to handle the truth. Eren had an idea how dangerous he could be. He remembered snippets of images of him choking Levi with an intent to kill. Eren wanted to throw up at the memory.

But he can’t keep running away. Eren knew deep inside that if he wanted to heal, the omega will have to piece himself together. Levi can’t do any of that for him. Eren would be damned if he willingly continues to become a burden to his mate.

“I wan—nna know. Can you?” Eren squawked. If Levi didn’t know Eren so well, he might have been worried or scared for the omega, but the alpha knew how determined his Eren was. No amount of pressure and unfortunate events could kill the blaze of righteous anger hidden underneath Eren’s teal eyes. Levi was right, of course. Eren was wearing that familiar frown on his face, rage burning through his veins and heating him up like fire.

Mikasa and Armin simultaneously looked shocked and relieved. They had an idea of what kind of hell Eren went through, courtesy of Historia’s testimony, so they have been expecting the worst. To see their friend’s old fire again is like to see the younger version of Eren who believed that mers can do better than just cry. Somehow, this rekindled their belief that they could fight against the true monsters out there.

Erwin straightened while Hange bit the claw on their thumb before swimming towards where Eren was seated. Historia has planted herself beside Eren, speaking in soft tones and assuring the other omega that he doesn’t have to force himself this early if he doesn’t want to. Eren was too stubborn to be persuaded otherwise.

“We’ll start slow, okay kiddo?” Hange asked from behind Eren, careful not to break the safe space between the omega and his alpha.
“M’okay. I can do it.” Eren assured the beta.

“What’s the last thing you remember?” Hange asked once more. They were all in for a long ride and everybody knew it. All present mers for the private breakfast had stopped touching their food. The stench of unease and sympathy was running high. Occasionally, Isabel had to press against Furlan so she won’t be eaten up by the tension.

Eren recounted all that he could remember. His meeting with the traveller mers called Reiner, Annie, and the rest of them whose names he can’t seem to recall. The omega couldn’t remember all the details why he left, though his eyes betrayed him and told Levi that there was another factor besides the alpha’s extended leave. The memories from then on had become too vague. Eren eventually stumbled over his words and just recited snippets that couldn’t be understood without context. Levi remained frighteningly silent the entire time. It was only when Eren told them of the tortures he could recall that the alpha finally snapped.

Levi’s face remained grave, with his usual permanent frown etched on his face like a battle scar. It wasn’t unfamiliar but the alpha’s tail was swishing angrily as his hand found its way towards Eren’s and just held it like his omega will disappear if he didn’t anchor him. Historia would add details when Eren couldn’t remember. She’d clarify what happened to the omega which caused Eren to cry in anger while the rest stiffened uncomfortably on their seats. The mermaid had no qualms about retelling their misfortunes in detail. Marco looked like he was going to be sick when Historia mentioned things about needles and places where they shouldn’t be.

“They took us because we’re shifters but that’s not the only reason why,” Historia started when Eren had been too upset to continue his recollection, “We’re the only mers capable of merging with Titan blood without completely losing our minds. Normally, shifters would eventually succumb to Titan instincts but we’re especially bred to retain intelligence despite shifting.”

“Especially bred?” Erwin questioned, his back further straightening if that was even possible. Mike clenched his fists tightly and cursed lowly under his breath.

“We—“ Historia answered hesitantly as she eyed Eren who was angrily wiping his tears away, “We weren’t just accidents. I found out that we’ve been planned all along and that our mothers were physically prepared for this.”

“What?!” Mikasa burst out but she was held back by Armin who looked like he was about to cry himself. Eren stared at Historia with huge disbelieving eyes that made Levi ache. Just what the hell is going on?

“I wasn’t saying that our mothers consented— at least, I don’t think Eren’s mother did,” Historia added and gulped, “—unlike mine.”

“Princess, please explain this.” Erwin ground out, “This might be crucial to our fight against Titan.”

“T-There’s this chemical— it’s given in parts to a mer who’ll be a vessel for the shifter. My mother has been taking it from the healer named Grisha—“

“Grisha Jaeger?!” Eren exclaimed angrily, pushing into the personal space of the other omega. Levi clenched his jaw as he held on to Eren’s wrist. The omega reeked of aggression, almost enough to make Levi gag hard. Omegas who feel strongly of negative emotions tend to make alphas feel sick as a natural defense.

“Yes.” Historia answered without hesitation. She looked a little sad for Eren but her hard blue eyes
were determined in exposing the truth. Eren had the right to know that his father was working under the direction of the Royal family.

“So Eren’s father had perfected a concoction that can produce shifters who could be capable of thinking,” Erwin hummed, “I suppose the purpose of this is that these shifters were meant to answer to a higher authority and carry out whatever purpose they were created for.”

“Exactly,” Historia confirmed, “Father, along with other powerful mers from both the Underground and his advisors, wanted to create an army or at least a team that could scare the entire mer population into submission. Our purpose as shifters was to force the other reeves to give up their autonomy in exchange for protection from Sina. Reiner and the others—they were also created for this too.”

“How the fu—“ Hange shook their head in disbelief, “Okay, no offense but your father is an absolute idiot! He’s been making political mistakes since he existed in the palace! How could he even think of such an elaborate scheme?”

Erwin pressed his lips thinly, as if knowing the possible answer.

“He’s—he’s not my real father. What you’re seeing in Sina is just a puppet government. That’s how my family has been able to influence both high and low.” Historia confessed as she twiddled her thumbs. She felt extreme shame for what her family had been doing for the past decades.

“By low, you mean Kenny Ackerman and his connections?” Levi stated with a frighteningly even tone. Historia nodded and confessed that the principal mer who brainwashed and hurt Eren the most was Kenny himself.

The stench of vile hatred made the mers shiver in fright.

“And your real father turned you into a shifter?” Mike interjected, trying to distract Levi from thinking about his uncle for too long.

Historia nodded weakly, “He wanted to be one himself but of course you need to be born as a shifter. I was the first experiment. Mother probably expected that I’ll die. She was quite disappointed that I didn’t. Now a lot of influential mer people know that she birthed someone of Titan blood. It’s the greatest shame, she said.”

“Tha—at’s not true!” Eren glared angrily at Historia though his emotions weren’t against her, “The true monsters ‘re t-those who t’rned us into this! I-I’ll fu—cking kill them all!”

Levi smiled a little despite himself. It looks like Eren won’t allow his difficulty in speaking words to hinder him from voicing out his indignation. The omega had the nerve to curse nastily even if he can’t pronounce it in one go. His mate is truly one hell of an omega.

Historia grinned and punched Eren gently on the arm.

“What about the Titans themselves?” Erwin inquired, “Surely your family couldn’t control them all. They’re a sort of species. Do you know if your father merely used the situation as an added advantage or was it part of the scheme too?”

Historia hummed as she wriggled her ears, “They don’t tell me much but I think it’s a little bit of both. The Titans have long existed before our family did but I think they started from diseased mers.”

“That’s true.” Armin confirmed with slightly bright eyes, obviously excited in sharing some facts,
“Titan is a close relative of our own but they evolved into something else completely when some sort of bacteria ate through a small number of olden mers from a thousand years ago or more.”

“Right, so they already existed but they weren’t expanding that much in numbers. That’s when my family comes in. There were about close to a hundred Titans before but it increased in number when the Royal family used the scare and created some Titans of their own.”

Hange made a frustrated noise from the side, “Ugh, seriously? They were able to achieve such scientific feat and they— what? Use it for political gain? That’s gross!”

“They wanted to control everyone,” Historia murmured and ducked her head low.

Erwin sighed and pinched the bridge of his nose hard enough that Levi felt like it was going to break in half. The commander’s tail swished in agitation, muscles bunched up like he was preparing for a fight. Mike mumbled something unintelligible from his side while Armin subtly moved towards them to offer comfort through soft pheromones. Erwin smiled gratefully but it was still strained.

“Guess we’re really fighting the government, huh?” Hange blew out a breath, causing bubbles to form.

“They’re not our government,” Levi reminded the other easily, “Sina might have stretched its shitty tentacles all over the upper reeves but we’re not going to give in.”

“What are we supposed to do then?” Mikasa asked as she eyed Eren who was biting the inside of his cheeks like it offended him.

Levi frowned as he took in the scene in front of him. The warm water mers were clustered together, arguing in scared tones and looking like they’re about to be executed. The rest of the cold water mers had solemn expressions on their faces, looking uneasily among themselves in silent surrender to the fact that they probably won’t come back from what’s about to come. Furlan looked pained as he smoothed Isabel’s unruly hair. The mermaid was hiding underneath the table but a part of her head was poking out. Her green eyes shining with unshed tears but her brows were scrunched together like she was angry at herself for being scared.

What else are they supposed to do than—

“Fight.” Eren growled low, his fins flaring in aggressive display as he eyed Historia, “No m’atter how st—rong they are, it doesn’t matter. I’ll fucking kill— every single one of ‘em.”

The blond mermaid straightened as her expression melted into the same determination that Eren had, “Of course.”

The Marians and merpeople in Sina were truly wrong. Omegas we’re not weak or lesser than the other alphas or betas. They might not have cried the battle songs that the alphas used to do back when wars were waged nor have they exerted dominance by using fists and claws, but every omega’s strength was buried within. Levi watched as the two toughest mers he’d ever known clung to each others’ promise to destroy the world, and they were both omegas. The upper waters had made many mistakes but pushing these omega shifters to their limits was the ultimate oversight that will cause their downfall.

Levi smiled. The future might have blood and death instore for them, but he’d never regret being part of the greatest rebellion story ever told.

“You won’t be alone, Eren.” Levi declared like it was an unbreakable promise, “We’ll finish this
once and for all.”

Eren had been exhausted after the early meeting but Levi urged him to spend time with his former podmates to catch up further. The omega rubbed at his eyes and was about to protest when Armin dragged him to their little group. Levi gave Armin a tiny nod as thanks. Eren needed to have other things in his head. The alpha hoped that the young warm water mers’ shenanigans would be enough distraction after what seemed like a suffocating discussion.

Erwin tipped his head, pointing at the direction of his personal home. Levi arched a brow but didn’t question it. Mike and Hange were already headed towards that direction anyway.

The distant sound of bickering and laughter was the last thing Levi heard before he left.

Eren made a weak little sound, feeling a little hurt that Levi was leaving him behind. It was just his omegan instincts going crazy, of course. Eren knew well enough that the alpha is probably going off to work.

“Oi, Jaeger.” Jean called out with an unimpressed tone, “Could you be anymore stereotypical? The captain literally just left and you look like you’ve been waiting for eighty years.”

Eren hissed rudely at the alpha though it was not as violent as to urge a fight.

“Don’t mind him, Eren.” Marco shot apologetically, “He’s just venting out because the other superior officers from Sina were giving him a hard time.”

“You mean they’re double the assholes than usual.” Connie added with a roll of his eyes.

Sasha pouted, “We like it better here!”

“As much as it pains me to admit,” Mikasa added as she removed some strands of hair from her eyes, “Alpha soldiers here are more unlikely to look down on younger mers; except for that shorty.”

Armin laughed and patted Eren’s arm, “I’m sure Captain Levi just has an uncanny way of showing emotions.”

Eren hummed with a confirming nod. Captain Levi is a sort of guy who’d rather stab himself than show his true feelings in public. The short alpha can be very sweet and affectionate but it was exclusive for people who are really close to him and is usually done within private quarters. However, Eren’s noticing that Levi is somehow growing out of his reclusion. The omega was secretly happy for his alpha.

“Anyway,” Eren croaked uneasily as his tongue started to get weird again, “What’cha all doin’ here? Aren’t you— gonna get caught?”

Mikasa smiled, “There’s too many soldiers under Sina’s command for them to specifically look for us. We’re also making sure our shifts and leaves would be in sync so we could slip in here. So far, no one has noticed a thing and we intend to keep it that way.”

“B-But aren’t cha cold?” Eren rumbled as he adjusted his sister’s battered scarf. When did it get so worn out like that?

Mikasa smiled warmly at Eren with teary eyes, “We’re all okay, Eren. Squad Leader Hange has given us the same herbs as they gave you. It also helps that we frequently report back here so we
could get used to the temperature.”

“Jean’s dick was about to fall off though!” Connie shouted and got himself trapped in a headlock by said alpha.

“Fuck you, Springer! My dick was made to survive the winter!” Jean complained before he threw curses in their native tongue at the beta.

Marco pleasantly ignored his rowdy mate, “I really don’t want to regret mating with him so I’ll just pretending Jean isn’t being an idiot again.”

Eren laughed a little too loudly before he heard a quiet little snicker behind him. Historia was sitting behind the group, seemingly trying to hide again now that her opinion isn’t needed. It broke Eren’s heart to see her this way. The golden tailed omega might not have clear memories of his time in captivity but Eren could still recall snippets of Historia’s encouraging voice when the brunet thought he was going to die.

“Historia,” Eren called out and made a gesture to urge the omega mermaid to join them. Historia bit her lower lip, slightly unsure if it’d be okay for her to barge in before Armin peeled himself away from the group and tugged playfully at the mermaid’s tail.

“Oh gods, they look so much alike. It’s creepy.” Jean commented as Sasha and Connie nodded behind him. It was true. Armin looked too much like Historia, especially with their blond hair, blue eyes, and button noses.

“I don’t think I can handle a conspiracy theory after that mind boggling revelation,” Connie whined as he massaged his head.

“I’m really sorry for that,” Historia apologized again and it was disheartening that she keeps taking the responsibility for the mistakes made by her family. “My family is extremely crazy. I’m kinda glad that I didn’t grow up with them.”

“That sucks,” Connie commented, “Seems like they’ve been treating you badly since you were— I don’t know, since you were concieved?”

Historia scratched at the top her nose, a little embarrassed. Marco, being the resident older omega, crooned a soft tune to let the mermaid know that she wasn’t a stranger. The mermaid blinked rapidly before she was forcibly included in their retelling of how different it is to be in Krolva than in the upper waters. It was, for the first time in Historia’s short life, warm and calm. Eren’s bunch of rowdy friends were a family in itself; a thing that Historia didn’t get to experience. For a moment she was lost in the waves of joyious laughter and ribbing.

Her alpha could finally rest in peace, knowing that Historia finally found a place where she can be herself.

Furlan and Isabel were being weird.

Not that the two weren’t such oddballs for the beggining, but seeing them mutter to themselves and swim restlessly outside Eren and Levi’s nest was— really weird. Eren really didn’t have an adjective in mind to describe it.

“Ohm,” Eren hummed but it really was more of a heads up that he’s around.

Isabel made a cute screeching noise before turning around and releasing a relieved breath. Furlan
looked sheepish before swimming towards Eren to greet him properly.

“Sorry,” Furlan apologized as he wrinkled his nose in a boyish way, “We didn’t mean to snoop but Levi is really making us worry.”

“Oh, he’s back?” Eren asked, surprised that the older alpha had already finished his business with Commander Erwin. The omega expected that Levi would have picked him up from Mikasa and the others but he heard nothing from the officers of Legion since the meeting.

“He has this creepy murder face!” Isabel exclaimed and tried to copy her big brother’s expression. Furlan laughed unashamedly at the parody imitation but it did well to serve a point. “I’ve been trying to coax him out to prepare dinner for later. I even offered to *clean* but he’s still so damn quiet!”

Eren bit his lip. He’s not sure if he can coax the alpha to share his burdens with him. The omega was already tattered and ruined almost into nothing by the goons of the Royal family and Kenny Ackerman. He obviously wasn’t the brick wall of mental stability that Levi obviously needed; however, Levi was his mate, bitten or not, and Eren would be damned before he leaves Levi to fend for his own.

“I—I’ll t-try to calm him,” Eren said shakily, “but no promises, ‘kay?”

“Pfft, as if you’re not Levi’s ultimate weakness,” Furlan rolled his eyes in amusement. “Go get him!”

Isabel laughed and made a happy noise before plastering herself against Eren, “We’re really glad you’re okay, Eren. Don’t run off again, alright? We’re really going to miss you.”

The omega smiled warmly before patting her hair, “Now that’s... sm’thng I can promise.”

“— we’ll also punch your dick if you do it again.” Furlan added with a shit eating grin. Eren really missed these two.

To say Eren was nervous was an understatement.

He was shaking and Eren’s heart was beating so loud that Levi could probably hear it. It wasn’t that Eren was scared of Levi himself; he’s scared of seeing a distraught mate who can’t seem to pick himself up. Levi had always been the pillar of strength that everybody envied. It’s like the alpha can pick up the burden of the world without even flinching. Even when Eren was so young, he looked up to Levi as a hero. Perhaps he was a little too naive to think that nothing can beat the alpha down. Levi still has a heart after all. Now, it’s even more difficult because Eren knew to himself that seeing Levi in pain, would not only break his image of Levi, but will also cause pain for Eren himself.

It was odd, this relearning of another person even if you’re already in a permanent relationship. The mixed emotions of excitement and sadness in knowing this new side of Levi made Eren’s head feel dizzy.

“Levi,” Eren called out as he slipped into the alcove. The bells made soft ringing noises as Eren’s tan fingers trailed over them. It was a miracle that Levi wasn’t itching to clean their nest of the excessive toys and charms.

The alpha didn’t make a sound but Eren could clearly see the silhouette of Levi’s body slouching on the wall. Levi had his arms crossed, painfully covered in old burns and gashes from blades, his
chest still bandaged but it wasn’t as extensive at it was before. Eren gulped, the familiar feeling of
guilt creeping into him as he eyed the new wounds Levi had to deal with because Eren let himself
be caught. He was so foolish.

“L—evi,” Eren warbled wetly, causing the alpha to wake up and glance at the omega with alarm.
Levi pushed himself up from where he was seated and crooned at the omega to lay beside him.
Eren eagerly melted into Levi’s arms and made pleading noises.

“Gods, I—hate seein’ you like this. It’s my fault.” Eren whimpered angrily, his fists curling into
themselves and digging into the omega’s flesh until they bled. Levi hushed the young omega
before forcing Eren’s fists to open to stop the omega from further hurting himself.

“Shouldn’t I be the one to apologize, brat?” Levi said earnestly as he licked the fresh wounds
clean. It was a pointless chore but the alpha wanted to show his affections to the obviously
distressed Eren. Sometimes there was just too much going on in the omega’s head. Levi itched to
quiet his demons.

Eren sniffled before glaring at Levi even if his pink cheeks betrayed him, “No. I ran—‘way and
you got hurt.”

Levi hummed, “Why did you run away?”

The omega looked away, feeling like he was about to crawl out of his skin. Eren didn’t remember
much but he recalled how Hitch—so that was her name—called him a nest warmer and how Levi
didn’t want to tie himself permanently to a mer like Eren. ‘Fucked to obey his superior’ is what the
mermaid said. The omega felt like a whore during that moment. It didn’t help that Eren found out
that he was barren. How could he even begin saying that to Levi?

“Please—don’t ask me th-at.” Eren pleaded weakly. He can’t.

“It’s not just because I was gone for long, wasn’t it?” Levi prompted. The alpha refused to let this
talk slide. Eren was his responsibility from the beginning. He had to know where he went wrong.

Eren pressed his lips together, his brows and nose scrunching up like he was going to cry.

“Y-You don’t ever have to bite me,” Eren warbled through tears, “I-I l—ove you. That’s enough.
Just stay with—me as long a-as you can bear it, kay?”

“Eren, what are you talking about—”

“Levi,” Eren whispered with shame like he wasn’t worthy enough to say the name, “M’barren... I
can—not give you pups.”

The alpha stiffened, hands stilling from rubbing comforting circles around the tender flesh of
Eren’s newly healed palms. Is this why Eren ran away? He felt like he failed Levi by being unable
to bear his pups even at such a ripe age. It must have been a great shame for the omega, since the
warm water mers took pride in their omegas being fertile. It was their purpose.

Eren must have mistaken Levi’s silence for anger as the omega cowered and tried to slip away
from the alpha. The golden tailed brunet kept babbling nonsense about him still being capable of
sex and would willingly let Levi use him for such.

The alpha growled darkly, “You are not just a good fuck, Eren.”

“Th-en why won’t you bond with me!!” Eren cried out, angry at himself and Levi. “Y-you don’t
wanna mate with me permanently. I g—et it!”

“No you fucking don’t!” Levi shouted with equal force, “Damn shitty brats thinking stupid shit. Are you for real? Eren, I’d die for you! Kenny almost finished me but I didn’t care ‘cause I fucking love you. Do you understand me!?”

Eren stilled, huge turquiose eyes gleaming with pearlescent tears.

“I didn’t bite you because I was so damn scared I was taking advantage of you, brat.” Levi huffed frustratingly, carding his fingers through his hair, “You had your first heat and I didn’t want to have to hear a consent that’s fucking influenced by a boner. I wanted to bond with you properly, when your body can actually handle it and your mind isn’t a shitty mess.”

The omega continued to gape disbelievingly.

“Eren,” Levi cooed as he calmed down, “I don’t want snotty little brats. It’d be nice to have that but what I want is you.”

“Oh, Levi,” was all Eren had to say before the alpha shot forward and pressed their lips painfully in a desperate kiss. They still had so many things to say; so many things to clear up once and for all but they let their bodies do the talking. The young omega keened high as Levi trailed heated kisses along his neck and collarbones. The alpha nipped at the tender flesh where the bond mark should be, like a teasing promise that definitely got Eren riled up.

“I will mate with you, you hear me?” Levi purred lowly, letting his hands grope at exploded flesh of his desired mate. Eren had lost some of his natural fat, which Levi mourned over. The alpha loved to squeeze them between his hands when they coupled before. It irked Levi that Eren had lost weight due to his captivity but this also gave the raven haired alpha a chance to feed his omega until he’s plump and healthy.

Eren was completely swimming in bliss as he nodded his assent and made a confirming clicking sound at the back of his throat. His emotions were still running high, telling him that he needs this alpha now or he’ll die.

“Please, please, please—“ Eren babbled incoherently as Levi’s fingers prepped him open. The omega yowled and arched his back when Levi hit his sweet spot. The dark tailed alpha smirked and peppered Eren’s stomach with fluttering kisses in approval. There was no time for extra foreplay. They needed to be tied together permanently.

Levi gave the boy one last apologetic kiss before he withdrew his slicked fingers. Eren was already shaking, his eyes staring lovingly at the alpha who he knew exerted so much effort in being gentle with Eren.

“M’sorry... I doubted you,” Eren wept openly, pearls starting to collect steadily where his head lay. Levi smiled sadly as he stared at his upset mate. It wasn’t Eren’s fault. It wasn’t anybody’s fault. What they had was complicated from the beginning. They were two different mers who weren’t even meant to fall in love with one another, and yet here they are.

“Don’t say that,” Levi murmured, “It’s not— we’re going to make this right. Are you with me?”

Eren smiled, “Th—ere’s no one I’d rather... spend the re-st of my life with.”

And that’s what truly finished Levi. All their doubts were thrown far away, forgotten in the depths of the oceans where no one could ever lay eyes on them. Eren moaned at the intrusion, feeling full and loved after endless months of pain, agony, and betrayal from his own family. Levi moved in
sync with him. Their cries turned into a song that they only knew how to follow. The feelings were intense and blinding but at the same time— freeing.

Eren felt like he was flying. The world was no longer small nor was it plagued with monsters in the night. If this is what being free felt like, Eren would fight to the very last ounce of his strength just to give everyone a chance to experience this; to forget that they were turned into livestock.

The omega thought that he couldn’t climb any higher than this but then Levi extended his fangs and plunged Eren deeper into pleasure. The bite stung for a few second as it drew blood but the sudden click of a firm connection made Eren forget the pain of it. The omega had already been slightly in tune with Levi before but now it seemed clearer, like a haze lifting for the first time. It wasn’t as powerful as he thought it would be, but he felt Levi’s fast beating heart and the warmth of his love.

It was more than enough.

Everything that he’d been through— was worth it for this first step into being finally bonded.

Chapter End Notes

Have I been gone a long time? I feel like I did.

Sorry, guys! My life recently turned into some messed up Greek tragedy so I’ve been busy with a whole lot of things, plus the fact that I really didn't know how the hell I'll put all the plot stuff I wanted to drop in here without it being messy.

Did I succeed? Probably not but I tried!

Again, thank you so much for the support! This fic really reached a level that I didn't expect. We're going deep into the plot now so stay tuned and tell me what you think! Also, I'll just add in the little reminder that it takes more than one bite to secure the bond. (this little tidbit would be important later on in the plot *wink wonk*)

Until next time!
Hello, Father?

Chapter Summary

Meeting the in-laws usually didn't end up like this.

Chapter Notes

This is going to be plot heavy for the next few chapters.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

The ocean was noisy.

Melodious rumbles and claps of thunder raged from above the waters as winds howled and lashed angrily, spraying saltwater upon unfortunate ships that got caught up in the storm. The waves were unforgiving, towering in heights that could swallow down buildings in a flash. Whatever violent storm had cursed the land dwellers have reached the bottom of the ocean where the mers lay to rest.

Levi looked up from where he sat serenely on a moss covered stone. It was that time of night where the past bleeds slowly into the present. Legion was in a state of peaceful slumber despite the roaring storm but the alpha was plagued with familiar nightmares, so he stood guard over his pod.

The rumbles of thunder, though far from reach, echoed down and caused Levi’s slightly pointed ears to wiggle. It had been a long time since a storm this powerful had crashed over the ocean. Somehow, despite the eerie cries of the skies and the calling of whales and dolphins seeking shelter, Levi felt safe. He had always believed that noise meant life while silence was death.

Levi grimaced at his thoughts and forced himself to look away from the stretch of darkness of the open field. His gaze dropped on Eren’s shivering form. The omega was huddled in their nest, swaddled with thick blankets, pillows of feather or kelp fillings, yet Eren was whining and complaining about the coldness even in his sleep. The alpha smiled gently, ever reserved for his mate, and took pity on the freezing lump.

Eren had already gone through a lot of suffering while Levi pathetically waited in Krolva, cursed with being able to do nothing to save his love. This was the only way Levi could ever repay his omega for his faithfulness and courage to live on.

The alpha scooped up Eren with ease, bringing with him the lumps of blankets that provided as much heat as it could ever give. The omega made a keening noise before pressing his face on Levi’s exposed collarbone. Eren babbled something incoherent before softly snoring.

Levi chuckled before transferring his mate to the warmer quarters of the abandoned ship. The alcove might have been their safe space, but the main territory of Levi is more comfortable and offered better protection from the elements. Eren obviously didn’t care where he was put as long as Levi’s scent was there to accompany him in his dreams.
“You’re up early,” greeted a husky voice, sleep evident in its slow tune. Furlan was smiling a little though he looked rumpled with sleep. His form was slumped at the side of Levi’s doorframe in a slugish way. Levi snorted as fondness crept up on him. Furlan would always be a goofy pup.

“I didn’t sleep,” Levi said as he smoothed out the wrinkles of Eren’s blankets. The alpha didn’t need to say that he stayed up all night. Furlan and Isabel were far too acquainted with his troubled sleeping patterns.

There was a disapproving look on Furlan’s face but the beta didn’t say anything. Levi was grateful. It’s bad enough to deal with insomnia and the occasional nightmares when sleep becomes less elusive, but it’s even worse to deal with a distressed family member. With one last pat on the sheets, Levi pushed himself away and let the omega sleep in his bedroom.

Furlan clicked his tongue and swam his way into the kitchen, the frigid cold trailing him like a plague. Levi followed the blond and caught the sounds of Isabel snoring up a storm in her own room. The alpha was thankful that Isabel was the less likely to stay up at night. She was far too outgoing and happy to be plagued by demons.

“One hell of a week, wasn’t it?” Furlan prompted as he broke open some cactus-like plants and offered one to Levi. The alpha tipped his head slightly in thanks before drinking the fluids inside in one go. It tasted a little stale and bitter after being plucked several days ago.

Levi licked his lips before turning the husk of the plant over, “For some reason, I feel like Erwin saw this coming. Historia also looked like she was about to shit herself the entire time, so I guess we should have expected the worst from her.”

The beta blew a breath, “That was— way too much information to even. you know, process? Fake families and royalties? Experiments? Hell, even Eren’s dad is a traitor!”

Levi closed his eyes painfully, remembering the look on Eren’s face and the stench of anger and sadness on the omega’s skin as Historia told them the truth about Grisha Jaeger. It wasn’t something they could have foreseen. The alpha father had been missing for most of Eren’s childhood, with the excuse that he went on a journey to find a cure for his wife and child.

It’s no longer a surprise that Eren’s omega instincts kicked in and forced him to hibernate for periods at a time. Nature had a way of defending omegas from further trauma.

“How are you holding up?” Furlan asked when Levi’s hand practically crushed the plant husk into tiny pieces. The loud clap of thunder rumbled ominously.

“I’m a soldier,” Levi answered though his eyes remained blank and unseeing, “I was only ever good at killing. This game is not mine to play.”

Furlan held his breath, “But you want to.”

The alpha made a sharp ‘tsk’ noise, “As long as they’re dead, especially Kenny, I really don’t give a floating fuck.”

The beta hummed knowingly before passing the food basket to Levi as a sign of peace. He didn’t want to further enrage the alpha at this time. Levi was downright the epitome of the devil when he was pushed to his limit. Furlan loved his life too much to risk getting mauled, even if he knew Levi would never hurt them. Alpha instincts don’t always listen to logic after all.

“Wait a minute—” Furlan choked on his slimy squid while Levi pointedly didn’t make eye contact. There was a hidden amused smirk on the alpha’s face but he wouldn’t just spell it out
easily for the little prick. The unmistakable pointed stare on Levi’s neck burned with scrutiny.

“YOU’RE FUCKING MATED!?” Furlan shrieked in sync with the loud thumping noise from Isabel’s room.

Levi raised a brow as he fought the urge to touch the bite mark on his neck. The wound was still red on the inside while the puffed flesh where Eren’s teeth marks sank were pink and swollen on the edges. It was completely against tradition. Legion might have been a little more liberal with their treatment of omegas, but they were still prohibited from biting the neck. Omegas marked their alpha or beta mates either on the wrists or the hip. Alphas bit the neck as a show of possession and power against any rival mers. Levi didn’t care about tradition. He and Eren are equals.

“What gave it away?” Levi raised a brow, trying to look unimpressed while at the same time fighting the smug smirk threatening to come out. His inner alpha was howling with joy and practically stomping around with pride at having mated such a powerful and beautiful omega.

“WHO’S MATED!?” Isabel’s voice shrieked down the hallways. The alpha made a disapproving clicking noise as he watched the red headed mermaid basically crawl her way into the kitchen like some sort of deranged octopus. Levi was going to have to clean the floor again.

“Eren is asleep, you little shit,” Levi glared at the beta mermaid, “If you wake him up and he starts tearing this place apart, I will murder you myself.”

Isabel didn’t even flinch as she stuck her tongue out childishly, “Aren’t newly mated alphas supposed to be all nice? You’re still prickly and angry.”

Levi rolled his eyes before promptly picking up the squirming beta from the floor. He kept nagging her how dirty the floorboards are while the mermaid growled and whined about how they keep cleaning the damn things and that they can practically lick the floor. The alpha scrunched up his face, showing his disgust at the imagery, before kicking the beta girl away and telling her to go back to fucking sleep or he’ll make her.

“Does this mean we’re a real family now?” Isabel asked through under her lashes. She looked so young and hopeful as her eyes glimmered with sparks that Levi thought he’d never see again.

The alpha gave a tiny smile. “We’ve always been a family.”

Isabel smiled brightly before turning away to catch some sleep again. The alpha didn’t miss the muffled sniffing noise coming from Furlan’s direction.

It didn’t take long for Eren to finally wake up.

The omega was a mess with his hair standing up in all directions, bags under his watery eyes, and layers of mismatched blankets covering his shivering body like it was meant to be a protective armor. Levi didn’t even hide his snort as he coaxed the omega to enter the kitchen.

The brunet made a displeased face at being ordered so early in the morning but he acquised. Eren sniffed pathetically before planting himself on Levi’s lap, threatening to fall asleep again.

“Oi, brat! Get off!” Levi complained though his instincts preened at his omega’s gesture of trust.

“Dun wanna!” Eren replied haughtily with a pointed glare that competes with his alpha’s. The omega remained seated and unaffected as he struggled to keep his blankets close and proceeded to forcibly wrap Levi’s arms around his waist. Furlan, who was not so innocently watching the scene,
was grinning madly while a recently awakened Isabel gawked openly. The golden tailed mer usually wouldn’t pull a stunt like that.

Levi’s nose crinkled. “Bratty little pups don’t get to eat breakfast,” he fake threatened with a sloppy show of pointed teeth.

Eren made a grumpy noise and nipped at Levi’s collarbone, “You fucked me right through our nest, which I worked so hard on to put together, and I had to wake up without you! I deserve to act like a snotty pup whether you like it or not!”

Furlan lost his composure and laughed loudly until he fell off his seat. This was the first time they heard Eren finally form a sentence without stumbling over his words for *freakin’ weeks*, and of course it had to be crass. Isabel shuddered visibly and made fake gagging noises before swimming away from the kitchen like an embarrassed teenager. Eren smirked through the layers of blankets, half-dosing away as the heat of his alpha lulled him back to his dreamworld.

After a few minutes of wrestling Eren into eating his breakfast properly, Levi pulled himself away from the bundled omega. There were so many things to deal with and the captain of Legion couldn’t have the simple luxury of indulging his omega during early hours.

“You’re going already?” Eren asked through thick lashes. Levi was minutes away from losing his grip on his notorious self-control.

“Yes, Eren. I still have work to do and Erwin’s going to be pissed if he gets another shitload of errands just because I’m laying around.”

The omega smacked his lips and gently rubbed on Levi’s wrist, “It’s about what Historia said, isn’t it?”

It wasn’t really a question. Eren’s eyes hardened though his voice wavered through every syllable. It’s not hard to see the underlying guilt swimming underneath the younger male’s eyes. There were so many unsaid words and it hurt Levi to see them so raw in such a young person. They had so much to talk about. The alpha understood the need for it. Now, though, is not the time. He’ll have to address Eren’s distress when they nest again this evening.

“It is.” Levi answered as honestly as he could. He learned from his past mistakes. The alpha may have had a sharp tongue and no filter but he knew that his lack of grace in giving Eren the same benefit had landed them into trouble before. Now, he’s going to tell Eren everything that he’s thinking and feeling.

“I know you’re smart enough to know that things will change. We might have to prepare for the worst, given the circumstances. Erwin will figure this out but—” Levi pressed his lips thinly that it almost looked painful.

Eren crooned and rubbed at Levi’s skin soothingly, “Don’t hold back on me, Levi. I can take it.”

“Erwin might be a sharp strategist... but he has never met anyone like Kenny before,” Levi finished with a grim look. He just knew that his uncle was pulling some important strings and that scared the living hell out of him. The younger Ackerman had already knocked on death’s door several times because his uncle was a sick fuck who enjoyed pain and agony inflicted upon others.

“I’ll fucking kill him, Levi.” Eren growled as his voice jumped slightly, a tell-tale sign that his speech is failing him again, “I swear, we’ll find him and stop this mess.”

Levi smiled softly before bending down and nudging the sheets to fall away from the young mer’s
shoestring, exposing the pink mark of their first bonding attempt. Eren blushed prettily as the alpha dipped down and pressed a possessive open-mouthed kiss on the bite mark. The omega groaned loudly as bolts of electricity ran through his veins, making Eren arch obscenely.

“I’ll hold you to that promise, brat.” Levi smirked one last time before swimming away to leave his omega mate completely turned on and more than frustrated.

“Levi!” Eren screeched as he attempted to shove back his prick into its sheath. “You’re a dick!”

Krolva was alive with murmurs and excited chatter as Levi made his way through the main traffic. The few omegas who left their homes to assist in setting up the training grounds all but blushed and gossiped among themselves. The raven haired alpha tried to ignore them as best as he could, but his instincts made Levi feel like he won the fucking world. It didn’t take a genius to figure out that the cold waters’ strongest warrior had finally found his other half.

Still, Levi made sure to keep his scent in check. He was going into an alpha packed territory. There’s really no need to stink up the place with the sugary and spicy scent of his happiness.

Surely enough, the loud voices of alphas conversing started to ring through Levi’s ears. The Stone Curb is usually the place where alphas of Legion spent their time socializing before they are sent out on missions or training, not really a place where Levi would find himself loitering in.

There were occasional betas and a sole omega who’d be darting through the crowd just to say hello or maybe ask a question from their superiors. Levi nodded at some of them in greeting while he tried not to snarl at the godawful pungent smell of alpha scents mixing together.

Somewhere along the far end of the packs of boulders and dim glowing plant life, echoed a voice that carried with it the baritone of old age. The merman was laughing joyously; clapping Erwin’s shoulder without a care about the other alpha’s standing in their pod.

Levi cleared his throat and pounded his fist against his chest in salute to the older alphas. Erwin’s grin quickly faded into a surprised ‘oh’ while his companion grinned wider at the newcomer. Erwin’s companion was undoubtedly the epitome of what a typical alpha should look like: broad shoulders, a full dark blond beard, tight muscles, and an aura that commands respect. He had the same thick eyebrows and set of twinkling frosty eyes that Erwin sported.

“What?” Levi grumbled as the other alphas continued to gawk at him, “Do I have my dick out or something?”

The older merman boomed another loud laugh, “Levi, you son of a bitch!”

“Kuchel Ackerman was a nice lady,” Levi answered in a deadpan tone while Erwin shook his head fondly.

“That she is!” He laughed again and herded Levi into his arms and shook the smaller alpha like an excited father. Levi made a disappointed noise as his hair was ruffled by the enthusiastic alpha.

“Uncle, please.” Erwin pleaded though he looked like he enjoyed seeing his friend get harassed by his uncle. Levi let it go since Gregory Smith was like a father figure to both him and Erwin. It was already common knowledge how the older Smith brought the boys together to bond like brothers. The first few years of Levi knowing Erwin had been a little too bloody because of how they differed in methods. Gregory was a fuckin’ saint for making a damn miracle out of the two by making them close friends.
It’s a shame the older alpha didn’t enjoy staying in one place; hence, he’s rarely seen by his own pod.

“Congratulations, boy!” Gregory chuckled as he patted Levi’s cheek, “I see you’ve finally found the balls to mate with that young Jaeger. About damn time, I say!”

Erwin smiled, his usually stoic demeanor and cold eyes lighting up with happiness and pride for Levi. The raven haired alpha scrubbed at his nose, trying to ignore the funny feeling underneath his ribs. There’s no doubt that he wore his bite mark proudly, though the placement was scandalous, and nothing could ever dampen his good mood.

It was a good balance to what he’s about to discuss with the two.

“We need to talk,” Levi cut straight to the point. The two blond alphas straightened at the statement before nodding in silent agreement to move their conversation somewhere more private. The Stone Curb had a small opening that lead to basically a huge drop. Not many mers dared to go there since the current had the tendency to suck in any living being into the dark abyss.

“You wanted to talk?” Gregory prompted, crossing his arms defensively.

“I did,” Levi answered smoothly, “I wanted to know if anyone’s tracking Grisha Jaeger.”

Erwin looked taken aback, a surprising feat since the blond commander did not have the habit of making is surprise known. Gregory made a little noise at the back of his throat before staring at his nephew. It was creepy sometimes how they didn’t need words to express their thoughts.

“My volunteer to look out for any signs of Eren’s father,” Erwin started soothingly, having noticed that Levi’s posture became rigid and tiny bit on the side of aggressive, “Our main goal right now is to come up with a counter-attack if the upper waters start to make a move. I’m positive that the king would declare us to be threats to the throne. It’s only a matter of time before they attack us to recover Historia and Eren.”

Levi bit the side of his cheek, “I don’t like this. I also don’t like the fact that Historia was easily given to us. Two shifters? That’s suicide for them. If I’m getting these doubts, I’m pretty sure your huge ass head is considering this too.”

“You want to find Grisha so you could figure out what’s going on,” Erwin observed, his keen eyes narrowing in on Levi like he could read the shorter mer from the inside, “He’s the weakest link, with no combat training, so you want to get to him first.”

Levi nodded as Gregory hummed a contemplative noise.

“A decent idea but there’s a downside to it,” Gregory grumbled as his thick fingers threaded through his beard.

The shorter alpha raised a brow, “And what’s that?”

“Grisha Jaeger, no matter how much of a prick of a father he may be, is still Eren’s blood parent. You’d be tracking down the man who your mate has considered to be his family for a long time. Betrayal might’ve dampened their relationship but—“

Levi puffed up his chest, “I know that. That’s the reason why I’m talking to you two. I need information so I could move carefully and— I need Erwin’s permission so I could take Eren with me.”
The commander’s eyes widened, “Levi, you’re seriously taking Eren to hunt down his own father?”

It was a crazy idea. An idea that might make his new mate hate him for the rest of their lives but Levi was willing to do it. Eren had a lot of unanswered question, had even been deprived of seeing his father for so long with nothing but a lie to explain his disappearance. This is an opportunity for the young omega to finally have some bit of closure if Grisha was truly following death’s path. No mer who ever worked such a dirty task for a king would ever be guaranteed a full life.

“I’ll ask the brat if he wants to come but I won’t force him to,” Levi answered steadily, “I won’t deprive him of a choice, Erwin. He’s already been thrown around all his life. If he wants to find answers, I won’t stop him.”

“And if he doesn’t want you to find Grisha?” Gregory prompted.

“I doubt he’d ever stop me,” Levi snorted amusedly, “Eren is one tough little shit. Something like family ties would never stop him from achieving his goal. But if by some damn miracle he doesn’t want me to go, then I’ll have to respect my mate’s wishes. I’ll find another unfortunate bottomfeeder to terrorize.”

“And they say romance is dead,” Erwin smirked jokingly. The blond alpha’s eyes glimmered with amusement and respect for his younger friend. Levi had always had trouble listening to other people when he’s determined to do something. For the shorter alpha to step away from his stubbornness to respect and please his mate is a whole level of maturity and love that Erwin never saw in the captain before.

“There’s something more,” Levi added but a familiar scowl returning to his face. The two alphas stiffened.

“I haven’t told you everything about Kenny Ackerman.”

Telling Eren everything should be a private affair; Levi had it all planned out in his head how he’s going to ease in the younger omega into the situation. It was only fair, since he’s practically asking his mate to go against his own flesh and blood. It’s messy work.

Only, he didn’t expect that Mikasa and Armin would be back so early. The two were sitting beside the golden tailed brunet, tails swishing idly. They shouldn’t be due until next week, not until the rumor mill has died down along with the terrible weather that’s making the ocean colder than death’s door.

This was not a good sign.

“In-law,” Levi drawled as he watched Mikasa’s shoulders hunch defensively. Armin was trying so hard to stifle his laughter.

“I hate you, shrimpy,” Mikasa declared, her alpha pheromones trying so hard not to put out a threat. She had consented to Levi claiming Eren as his own, but Mikasa really didn’t like how the older short alpha sounded so damn proud. “We didn’t come here to be antagonized.”

Levi made a vague grunting noise before settling on a nearby rock. Almost immediately, Eren bolted from his seat and squeezed himself into Levi’s personal space. Mikasa glared even harder, not used to her brother favoring someone else besides her and Armin. The older Ackerman merely cocked a brow before pointedly wrapping a possessive arm around his mate. It was ridiculous alpha behavior but it was too much fun to mess with Eren’s family.
“We moved Carla,” Mikasa started with a heavy snort, not wanting to fall for Levi’s tauntings, “It’s getting too noisy up there and our leaders lost total control over us. Petra told us that Sina’s already starting their propaganda against Legion. Extremist religious leaders are howling day and night.”

“It won’t be too long now,” Armin added. “I’m sure they’ll say something about Eren or even spread lies about Historia. Once that happens, every pod in the ocean will be out to rip Legion apart and there’ll be nothing to stop Sina’s control, especially with the Titans in their hands.”

“Mom’s gonna be okay, right?” Eren prompted, his eyes glowing as deep anger bled slowly into the cerulean orbs. Levi was momentarily mesmerized, feeling a bit of awe at the fact that he was blessed with a mate who was this intense.

Armin smiled kindly at his brunet friend, explaining that the mother mermaid was safely transferred nearer to Krolva in case something bad happened. Carla also adjusted her schedule, as she now preferred to stay indoors so that the warm water mers wouldn’t misdirect their anger at the mermaid who birthed a so-called monster. Eren had been furious but resigned to the fact that he can’t do anything about it now.

“We need to move now,” Levi grumbled underneath his breath. “Those shits won’t give us the luxury of time. Legion is not in the position to hold off against the whole goddamn world at this rate.”

“Erwin’s working on it,” Armin consoled the alpha with a soft comforting noise.

The raven haired alpha clicked his tongue, “There’s also that. We can’t leave everything to Erwin. He’s just one man.”

Eren stiffened slightly, palms starting to shake and stick to where it was plastered unto his tail, “You’re planning to do something, aren’t you?”

Levi bit his lip. He mourned of being robbed of the proper opportunity to explain to Eren what he had wanted to happen. Unfortunately, the gods refused to smile upon them. The alpha must tell his omega the consequence of this dire situation, audience or not. Eren remained tight lipped and eerily silent as Levi laid out his plans to track Grisha. The nervous energy from Armin mixed with Mikasa’s sullen resignation made Levi’s skin crawl. He felt bad for these young mers but he’s not in a position to console them. The alpha was the captain of Legion but not theirs.

“Let’s do it,” Eren gritted out after long minutes of dreadful stillness. The omega’s scent intensified, reeking of putrid spice and copper that made Levi’s inner alpha tuck its tail in sorrow and worry.

Levi crooned softly to his distressed mate, “It won’t be easy.”

“No, it won’t,” Eren confirmed. “I know it’s going to take a lot but we have to do it. My father has been running away long enough.”

The alpha smiled proudly, curling just the tip of his tail around Eren to show his approval. Armin made a childish trill while Mikasa politely looked away to let the newly bonded have their moment.

“I hate to be that guy,” Armin sighed after a while, “but Eren needs to be careful until the bonding fully holds. I was told it takes more than one biting, right? You should consider that before leaving.”
“Oh gods,” Eren paled while Levi’s heated fingertips trailed over his spine discreetly. “Oh shit, I didn’t—I forgot... so you mean—“

“SEX!” Hange screamed from a distance while Mikasa crushed a coral between her fingers.

The warm water mers had made themselves scarce for almost a month. Soldiers of Sina have been crawling all over the ocean floor like an infectious disease, forcing the rebel Marians to cut their visits to a complete halt unless they want to be caught. Communications were hard to get by as well. After a long parade of successful propaganda, the monarch of Sina finally instilled great fear into the hearts of plenty. Paranoia was everywhere. The religious elders of all pods wailed and cried out into the heavens, declaring the end of time and scaring merpeople to repent their sins. It was all part of the plan, of course. The king wanted information and confessions of treason.

Petra and her mate remained quiet within the confines of Sina. They blended into the night, trying so hard not to be noticed while the majority of the crowd erupted into restlessness. Erwin already made an offer for them to leave but they remained loyal to their purpose. Someone must stay within Sina to watch everything unfold.

Levi was now lacking in numbers of men but it will have to do. Eld and Gunther didn’t need to be asked to join Levi, while Hange and Moblit had enthusiastically volunteered. Mike didn’t say a word either and just appeared the day before Levi’s team was about to leave.

“If there’s anyone who would be a good asset at finding a deadbeat dad, it’d be me,” Mike declared jokingly while Eren laughed from the side, completely agreeing with his senior.

The alpha nodded gratefully, acknowledging that Mike was indeed a master of scents in a way that couldn’t be explained even by an intelligent mind like Erwin or Armin. Without him, it would take longer for them to find a man who had been hidden from this world for years. Eren and Levi don’t intend to go easy on Grisha.

It was during early dawn when the group finally decided to break away from the confines of Krolva. The cold, dark waters were unforgiving as they weaved through vast spaces of wastelands and stretches of sand that went on forever. Eren breathed roughly through his teeth, huffing and puffing as he kept up with the speed of cold water mers who swam through the ocean like snakes slithering gracefully with efficient speed.

Levi made an inquiring noise at the back of his throat, slowing down momentarily to let his younger mate catch up to him. Eren smiled appreciatively before nosing at his alpha’s skin to affirm that he’s doing okay. Levi didn’t let Eren slip from his sight from then on.

The group managed to find a clearing which could serve as their temporary home after hours of travel. News about Grisha had been close to nothing since his disappearance but Legion’s intelligence and Armin’s cunning mind had at least narrowed down possible places where the older Jaeger could hide. Everyone was severely impressed by the level of rage and lack of hesitation in Eren as the golden tailed omega practically foamed at the mouth, shaking in anger and detailing how he’d tear his own father apart.

Levi let his mate simmer in his own anger, understanding that Eren is a spitfire that couldn’t be controlled when he’s blinded by pain and misery. The alpha left his omega under the care of his trusted friends and merely focused on furiously preparing an acceptable nest for the two of them. Hange kept poking fun at the raven haired alpha, pointing out that Levi had already gone through different combinations and that Eren just wanted to get some damn sleep.
True to Hange’s word, the omega was already shyly poking his head into Levi’s space, trying to see if the nest was ready. Levi smiled indulgently at Eren before patting the soft sheets they had packed and offering them to his mate. The omega crooned and made happy noises as he inspected the nest, sniffing and turning over the soft fabric to his satisfaction before he lazily buried himself under the fluff and scented them feverishly. Levi bit back a chuckle and watched the golden tailed omega have his fun until Eren grew tired and fell asleep, clutching at the end of Levi’s tail while sleep lulls him into another world.

“He’s really something else, isn’t he?” Eld grunted not too far away. The merman had a genuine expression on his face, clearly happy over the fact that their captain finally allowed himself to love without hesitations.

Levi sighed, carding his fingers through Eren’s messy hair, “A bundle of trouble; no doubt.”

“We’ll give him justice, Captain Levi.” Eld promised with a salute before melting away into the darkness. Cold grey eyes tracked the rest of the team before the pull of sleep finally let Levi fall into the safety of his nest.

Their first hit was, as expected, a miss.

It was an old abandoned town for shit knows for how long and it sat sadly atop a hill of crumbling corals and sand. The base structures were obviously manmade but the other materials and tools scattered around the dirty floors were obviously of mer origins.

The eerie sound of a whale could be heard but nothing else besides that and the loud gurgle of the ocean made a peep. It was like the place was cursed and even the planktons knew well enough to avoid the area.

Mike sniffed along the piles of rotting wood and coral crusted metals but there was no sign of recent life anywhere. Eren bit the inside of his cheek, seemingly angry that he wasn’t going to be hitting his father’s stupid face anytime soon.

Hange and Levi made a deep call; it was time to go.

The second and third locations didn’t give much either.

Long lines of abandoned roads and a cocky group of thieves were all they got in the second location. The third one was trickier since it was occupied by a small independent pod that had no trouble with living by the rules of the old gods. They were traditional, keeping their omegas meek and silent and some were even cuffed or wore collars made of metal and strings. Eren almost threw up at the sight of such submissiveness and pure surrender without question. Levi felt the same way as his mate but he bit back any comments and allowed his team to handle the situation from afar.

There was nothing important regarding the pod. It was too small to be used as a hiding place. Besides, Grisha’s fascination with science and human chemicals would be treated very poorly in this area.

It was time to move on again.

“What would you say to your father if you’re given the chance to see him again?”

Levi blinked, raising his head from where he was cleanly stripping off the flesh of his fish. He was
caught off guard by Eren’s question. Levi had never really given his father much of a thought. The man had been some important piece of dick who fancied himself an omega in heat, consensual or not. If anything, Levi spat at any memories of his father. However, from the look of daze on Eren’s face, the alpha felt like this was an important matter to his mate.

“I don’t know,” Levi confessed as the dull murmur of good-natured bickering echoed in the background. “I haven’t really given as much as a single fuck when it comes to my old man. I never knew him.”

Eren hummed quietly, his eyes glazed with unshed tears, “Do you think— I’ll turn out to be like him?”

Levi clenched his jaw, sensing where this conversation was going. The cold trickle of despair echoed through their bond before the alpha even scented it on his mate’s skin. Eren sat unmoving, his untouched fish draped limply over scarred hands. Levi took a deep breath before covering Eren’s hands with his own.

“Why would you think that?” the alpha asked calmly.

The golden tailed omega clenched his teeth as he stared angrily at the wide expanse of the ocean, as if trying to imagine his father on the other side. “I always tried to follow his footsteps... helping merpeople, gods— I’ve been an idiot.”

“You didn’t know.” Levi frowned.

Eren squeezed his eyes shut painfully, “Fuck, I know. It’s just— he left us. He used my mom and left us. We’re just tools lying around and he didn’t— Shit! I’ll kill him. I’ll kill him for making mom cry.”

The alpha sighed and scooted closer to Eren, forcing his omega to eat by offering him chunks of fish. The rest of the team didn’t bother them, sensing the delicate situation they’re trapped in.

It was a long night before they disappeared again.

The truth was, Eren didn’t know what to do with himself if he ever saw his father again. Anger and betrayal were at the forefront of his emotions but deep inside, the omega knew that he’s hurting and maybe a little desperate to believe that Grisha had a good explanation for everything. It was so easy to fall back to his natural state of mind as a pup, believing so blindly that his parents were simply looking out for him as any good parent should.

He’d been complacent to his own father’s short-comings by ignoring the red flags about the older man, Eren had thought. Family bondings and nesting hadn’t been a priority for Grisha, so Eren grew up without an image of a father. Carla had said nothing about it, of course. Eren blamed himself for allowing his mother to suffer for so long.

“What the hell?” Hange hissed under their breath, eyes permanently glued to the skies.

Eren jumped, almost spitting out the squid mixed with Hange’s special herbs, when the frantic songs of a pod of whales and dolphins wailed into the night. The animals were scared to death as they cried out their sorrows in eerie echoes, warning other marine creatures about an unseen fearsome predator.

“What’s going on?” Gunther growled, making a move to wrap battle-injured fingers around his
blades in case a fight breaks out.

Mike sniffed carefully, his expression morphing into alarm as the smell of blood hit his nose. It was from one of the injured mammals. A huge chunk was bitten off of their side by a ragged set of teeth. Hange cursed colorfully as their trained eyes recognized the bite of a Titan.

“We’ve got to get out of here,” Moblit snarled as he eyed the ocean with distrust. “If those pods were forced to flee to the opposite direction of their migration, then something really bad must’ve happened.”

Levi clicked his tongue and made a deep commanding noise. The rest of the cold water mers straightened and saluted before packing up quickly while half of them surveyed the area for any potential threats.

“Eren,” Levi rumbled with his soothing alpha voice. “We’ll have to cover your face and discolor your tail so you won’t be recognized. The other shifters might still be looking for you.”

The omega nodded obediently, holding back a joke about how painful it must be for Levi to cover his own mate with dirt. Levi simply lifted a delicate brow, probably already sensing what’s already in Eren’s head, before burying his clawed hand into the dirt after licking his other palm. Eren immediately tensed because, *almighty Maria*, that was so hot. The omega was practically being scented heavily as Levi smudged his saliva and dirt over Eren’s golden tail, turning it into a depressing shade of dirty yellow.

“Gods, please hurry!” Eren squealed as his alpha’s palm dragged over the delicate spot over his sheath, the hidden prick inside was already throbbing in interest.

Levi smirked fondly, “I really shouldn’t be surprised that fucking danger turns you on. Disgusting little brat.”

Eren frowned before bending down to retaliate, sucking erotically on Levi’s bond mark like he was made to tear the alpha apart with his tongue. The captain gasped as he clenched his teeth to stop the embarrassing loud moan threatening to climb out of his throat. The omega licked one last time before letting go of the flesh, licking his lips as he gazed hotly at his mate with hooded eyes. There was a stray noise of someone clearing their throat before Levi glared at his team, who suspiciously tried to look innocent.

Levi barked lowly before covering Eren with a cloak.

The group made their way through the ocean with the fear that someone’s watching.

A month had already passed.

If there was ever a place which the gods have cursed to house the pits of icy hell, it would be this one.

Eren had no fucking idea where they were but Hange and Mike had told him they were up further north, miles away from familiar reeves like that of Maria, Sina, Trost, and especially Krolva. The cold was intense to the point where one’s skin felt like it was burning with fire. Large shards of crystal-like ice formations erupted from frost covered grounds. Everywhere they looked their reflections stared back at them in stony silence. It unnerved the mers greatly.

“Stay alert,” Levi commanded as he swam further into the maze of frozen boulders, “We’re not leaving with even one mer missing.”
The rest of the cold water mers responded with a respectful noise before scattering and inspecting the foreign space. It was one of Armin’s last suggestions. The blond had remembered how Grisha fondly told stories of a deep cave filled with ice and glass. It was Armin and Eren’s favorite bedtime story whenever the smaller blond omega decided to sleepover at the Jaegers’. Eren bit his tongue as the tangy taste of bile threatened to spill from his throat at the memory.

It was a shame, really. Given a chance, Eren would have appreciated the haunting beauty of the eerie walls of eternal mirrors, and soaked it up in memory so he could excitedly tell Armin about their dreamworld. Never in Eren’s life could he have imagined that he’d be given the opportunity to swim through miles and miles of distance, witnessing the change of currents and shift of countless reeves. The freedom of it was intoxicating if there wasn’t a tightening noose around their necks.

After almost half an hour of silence, Eren was about to call out that there was nothing to be seen when a tight grip on his throat choked the omega, forcing his body to flail and crash into one of the crystal walls.

“What the fuck!” Eren cried out in pain before a wrinkled palm silenced the writhing omega. The brunet stilled, his eyes widening at the familiar faded scent that was unmistakable. For a moment, Eren felt himself shake with childish fear and longing.

It was Grisha Jaeger.

Eren tried to scream and cried heart-wrenching sobs as he tried to get his father’s hand off of him. Panic swelled in the omega’s heart, elevating the instinct to kill and run away. All of the brunet’s desperate noises were merely muffled with no one to hear.

“Stop your squirming and listen to me!” Grisha hissed in his alpha voice, rendering the omega helpless as the tone seized the brunet’s bones and forced the younger mer to stop. Eren glared spitefully at his father, eyes squeezing pearlescent tears of burning pain and betrayal. The alpha command was a barbaric way of keeping an omega in line. It was an ancient practice that Eren hated the most.

“You have to listen to me carefully,” Grisha shakily explained. The older Jaeger stunk of distress and fear. His beard and the mass of hair tied at the back of his nape were a mess, mostly white in color or a dull fading black. Grisha’s eyes were red, his irises starting to become milky, and held nothing but deep regret. His tattered tail was of the color of metal starting to rust. This man was nothing like the father Eren had seen in his childhood.

“Eren, you can’t let the mad king find you! You’re our only hope of ending this war.”

“Why should I listen to you, huh!?” Eren yelled when Grisha finally let him speak, “After all that crap you put us through, you think I’ll simply cower and let you tell me what the hell I’m supposed to do!? Eat shit, old man!”

Grisha’s eyes glistened, his face dropping instantly that it was enough to send a tiny trickle of fear down Eren’s spine. With efficient speed, the older alpha grabbed hold of Eren’s throat again before barely dodging a flying knife headed straight to his head. Levi howled a haunting challenge, making Eren’s inner omega scream in fright. Even Grisha looked unnerved as the cold water mer released his spiked fins under his jaws and hissed threateningly at the older warm water mer.

“Let him go or I’ll rip your spine out!” Levi bellowed in dark tones, the echo of an angry alpha voice distorting his every word.
Grisha looked away sadly before dragging Eren further into the crystal maze. The omega kicked and dug his claws into his father’s forearm, drawing ribbons of blood enough to make them gag. The merman didn’t even as much as hiss at his son’s own doings which frightened Eren even more. Alpha fathers exerted almost full control over their offsprings. Grisha had enough power to make Eren bend to his will if the alpha wanted to; a fact that made the omega even more panicked and furious.

Eren vaguely registered the sound of an explosion and heavy debris falling around. There were growls and screams from Levi’s team as the ceiling collapsed and formed a barrier between them and Grisha. The older Jaeger might not have been well-versed in the art of fighting but he had a sharp mind to make up for it. He must have set this trap long before Levi’s team reached the area.

The omega in Eren panicked more.

“Let me go!” Eren shuddered as he dug his claws deeper into Grisha’s flesh. The older merman finally flinched and let go of his son with a hiss between his teeth. “You’re fuckin’ insane!”

“I had no other choice,” Grisha resigned.

“Bullshit!” Eren yelled with clenched fists as he backed away. “You had a choice to stay with mom and figure out everything! Instead, you just fucked off with powerful royal dickheads and turned us into monsters! How could you!?”

“I did what I had to!” Grisha screamed back. His omega son said nothing, too tired of hearing lies. Eren didn’t even want to look at the damn bastard. It didn’t take much for him to release his claws and swipe at his own father with intent to kill. Grisha barely avoided the well-practiced hit before trapping his son’s arms and using what little energy he had to utilize his alpha voice again.

“If you don’t listen to me,” Grisha gritted out weakly, “your friends out there could get killed along with Armin, Mikasa, and your mother! So listen. to. me.”

The omega cried harshly, fat pearlescent tear already crusting down his tan cheeks. Eren was so angry, he could barely hiss out a spiteful word.

“Whatsoever you think I’ve done, you’re wrong Eren.” Grisha sighed with remorseful eyes, “It’s true that I had a choice at the beginning but the king deceived me into doing their work. I was young and hungry for recognition. It was all purely research, Eren, believe me. I had no intention to destroy anyone’s life—“

“What the hell are you talking about?”

“The king threatened me. Your mother was pregnant with you at the time I worked for Rod Reiss, the true king of Sina. He wanted me to work on a chemical that could turn mers into titans but still have the ability to think and carry out orders. I was fascinated at the beginning but when I tried to refuse to further continue, they threatened to rip you from your mother’s womb.”

Eren gaped openly as his father broke down before him. The echoing pounding of fists and livid screeching of his mate were muted to the young omega as his heart sank in disbelief.

“I thought we would all go free after I have done what he had asked,” Grisha sobbed and heaved a shaky breath, “but I was wrong! Reiss experimented on his own daughter and forced other mermaids to give birth to shifters. I was scared out of my mind. I ran away but Carla was already targeted by the Sina soldiers. She was going to lose you—I had to—“

“Dad...” Eren whimpered.
“I used the serum on you and your mother so that both of you would live. I’m so sorry, Eren! Carla would never have survived losing her first pup.” Grisha bawled; his grip loosening until he was limply hanging unto his son. “I thought so foolishly that I could keep you away from them, that maybe when the time comes, even you could stand up against the monarchy should they threaten to take you for their own selfish reasons.”

“I tried so hard to reverse the serum but I couldn’t keep the news from coming out. Reiss heard of your survival and had ordered that I be kept away from you so that you— that he could...”

The omega stiffened, “Could what!?"

Before Grisha could open his mouth, the huge walls of piled ice barriers caved under clawed fingers. Levi’s forearm struck out a hole through what looked like impenetrable crystals, oozes of black poison eating through the material like wet clay. The alpha grumbled furiously, his cold eyes turning into dark pins of slits as his gaze screamed for death and blood.

“I said,” Levi snarled as he broke through the opening like a demon crawling out from hell, “Let Him Go.”

Grisha stumbled nervously as the stench of a livid and vengeful alpha clouded the waters. The face of the cold water mer looked strikingly familiar to the older Jaeger; it was a face he always connected to death and captivity.

“Alpha!” Eren cried out, his inner omega whimpering out a noise to placate Levi. The golden tailed omega didn’t like how his alpha was getting angrier by the second. It simply hurt him like a physical slap.

The raven haired alpha ignored his mate’s pleas and went straight for the unfamiliar alpha. Levi snarled, deeply disgusted that a knothead would dare place his filthy hands upon Eren’s caramel skin. The possessiveness that ran through him was foreign and unyielding. Levi never felt the need to maim like he did right now. In the past, the alpha’s brutality was merely a necessity but now it was enveloped with the desire to protect and eliminate a threat.

And this old alpha was most definitely a threat to his omega.

With lethal force, Levi pounced on the other alpha and snagged him right across the enclosure. Grisha gasped as the poison tinted skin of Levi’s forearm burned at every exposed flesh of the older alpha. Eren quickly bolted into action, trying to get into a strategic place should he need to intervene. From the outside, Hange and the others were shouting at Levi to calm down but no words reached the alpha.

It became obvious that Grisha was no match for the corded muscles and brute strength of Levi. The older alpha was at a complete loss on how to defend himself against every attack. For a tense moment, the mers feared that nothing would be left of the foreign mer.

Levi almost lost his control, his mind focused on the single intention of ridding the world of the other merman. It was only when he made a grab at the other’s scent glands that Levi managed to pull himself from his rage. The familiar scent of Eren was on him but it was different. Instead of warm sands and tropical plants, it smelled mature and faded by time and experience. The alpha also carried the faintest scent of fatherhood. This man—

“You.” Levi growled as he threateningly snarled right next to Grisha’s vulnerable neck. “You’re him.”
“What the hell is he saying!?” Grisha choked pathetically as he strained against the other alpha’s hold.

“Dad!” Eren warned with a flare of his pectoral fins. “Stop fighting or he’ll rip you in half.”

“That’s the guy?” Hange asked incredulously, their beta scent shifting from confusion to amusement. “Oh man, Eren you are so lacking in the aging department.”

“Get him away from me!” Grisha yelled as he tried to pathetically scramble away from the stronger alpha. There wasn’t much he could do but flail around and try to dislodge the clawed hands which were pinning him to the ground. “You don’t understand! We’re running out of time!”

Levi sneered, gripping the alpha father by the jaw and forcing the other mer to look him straight in the eye. “The only one who doesn’t have enough time here is you. You’ve spent a lot of good years fucking off in Hades knows where. It’s about time you start owning up to your sins, light hoarder.”

Moblit pressed his lips together at the insult. Levi rarely ever meant his degrading words but calling a warm water mer a ‘light hoarder’ was definitely on the top list of unkind things one could call a mer. Even Hange raised an impressed brow.

“Levi,” Mike intervened as he made a show of lowering his weapons, intending to send a message that no other alpha would get in the captain’s way. “You might kill him if you continue this. Eren’s father already looks like he’s deteriorating. Let him go. We need Grisha Jaeger alive.”

The raven haired alpha made a sharp ‘tch’ noise before shoving the other alpha away from him. It’s not that he wanted to jeopardize their mission. If anything, the cool and normally collected alpha would have easily ignored the rage within him if this was any other mission. Somehow, though, this is extremely personal. This merman had cursed his Eren to live a life of suffering. Levi’s omega mate deserved better than this.

Slowly, Eren made cooing noises as he approached his distressed alpha. Levi grunted; feeling a little bit of shame at losing his composure like a hormone frenzied teenager. The golden tailed omega smiled the tiniest bit as he pressed his body against Levi, offering up his exposed bond mark so that his alpha could center himself. The alpha captain was no fool, though. Even when presented with a mouth-watering gift, Levi had enough brain cells to cover his omega’s body as he buried his nose into Eren’s skin. This was an intimate moment and Levi wasn’t in the mood to share.

Grisha watched the interaction with a critical eye.

“Well, hey dad!” Hange grinned as they brandished their blades and draped them casually over their shoulders. “It’s good to finally meet you! I hope you don’t mind but we’ve got some awfully important questions for you. Like, why are you a piece of shit?”

“This is no time to talk,” Grisha hissed with a pained grunt. “If you’re here, Sina would be able to find you. They’ve got their military all over the place, including Kenny’s own goons.”

“Sina is miles away,” Gunther reminded the older alpha while Eld nodded from his side.

“You think Sina would simply let me roam free? The resident mad scientist who created what could probably be considered as weapons of mass destruction?” Grisha raised a brow as he struggled to sit up straight with as much dignity as he could have. “They have me guarded. With a commotion like this, it won’t be too long before we’re surrounded.”
“Then you better start talking,” Mike grunted with furrowed brows.

Grisha looked around with a frightened stare. The scent of wariness that was wafting along the waters was tinted with the potent smell of underlying aggression. Even without the long, sharp blades and sharp tooth daggers, Grisha knew that cold water mers were weapons themselves. He didn’t stand a chance even if he was an alpha. From his limited knowledge, Legion as the only surviving cold water specie was known for their practice of ‘kill or be killed’. It was best to surrender now.

With gritted teeth, Grisha subtly bared his neck as a sign that he wasn’t going to fight. Mike and the other relaxed slightly, relieved that they wouldn’t have to wrestle the submission out of Eren’s father. Levi, on the other hand, did not trust Grisha. The shorter alpha glared openly as he rubbed his thumb over Eren’s hipbone. He knew he was staking his claim. Levi wasn’t even embarrassed about it. Eren had a new and hopefully better alpha now.

Hange approached the foreign alpha with a cheery attitude. The beta promised that no knives would jut out of Grisha’s skin if the older alpha would cooperate nicely. Grisha stiffened, slightly affronted that a mere beta would make such a threat against an alpha. Nevertheless, the older Jaeger hesitantly agreed even though he repeated his concerns about Sina. It was fruitless, of course. Levi’s team wanted answers and they were going to get it, even if they had to hide Grisha from Sina’s eyes.

It didn’t take much taunting to get some information from Grisha. Hell, it was probably one of the easiest interrogations Levi has every witnessed. The raven haired alpha didn’t even have to do anything, so he merely stuck by Eren’s side.

“Are you okay?” Levi murmured quietly to Eren.

The omega clenched his jaw, “You were right. I’m nothing like him.”

The alpha captain turned to stare at his mate. Eren certainly looked younger, with his eyes shining brightly with angry unshed tears, but the lines on his face told of stories of maturity and harsh life lessons. Any other omega would have broken down if given the same burden as Eren’s. Fortunately, Levi’s mate loved to defy the norm. Eren grew stronger and unyielding with every blow of life. He became the true definition of a monster. Levi loved him deeply for it.

“I’m always right,” Levi replied with a flat tone in a floppy attempt at humor.

Eren smiled as always. “I know. Just look at him, Levi. He’s telling us everything without a fight just so he could save himself.”

Levi nodded, “Probably also the reason why he fled Shiganshina.”

“Fucking spineless,” Eren hissed in disdain as he clenched his shaking fists. “I’ll never turn my back on my family like that. I’d rather eat my hand.”

The shorter alpha made a snorting sound, “Don’t. They’d probably grow back into tiny ass hands and that’s disgusting to watch. Awful at a handjob too.”

“Levi!” Eren squawked with a laugh. Deep inside, the omega preened at the fact that his alpha was making an effort to care for his emotional well-being even at a time like this. Levi had odd ways of comforting and caring but it always made Eren’s heart melt into a pile of goo. His alpha was a huge dork even if he was jaded by a dark past. Eren hoped dearly they could stay the same forever.

Unfortunately, their quiet laughter drowned out the growing growls from outside.
Titans did not like happy endings.

Chapter End Notes

Wow, I wasn't able to update this in a while.

I have to admit, it's really getting harder for me to find the motivation to write but I really don't want to leave this hanging!! I have the ending planned out but it's just the writing process that just /ugh/.

Anyway, thank you for the continued support! You guys are awesome as always. I was also prevented from uploading earlier since I was setting up my art accounts so I could interact with people more and hopefully to support myself for daily expenses.

Feel free to message/support me through any of the following accounts:

Tumblr
Twitter
Ko-fi

I'll be posting art based on this fic if you guys are interested in that! It will probably be up on my twitter account or on Ko-fi.

Thank you so much! Until next time!
Legion Falls

Chapter Summary

Legion finally falls to its knees.

Eren continues to be determined to fight for his family.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Eren’s laughter was cut short by a faint sound of a gurgling stomach. The boy’s fins fluttered and straightened as the feeling of ‘danger’ and ‘flee’ flooded his entire being. Beside him, Levi snarled suspiciously at the crystal walls and barked a command at his teammates.

“They’re here,” Grisha whimpered as he clutched his injured arm close to his chest. The warm water alpha looked fractically everywhere as the sounds of gnashing teeth closed in on them.

Mike sniffed a little nervously, “There’s probably about three to four of them and one is not a Titan.”

“Shit,” Levi cursed. That probably means they will have to kill the poor bastard who was sent here. Legion can’t afford any witnesses who will rat them out to the king. This mission has to be kept secret as long as possible.

Hange blew an annoyed breath as the Titan growls grew louder in sync with the walls and ceilings shaking as they were being torn open. “Ya know, I love these fascinating creatures so much but they always tend to make dramatic entrances. It’s very inconvenient!”

“Arms at the ready!” Levi commanded, prompting the cold water mers to draw their swords into fighting position. Eren did the same thing as he fell in line behind his superiors, awaiting their command for him to transform if needed. The brunet tried to ignore the trickle of anxiety at the possibility of being unable to turn into a Titan at a time like this.

Grisha stared at his only son from where he was sitting. It was then that he realized that he never truly looked at his son before; panic and fear eating him up before realizing how much his offspring had grown. Eren was dishevelled, his usually golden tail covered in grime and dirt, but he looked well and muscled. The omega’s body finally matched the spirit of a soldier he had within. Grisha felt shame for not being there to see it.

If their neighbors from Shiganshina could finally see Eren, they’d balk at the impropriety. They would think that no alpha would want to court his omega son.

They’d be wrong, of course. The bite mark on Eren’s shoulder and the puny little alpha practically leeching on his son had to mean something.

“Hold your line!” Levi barked again as the crack through the ceilings became bigger, showering them with sharp glass.

An eye blinked above the mers.
What little faith Grisha had in the cold water mers were swept away as he saw the familiar female eye from above. That creature was his doing; an action he regretted the most. The female Titan will definitely kill them all.

“Go!” Grisha shouted desperately, “Get away from here now. She—“

“That fucking bitch,” Eren bit out, effectively cutting off his father’s plead for them to escape.

Before the alpha father could open his mouth, the walls and ceiling crumbled inwards and revealed a group of awaiting Titans. The cold water mers rushed forward in a strategic curve, avoiding the falling debris and evading the creatures’ line of sight.

“ANNIE!” Eren yelled angrily, his eyes ablaze in tinged gold as he swam towards the female shifter. The brunet’s blade swung a high arc before meeting Annie’s arm, crystals crawling all over the exposed part of her skin.

Levi could vaguely hear his teammates yelling for someone to cover Grisha but he was too distracted by the fact that one of Eren’s kidnappers was here. The familiar fear of losing his mate was strong as he watched the two shifters fight it out in a violent clash of strength. He wanted to pull Eren away but losing Grisha would be to the detriment of their entire mission.

The cold water alpha cursed before snagging a spare whip from Hange who swam by.

“Hey! That was mine!” Hange complained half-heartedly before sticking their blade down a Titan’s throat.

Levi made no comment as he unraveled the thick whip and wrapped it around Grisha’s bruised wrists.

“What the hell do you think you’re doing!?” Grisha yowled in protest as his hands were bound and secured in an intricate knot.

The cold water alpha stared at him with menacing eyes as Levi pulled his sword and buried it into the hard ground, “You see this material? It would take a whole fuck ton of time to break this shit. You’re under my watch until this entire thing blows over. Try to escape and I’ll break your arms.”

Grisha pressed his mouth into a thin line, allowing the shorter alpha to pin his bound wrists to the buried sword, “You’re clearly underestimating what they could do.”

“And they’re clearly underestimating what I can do when my mate is in danger,” Levi growled, his fins flaring wide from under his jaw as the poison in his forearms crawled upwards. The alpha had been helpless when they kidnapped Eren. It’s time they repay in blood.

In no time, Levi joined the fray and delivered swift blows to whatever titans would swim by. It was getting harder to get to where Eren was with the walls and the ceiling crumbling everywhere. There was a faint yowl on Levi’s right before a titan went careening towards him. The alpha was quick to evade and quickly made way for Hange’s form.

“Outta the way captain!” Hange laughed widely before throwing their shark tooth dagger into the titan’s eye.

Levi ducked, quickly moving up through falling boulders of glass and hard stone. Screams and deep bellows echoed everywhere, with their reflections blurring and confusing the mers until everyone is thinly spread out. Levi quickly decapitated a stray titan, effectively cutting off its limbs and making it an easier target. So far, Grisha was still in his place though he was shaking violently...
in fear.

From above, a female titan covered in crystals was fighting Eren’s titan form. It was easy to see that the female was quick and knew the omega titan’s weakness in hand-to-hand combat. Eren yowled angrily, trying to retaliate each blow with more power than technique. It’s an easy mistake for someone as young as Eren. Levi gritted his teeth, fingers curling tightly around his sword and making the steel creek through brute strength.

This won’t do.

He knows that familiar face and those icy orbs. Levi spent most of his time grilling Hange and the rest of the soldiers of Legion about the travelling mers who mysteriously disappeared with Eren. For days and nights, Levi ingrained into his memory every detail about their faces. This is no doubt the strange mermaid who his subordinates said had the strange smell of both alpha and beta. The aloof mermaid who apparently is now trapping Eren in crystals and the omega is too enraged to even notice that it is a trap.

“Fucking moron,” Levi hissed before making a deep sound to call Mike. His fellow alpha raised his head from where he was sticking his claws into a titan’s flesh.

“You take Grisha. I’m going after Eren,” Levi commanded before he swam up in blinding speed.

The female titan, who Eren had called Annie, was momentarily blinded when a swift blade sliced through her forearm. Eren took this opportunity and opened his mouth to tear away the flesh on her shoulder. Levi quickly assisted his omega, swimming around the female and making a clean cut from the bottom of her spine down to her right shoulder blade, aiming for a blow to the neck.

Annie was fast and used her crystal covered hand to block Levi’s attempt to cut her nape down. The captain’s grey eyes flashed as he aimed for the elbow while Eren’s titan form bit down her left hand. It was almost a quick cut but Annie had ducked and dragged Eren down with her. Levi snarled and was quick to reverse his hold on his sword and stabbed her instead on the neck.

The female titan made a faint gurgling noise before being dragged into the bottom, Eren’s sharp teeth latched firmly into her tail like a vicious metal clamp. Levi took the opportunity and sliced through her sides and joints of her tail to render her immobile. Eren made a triumphant noise, eyes glowing as he salivated for the kill, but Levi warned him to stop.

Annie might have been exhausted but she had enough strength to activate her hardening on the nape. Levi grunted as he pushed Eren out of the way, disturbing his shoulder, right before the crystals stuck Eren to Annie’s side.

“Captain!” yelled Gunther who is pinned to the ground by the fallen crystals. He was flailing towards the direction where Grisha was pinned, now empty with only a broken sword scattered on the ground.

Levi hissed his displeasure. Of fucking course they would be too distracted to keep an eye on Grisha. The carcass of the disposed titans lay steaming in a gore pile; all was accounted for. It was probably that one non-titan that Mike was talking about.

Right before Levi was about to make a command, Eren let out a frustrated howl before grabbing Annie by the face and smacking her head against the wall. The female did not let out a sound as she jabbed Eren’s side, making the omega shifter bleed profusely.
“EREN!” Levi wailed right in time for Annie to dart away from Eren’s injured form and make an escape to east side of the crystal formation. Gunther struggled to get up, limping towards Annie as he used his blade tied to a whip and threw it towards the escaping female titan. He was dragged all the way to the inky depths while Levi caught his mate who didn’t seem to care that he was excessively bleeding.

“If you wanted to die, I could have stuck a blade into your dumb skull!” Levi reprimanded with little heat. “You fucking idiot.”

Eren made whimpering noises as he nosed at Levi’s jaw in apology. He still can’t talk in this form but he made sure Levi knew that he will be more careful next time.

“Come,” Levi urged when he saw his mate was starting to heal, “Don’t you want to pay your kidnapper in kind?”

The omega shifter would have smiled if he had lips to show but instead, Eren made an approving gurgling noise at the back of his throat. The two got up and followed where the rest of the group had escaped to. It wasn’t that hard to follow the scent of titan blood.

Suddenly, the sound of struggle met the ears of the two mermen. Levi scanned the area, surprised to hear that there were others in this place since Mike didn’t account for them. It was fairly far away from any civilization, unless—

Screams were everywhere, leaving Eren no choice but to swim towards the commotion to find his teammates. In the middle of the fray stood Hange and the others, struggling towards a small company of delicately dressed soldiers. They probably belonged to a private army of those rich bastards from Sina but why would they be so far away from their reef.

“Levi!” Hange yelled at the top of their lungs as the ringing sound of blade against blade drowned the waters, “It’s a fucking trap. This is a convoy! Get Eren out of here!”

The alpha immediately gripped Eren’s wrist, looking around for where the rest of the group were. The smell of pungent death and rotting corpse was everywhere. That’s not right. What did Hange mean by a trap?

Levi was about to lead Eren away when he caught sight of Annie’s bloodied form, hunched over an old beta dressed in lavish cloth and jewelry. Her hand was dripping with blood and chunks of meat. Levi felt himself tense as he saw a familiar weapon stuck in between the poor bastard’s neck and ribs.

Legion swords; particularly, Levi’s own which had been used to trap Grisha.

A crash jolted both mates, prompting them see Eld grunting in a tangled mess from where he was pushed. The smell of rot heightened, making Levi even more nervous. The carriers the convoy had held corpses of what looked like refugees, several days dead and had weapons of Legion sticking out of their skins. Women and children alike were packed like meat in an effort to...

“They’re framing us.” Levi gritted before scurrying away with Eren. Annie made no move to retrieve the omega shifter, seemingly finished with her job of distracting and leading the mers to their demise.

Mike made a deep noise, confirming he had retrieved Grisha. The old alpha was still in one piece but he had lost consciousness somewhere along the conflict. The non-titan mer probably was tasked to take back the alpha but had been torn to shreds by Levi’s team. Good. At least, they have
“Retreat!” Levi commanded before anymore backup could get to them. If this was a trap, a way to dirty Legion’s name, there’s no doubt an awaiting team ready to be deployed if they showed resistance. Annie was already a problem. She was too fast and looked like she could kill elite teams if needed be. Levi knew well that the female titan was simply holding back. He didn’t know why but he wasn’t about to fucking ask.

Eren made a face while they were making their retreat. He was still angry at Annie for betraying him so easily despite the bond they just had. With one last look, Eren saw Annie watching them eerily still from where she stood. If the omega wasn’t so emotionally compromised, he would have seen the way Annie’s eyes glittered with regret and hesitation.

For now, survival was more important and so they swam away.

It took gruelling days for them to return to Krolva.

The whole time, Eren had been in a foul mood and even the promise of nesting or sex did not tame the flames of his displeasure. Sometimes, Levi even thinks that Eren was purposely being loud during their coupling just to make his father angry. It was a real headache to deal with. The estranged father and son could not even hold a proper conversation without throwing barbs at each other.

“I expected you’d have a finer taste in alphas,” Grisha would mutter in disdain, posh Marian accent covering his tone.

Eren’s fins would flutter as his cheeks burned, “As if you’d know about good alphas.”

Levi would have tried to defend his omega but with the way the golden tailed brunet was mimicking Legion’s rough pronunciation and rude grunts, he didn’t think Eren needed further protection. Though, it didn’t stop the alpha from curling their tails together though. Grisha could fuck himself for all Levi cares.

By the time they reached Krolva, shit has apparently hit the metaphorical fan. Erwin was frowning more than usual but Armin was stuck by his side, apparently having escaped the closed borders to warn the rest of Legion. The blond omega tried hard not to let panic sink in but the news he brought was bad.

After Grisha was set up in a temporary prison, it was revealed to them that the convoy belonged to a rich political family in Sina. The beta had been supposedly in charge of taking in refugees and bringing supplies like weapons and food back to their reef. It was obviously not true and the refugees he did bring with him were sacrifices.

“Those who were unfortunate enough to be brought to his presence were killed beforehand,” Erwin recited as he strung together the information he got from Armin and Levi’s squad. “They were killed quietly and weapons from our territory were stolen to make it look like we killed the innocents to ransack Sina.”

Hange made a pained noise as they craddled their bruised forehead, “How could they have known we would be there?”

Erwin pressed his lips in a thin line, eyes connecting with the alert stares of his most trusted. There was a mole in their midst and they have been expertly delivering messages from Krolva back to
Sina’s territories. Hange pursed their lips angrily while Levi remained calm and composed, deadly eyes showing a message that he would be ready to pluck out the traitor if Erwin commanded him to.

“Get some rest,” Erwin sighed as he massaged the bridge of his nose, “You have all travelled very far. We have Grisha Jaeger in our midst. That’s more than enough information as of now. 

Dismissed.”

Levi, Hange, and the rest of the officers saluted their commander before swimming away.

It was going to be a long day.

Armin bit back a chuckle as he watched Eren quietly brood in a corner of Levi’s ship. They had been braiding kelp and resculpting discarded shells for the past hour but nothing seems to calm his golden tailed omega friend; if anything, it’s just making Eren angrier.

“There’s this thing called talking, Eren.” Armin grinned. “I know you’re very good at it.”

Eren blew bubbles through his gills. “Fuck off, Armin.”

The blond omega laughed melodiously before tucking himself near Eren. “Come on, you can tell me anything. These are rough times but maybe gossiping can make you feel better.”

Eren wrinkled his nose, clearly not sold.

Armin bit his lip, a mischievous idea forming in his head, “Sooo... we had this little debate about alphas—“

“Oh, true joy,” Eren grunted sarcastically.

The blond omega remained oblivious and continued on. “Well, since it’s getting rough recently, the boys thought it would be a wise idea to drink on a downtime during patrol. You know how Jean gets, right?”

Eren pursed his lip, titling his torso towards Armin, “He’s a lightweight. Why’d you let him drink?”

Armin grinned even wider, “Breaking the rules seems to be our circle’s thing. Jean really got drunk and even Marco couldn’t shut him up. He confessed some very—interesting things.”

“Out with it, Armin!” Eren yelled in frustration, making Armin jump in laughter. Oh, Eren was so easy to distract.

“We had a debate on whether or not true, uninsecure alphas would let their omegas fuck them.”

If there was any type of way to document Eren’s tomato red face, Armin would pay an arm and a fin to get one now. The brunet omega was gaping, cheeks red and eyes sparkling, as he no doubt imagined some very creative things.

“What do you think, Eren?” Armin asked innocently from where he was seated.

Eren wailed in embarrassment, “You kinky little fucker!”

“I think you should tell Marco that,” Armin countered which prompted Eren to lose his mind even more. Omegas fucking alphas? That’s practically unheard of! Even the act of sucking an omega off
was deemed lowly for warm water alphas. Levi, of course, did not care about the rule as he sucked Eren dry under the starry lit cave— shit, Eren was thinking all sort of things now.

“I’m gonna pretend I didn’t hear that from you,” Eren squawked indignantly while Armin laughed and rolled around the floor like a pup.

“Oh, come on!” Armin flailed from where he was starfished on the floor, “You really can’t imagine a big bad alpha like Levi giving all of that for you? I mean, he’s probably done a lot of forbidden things, I bet!”

Eren screeched, “Armin! What the actual fuck!”

That’s when Armin made a two fingered gesture which admittedly sent arousal streaming through Eren’s heated body. Gods, Levi was right. Eren was fucking insatiable and maybe he wasn’t opposed to doing some questionable things with Levi. The alpha had a body of a god and his stamina made it possible to have sex for hours even if he had just knotted.

Oh gods, Eren can feel himself getting slick.

Armin’s eyes widened as he slapped a hand to his mouth in realization. Eren panicked before he realized that Levi was just slouched near the ship’s entrance, arms folded and hooded eyes tracking him like Eren was going to be eaten for dinner. Probably.

“Erwin’s probably looking for me!” Armin squawked before swimming away to another escape route. Eren mentally cursed himself for falling into his friend’s schemes. Why did he let Armin run his mouth like that?

Slowly, Levi approached his mate with practiced ease. Eren’s heart was pounding in his chest like madshit— were those Levi’s fingers trailing down his arm.

“You smell like you wanna get fucked,” Levi grumbled lowly against his omega’s ear. “Or... is it that you want to fuck me?”

Eren was no fool. He had absorbed most of Legion’s language and non-verbal communication. He knew what those words meant and his body’s response was apparently to get wetter, his cock growing harder against its protective sheath; traitor!

Levi mouthed at Eren’s bond mark, momentarily forgetting all the problems he had in the world, “Let’s see if you can be a good boy for me, Eren... then I’ll decided if you can fuck me real nice.”

Eren was going to die right here and now.

On the fourth day since their return, Eren was told that the bonding mark was almost complete but would have attached faster were it not for the stress he was in and the fact that his titan body kept on persistently healing. The omega smiled, still optimistic that it was going to be alright despite the circumstances. Levi was a supportive alpha. He’d never let Eren be wanting in anything.

Politically, however, Legion was almost driven out of their territory. Sina had been successful in painting the blame in Legion, with the epidemic of titans growing and forcing merpeople to be displaced from their home reeves. Legion mers who stray to far from Krolva were shot down with harpoons, not even questioned on why they were there. Erwin was obviously distraught.

“You’re obviously the only pod that won’t surrender to Sina,” Historia stated one time in a
meeting. “They know Legion is strong enough to be a threat so it’s gathering support from all pods to bring down what’s left of Legion.”

Erwin agreed and with what information was gathered from Grisha, Sina had planned this for a long time. Their offer to join hands with Legion was a ploy to show that the pod was uncooperative rather than truly gaining control over them. Sina did not want Legion to join but rather, it wants to wipe out the pod from existence.

“We’re going to have to prepare to fight back against the entire ocean,” Erwin sighed from where he was seated. Almost all important officers were there with him along with Eren, Isabel, Furlan, and Armin. The young mers looked determined but they knew it was almost impossible to defend themselves against practically the whole world. Their numbers were dwindled considerably. Legion’s only hope is to depend on creativity if they were going to get out of this alive.

From there, a plan was concocted by both Erwin and Hange. It was suicidal, as Levi has helpfully pointed out, but they had not other choice. The warm water mers had harpoons, working new ones, to their advantage. They can shoot at long range compared to normal swords. Legion’s first task was to supply itself with weapons comparable to Sina.

They were going to have to breach the surface.

“We’re going up!” Eren chittered excitedly as he swam around Levi. The captain smirked fondly at the overly excited omega before scruffing him by the neck to settle down beside him.

“It’s going to be dangerous,” Levi warned sternly as Eren gave him wide eyes. “Humans have been making a habit of travelling more and more. We cannot be seen. It will be a mess if we get caught in their nets.”

Eren nodded vigorously, “I can just chew them off in my titan form if that happens.”

The alpha smiled gently at his omega, “I know, Eren. But we must avoid it either way. Humans are determined things. They find out we exist, they’ll hunt us down for sure. Anyway, I think Erwin has some insane plans for the boats if we ever encounter them.”

Eren hummed, indicating that he understood. They can leave it to Erwin, whatever the plan was. There wasn’t any time to be picky since they have little to no choice regarding the matter. Eren might be excited and maybe a little nervous about seeing the surface for the first time, but he knows that these veterans probably had experienced such thing not out of fun but out of survival.

It took a full day and a half to prepare for the journey before Legion dispersed involuntarily. The surveillance squad reported a mass migration by warm water mers, all armed to the teeth. Erwin cursed and ordered immediate evacuation before the first line of the warm water mers break through Krolva.

Eren stood sadly, golden tail swishing black sand, as numbers of Legion mers pack their belongings and leave Krolva for good. The reef was now eerily silent; noises of chubby cheeked pups and training soldiers were now but a memory. Levi crooned softly at his mate, sensing the melancholy.

“Eren, it’s time to go.”

The omega sniffed, refusing to let his pearlescent tears to cascade down his blotchy cheeks. He’ll come back someday. Legion will return to its full glory.

Eren will never truly abandon his home.
“I’m going to throw up,” Armin whispered from where he was cuddled beside Eren. Both omegas were looking up the crystal clear surface, sunlight breaking through the water like a bright gem. As warm water mers, such bright things are like an aphrodisiac for them. Only, breaking through the surface was forbidden. The internal conflict was understandable to the cold water mers.

Eren gulped, “Stay cool, Armin. We’re going to be fine. I’ve done this before.”

The blond omega sniggered, “Oh yeah? How was it?”

Eren crinckled his nose as he poked through the surface. The “wind”, as Hange taught him, was dry and made him all cold. The omega snatched back his finger and stared at it like it held answers to his questions. “I think I almost passed out... ‘cause I didn’t know how to breathe ‘air’”

Armin whimpered, “Okay, I’m really going to throw up.”

Hange was chuckling madly from the side as they draped their arm over Levi, “Aww, look at them! They’re so cute! I could just gobble them up!”

Levi rolled his eyes, though admittedly he had been staring at his mate for the entire time he was whispering with Armin. The two just looked too adorable, both confused and excited by the prospect of seeing a brand new world. Levi had breached the surface many times and saw how the sun shone unlike anything he has ever seen. It’s unpleasant to his eyes but everything above the water might please the young warm water omegas.

“Are we just going to float here or are you two ready to go up?” Levi called and was amused to see both Eren and Armin jump at being surprised.

“Okay, okay,” Eren breathed deeply, “I got this.”

Armin made a high noise before closing his eyes, never releasing his hold on Eren’s arm. Hange and Levi took their places in front of the omegas and gently drew them up from the water. As expected, the two sputtered and panicked, prompting Armin to release Eren and swim further away.

“Breathe, brat.” Levi calmly instructed as he massaged Eren’s gills with salty water from his palms. The brunet omega coughed and spat out water before his lungs kicked in and forced his nose to breathe in the air.

Eren smiled sheepishly, spit and snot probably covering his face from drowning in the air. Levi made a disgusted face and ordered his mate to clean up before looking over to where Hange was still helping Armin to breathe. It took an impressive amount of time but finally, the blond omega got a grip of himself. Thankfully, the cove they were exploring wasn’t too far away. Armin immediately draped himself over the smooth rocks and cried a little from the shock.

“I’m never going to make fun of you again, Eren.” Armin wheezed pathetically.

Eren was about to proudly retort when Levi grabbed him by the ear to help him with scouting for more items.

“Gods, this place is so cool.” Eren sighed in awe.

The cove was huge, arching across what looked like an abandoned vessel which still had paddles, nets and fairly undamaged wicker baskets. Hange was energetic as they heaved themself up the wet rocks and crawled around to look for something. Moblit came breaking through the surface
moments later, bringing with him cloth bags and kelp nets.

“Aha!” Hange exclaimed happily as they clawed through what looked like a treasure box, sealed tight by a lock and crusty growing life by its edges. Once opened, it revealed human items such as a gold plated clock, a nice set of silver utensils, bags of coins and a gem encrusted dagger.

Armin made a high squeal at the treasure, eyes immediately drawn at how everything is sparkling beautifully with the reflection of the sun from the ocean’s surface. Eren made a similar noise, shaking his alpha’s arm and pointing at the shiny things.

Levi indulged Eren before helping in the search and finding a crusty anchor and four harpoons by the side of the vessel. The alpha made a pleased noise before handing the items to Moblit for safekeeping while they awkwardly crawled through the rest of the cove.

“I wish life was just like this,” Armin sighed absentmindedly as he picked on a strange instrument. Hange didn’t know what it’s called in human terms but it can make people see from far away. Armin seemed to want to keep it.

Eren lay next to his best friend, the smell of salt and the splash of waves against rocks and sand was making him sleepy. “If only Sina wasn’t made of a bunch of dicks.”

“Do you think—“ Armin bit his lip, “Do you think this will be all over soon?”

Eren looked back at where Levi, Hange and Moblit were working. They had serious expressions on their faces, no doubt in mourning for the loss of their reef but they occasionally smiled and bantered. Sometimes Levi would be irritated enough to shove Hange back into the water before he’s splashed in the face. Moblit would laugh behind his hand, trying no to get distracted.

The golden tailed omega smiled, “We’ll just have to do our best. My family is right here. I can’t let them down now.”

Armin closed his eyes, breathing in the smell of the ocean.

All those who fall must eventually stand back up.

Chapter End Notes

Hi! It took so long for my brain to finally come up with the next chapter!

I'm soooo sorry I left everybody hanging in the last one
But seeing that a lot of people are under quarantine/lockdown (including myself)
I've decided to give this another go and in a more... lighter/hopeful tone by the end!

Thank you for sticking with this fic!
We're almost near the end! I'll try to update more frequently now that I have plenty of time in my hands! Also don't forget to check out my twitter (@MishkaYustina) if you wanna hang out. I mostly post art there uwu

(If there are errors especially with the continuity pls pls let me know. I'd appreciate it!)

See you next week! Stay safe!!!
Eren sat idly by the shore, feeling the warm laps of frothy ocean waves splash over his golden tail. It was nice being relaxed this way. If he closes his eyes, the omega can forget that there’s a brewing war in the horizon with him taking the central stage. It’s nice to forget and just be a young mer, sunbathing under the sun on a deserted island.

His mother would have loved to be here, Eren thought. Sadly, she’s miles away with Mikasa and the others. Armin was by his side, occasionally when not needed for information, but the blond omega’s mind was too busy with potential plans to actually be relaxing. It’s a shame, truly. This is their final calm before the storm. Eren wanted to make use of all the time he has left.

“Oi,” grumbled a shadow looming over Eren. The omega squawked, accidentally swatting a tail at the newcomer’s face. Levi would have looked terrifying if there wasn’t an indent of Eren’s tail on the center of his face.

“Fuck,” Eren cursed before scrambling apologetically at his alpha. “I’m so sorry! Are you okay!?” Levi grunted his displeasure while Eren licked at him, cooing apologies and words of comfort. The alpha tried hard not to make it obvious that he likes the attention. Unfortunately, his soft alpha grumbles betrayed him. Damn it, this boy really makes him weak and soft.

Hmm, not really a bad thing but Levi has a reputation to uphold.

“Are you done being a brat?” Levi teased with one eye open. He was covered in his mate’s scent and it’s making the tension leak out of him in steady waves.

Eren pulled a face before playfully biting at his jaw. “Are you done being an asshole, alpha? I did say I was sorry.”

Levi snorted affectionately before pulling himself further into the shore. He brought with him a huge net filled to the brim with metal weapons. There was a much smaller bag, woven and made out of scratchy brown fabric, with small indents poking out of it. They all smelled strongly of the ocean so Eren can’t tell what’s inside.

The omega made an inquiring noise about the smaller bag, making Levi smirk at his obvious curiosity. The alpha pulled the brown bag closer and let Eren have his fun at sniffing and poking it. It made noises, like glass hitting stones. Oh. Definitely curious.

Eren quickly untangled its opening and was immediately greeted by bright colors that sparkled under the sun. It was full of sea stones, crystals and a fancy looking mirror. The omega let out a pleased noise, grabbing at an aquamarine colored stone and feeling its smoothness against his skin. They’re all breathtakingly beautiful and fit to be part of a high-status, spoiled omega’s nest.

“Oh gods, they’re—” Eren couldn’t even find the words.

Levi watched his omega carefully, letting out happy and content pheromones. The alpha wasn’t
expertly skilled in the art of pleasing omegas, especially those who weren’t of his own species. Omegas from the Underground looked at brute strength and had no need for provisions of pretty things, mostly because there aren’t that much to be found underground. Eren was a whole new challenge everyday but Levi never once regretted learning a different world with his omega.

Thankfully, Eren was very accepting of the gifts and was quite vocal about it. The golden tailed omega let out sweet trills and happy chirps while he inspected his bounty. Eren insisted on wrapping jewelry on his alpha, something that won’t get in the way and could be useful. Levi wasn’t exactly excited about itchy accessories but he’ll make do.

“You guys have enough of those?” Eren asked as he gestured at the deadlier and pointier haul.

Levi sighed and fell flat on his back, “I sure fucking hope so. Raiding sailors isn’t exactly my favorite pastime.”

Eren winced. He had been on those raids a few weeks ago. It was the first time he saw humans and they looked very odd to him. They walked on ‘legs’ and smelled stale and dry. Admittedly, they are crafty but most of them looked drunk. Raids were supposed to be a little easier during the night, when they’re asleep or too drunk off wine or beer. Some raids though, are bloodier and some of Legion actually got killed. Thankfully, no one was caught alive. Erwin made sure of that.

The omega didn’t think he likes having to harm or kill the humans, no matter how badly the Marians thought of them.

It just felt wrong and Levi had sensed that. Eren had been off active raids for a while since then.

“I just want this to be over,” Eren sighed, pulling his tail closer to him.

Levi closed his eyes, feeling them sting at the brightness of unfiltered sunlight. Things are going to become rougher from here on out. The news about Legion’s alleged rebellion reached all ears and now there’s a price on their heads. The merpeople are angry, fueled by fear and propaganda, and are out to get blood from the wrong pod. It was messed up. Legion was the one protecting the entire ocean from the Titans, but now it’s them who are on the run from the very people they protected.

_Fucking irony_, Levi growled to himself.

Wordlessly, the alpha motioned for Eren to come closer. The omega hummed and immediately scooted near Levi, resting his top half on the alpha’s muscled chest. The two sighed, letting the noise of crashing waves take over. Soon, they’ll be in the middle of a war with the sounds of squelching blood and clashing of swords ringing through the reeves. At some point, they’ll get separated. Levi knows this but it doesn’t stop him from holding Eren closer, like keeping him there with him will prevent such fate.

_Gods, Levi wants to destroy the fucker who invented war._

_What a complete waste of time._

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Erwin was a capable alpha and knew when to be severe to his subordinates. Every move he made was calculated to the tiniest margin of error, all having backups if plans didn’t come through. Eren knew all of this beforehand even when there was relative peace within the oceans. Now though, there was a mad glint in his eyes and he smelled more strongly of iron than ever. It was obvious that the alpha pack leader was getting angry. Erwin just got challenged, crowded into a corner and forced to fight.
Of course it would end in blood.

Eren kept still as his superiors laid out their webbed plans. All very complicated but explained in the simplest of manners for all to understand. Whatever their alliance was left in Maria, Sina, and Trost were useless unless they find a way to slip through the barricades and lockdowns. Thankfully, Armin kept himself updated before leaving Maria. Grisha was also a source of information but the older alpha didn’t really know much about the outside world for extended periods of time.

Historia was still with them. She knew the insides of Sina, which Erwin was eternally grateful for. There were hidden connecting tunnels underneath Sina, all of which are old and unused, which Legion could make use of.

Erwin’s plan was a bold choice and a little suicidal.

They wanted to crack down the whole of Sina from below.

“We can’t risk a full fight with them,” Erwin had muttered as his dark eyes lingered on the crude map of the warmer waters on stone. “Legion has too little when it comes to numbers. The element of surprise is all we have.”

“But Kris—I mean, Historia and I are shifters,” Eren persisted. “We’ll be able to balance out the fight with us by your side.”

“It’s not that easy, Eren.” Levi interrupted with a careful look at his fellow alpha. He knew exactly what Erwin was thinking. Even though Levi hated looking at Eren as a weapon; in this war, he is nothing but that. Still, Levi can’t find it in himself to allow Erwin to call his omega that way publicly. “If the enemy soldiers see the two of you, you’d both be their target. They’d want to take you alive. It’s like exposing your best hand in a game.”

Eren quieted alongside Historia who was watching the interaction with a seemingly uninterested air. Erwin apologized, if only for politeness, for putting Eren at the farthest side of battle for now. The omega fumed internally as Levi was ordered to lead the frontlines when they cross Maria to free those who are still loyal to Legion.

Armin was being sent as well.

Eren got even angrier, reeking of the sour scent of distressed omega.

The meeting was dismissed, leaving only the highest of officials to further discuss plans with the head alpha. Levi was supposed to stay but the alpha opted to escort Eren back to their nest first. He claimed that the excessive alpha stink was making his nose and gills bitch, though Erwin already saw right through him. The blond alpha did not call him out on it.

“You’re angry,” Levi stated to finally break the awful silence as they swam back to their nest.

Eren made an annoyed grunt, “Yeah, no shit, sir.”

The alpha simply smirked at the attitude even if he itched to lightly hit Eren at the backside of his head. “I know I’m supposed to guard your ass but Erwin knows the best course of action as of now. The shitbrows is the head alpha after all.”

Eren sighed defeatedly, “I know that, Levi. I just—I know we’re not always going to be assigned together. Honestly, I just want to see my mom. She’s at the outskirts of Maria and I don’t know if she’s doing okay.”
The raven haired alpha let out a soft sigh. He is very proud of Eren and how far he has come. Being separated from his mother for this long and with an impending war looming, must all be very difficult for him. Levi can’t do anything about the assignments though. Both he and Erwin are aware that the enemies would want Eren on their side. There’s also the stroke of luck of having Historia with them. It all doesn’t make sense and they need to be careful; set aside emotions if they must.

However, Levi is not exactly a callous alpha. The smell of sadness on Eren’s tan skin unnerved him. It’s like an indication that Levi was being an incompetent mate. No, that really won’t do.

“I’ll see to your mother’s health, Eren.” Levi promised with a steady gaze at his omega. “We’ll bring her back to Legion or as close as possible, depending on how she takes the temperature. I won’t leave her there.”

Eren’s eyes glistened with unshed tears, “Y-You’d do that?”

Levi nodded before being tackled by a sobbing omega. Eren cooed and thanked his alpha for being so kind to him. Carla Jaeger, the only blood family he has left that truly matters, was all Eren could think of for the past few days. Mikasa might be a capable alpha but she’s a soldier now and couldn’t really be with the older omega for long periods of time. Levi promising Carla’s health and safety was all Eren needed to hear to be comforted.

It took a few minutes for Eren to calm down and scrub his pearlescent tears off of him and Levi. It was sort of embarrassing, with younger soldiers watching them with teasing smiles. It was a rarity to see their captain all flushed and smelling of comfort.

The two finally reached their nest, a little higher up so that the waters were a bit warmer. Legion was currently seeking refuge at the far south side of the ocean, with trenches and deep caves scattered everywhere. Eren and Levi tried not to think too hard about their shared home back in Krolva. The abandoned ship that served as Levi’s den was probably wrecked into pieces by now. In the present, all they have are spare soft pillows and kelp nets as nesting materials. The alpha wasn’t even entirely agreeable with the tiny alcove that they found but they were in no position to be picky. The entirety of Legion was practically homeless. They’re lucky to even have this peaceful frigid part of the ocean for themselves.

“You be good,” Levi instructed as he pressed Eren’s cheeks in between his palms. “I know this isn’t a very agreeable situation but we’ll have to fucking survive through it, you hear me?”

Eren pressed his lips together and nodded. The alpha made a pleased noise before kissing his omega softly on the lips. Eren sighed into the kiss, committing every scent and feeling into memory. Levi was going to be sent out again in a few days. He’s going to miss their peaceful moments.

Thankfully, Furlan and Isabel were good distractions. Eren officially made himself both a mother and a sibling to them. It eased whatever omegan instincts he had eating up inside. Eren wondered if he’s going into heat again soon.

Eren visited his father whenever he can. The omega had questions and he demanded his alpha father to answer all of them, with the threat of taking all of his teeth out. Grisha paled a little and relented. The information Eren wanted wasn’t even entirely political. The omega cried hard and once accidentally punched his father through the makeshift prison he was put in.

Eventually, Eren became less angry. Grisha, for all his shitty decisions, truly cared about his
omega mate; if only a little too much. Unfortunately, he was still every bit of an asshole as those in the warmer waters. It wasn’t surprising.

“You’ve no place to judge me,” Grisha sighed as if he was disappointed in Eren. The omega fumed with irritation once again. “Your moral standing isn’t exactly—impressive.”

“What the hell is that supposed to mean?” Eren growled heavily like an alpha.

Grisha’s gaze hardened and he looked taller even if he’s sat in a cramped space. “Mating with one of their kind. Are you out of your mind, Eren? How are you supposed to assimilate back into the pod with that horrid bond mark on your neck!?”

“Fuck you, old man.” Eren hissed with fins flaring wide. “You’ve no right to tell me who I can or cannot bond with! Levi is every bit of a better alpha than you are!”

“All I did was for the benefit of you and Carla,” Grisha stated with certainty. It was lies. All lies. Eren gritted his teeth as he gripped into the metal bars tightly, biting into his skin that it almost drew blood. “Now, you’re throwing a huge tantrum by mating with a scum from the Underground. Do you even know who he was, boy? The things he did? The things Ackermans are supposed to do?”

Eren howled darkly, “I don’t fucking care. He’s my alpha! Levi gave me freedom that I thought I would never have. I was just some hole to be fucked back in Maria, but here I’m a soldier with worth. I wasn’t treated like some fragile piece of glass or some dumb omega who can’t make decisions for shit!”

“Eren, that’s not what I’m saying!” Grisha yelled, equally frustrated.

The young omega refused to relent. Eren’s eyes burned with aged old anger, molten and bubbling up to the surface like a volcano waiting to erupt. There was just too much. “What more do you want to take away from me?”

Grisha remained quiet, his milky eyes gazing upon his son like he saw an answer to a question he bit back. It unsettled Eren but he stood his ground. Omegan instincts tried to tell him to apologize, beg for forgiveness from his alpha father and make amends. Eren growled low and hard to push it all back. Legion taught him to fight back. He won’t waste that amount of training beaten into him.

It was only when Hange arrived that Eren released his deathly grip on the iron bars. His palms were raw and scraped bloody. The beta made a worried sound but Eren’s wounds soon sizzled closed. Grisha watched with rapt attention, as if it was an experiment and not his son. Eren snarled one last time at his father before he swam away.

The smell of chemical hit him after a while.

Eren never talked about his visits to his father and Levi never asked. There was some sort of silent understanding between them and the alpha left the subject alone. Mostly, he’d want Eren to figure it out himself before he stepped in.

The smell of sadness lingered for days.

The waters were particularly cold two nights before Levi was deployed. Eren was shaking slightly, curled up into a ball as his alpha spooned him from behind and tried to keep the omega warm. Even Levi felt goosebumps on his skin because of the cold. That does not bode well for a warm water mer like Eren.
“You know,” Levi purred as he nosed at Eren’s bare nape, “There are more ways to get warm.”

The omega jolted with immediate arousal, “Fuck, Levi. You can’t just say that!”

Levi laughed lowly and snuggled at the taller omega to be a little shit. The golden tailed brunet made a wounded sound before making a squawk when Levi thrusted into his backside. Truthfully, the alpha was just playing around, but who is he to say no if his mate wants to indulge him.

“H-Hey!” Eren complained half-heartedly. Levi smirked as he nipped and bit at the younger’s shoulder, feeling his omega go limp and make purring sounds. When the alpha reached the faint raised scar of the bond mark, Eren wailed and groaned as each suckle sent sparks flying through his veins. Fucking horny alphas.

“What’s gotten into you?” is what Eren wanted to say but the sounds that came out of his mouth were garbled and long drawn out moans that had no business to be heard by innocent ears. Everything was suddenly flthy but this wasn’t a fast fuck. Levi played him like an instrument with Eren’s voice reaching an almost crescendo before dropping again.

“You smell sad,” Levi murmured into Eren’s skin like it was a confession. The omega gasped and inhaled the warm scent of Levi’s concern etching itself into every crevice of Eren’s being. Oh.

Eren didn’t even notice he smelled that way. Angry or frustrated, maybe? Levi’s sense of smell must really be something if he could pick that up easily. The omega hummed in a comforting way, smoothing Levi’s arms with his palms. Levi didn’t need to worry about Eren in addition to the shitload of other things he needs to put up with. Eren was determined to not be his alpha’s burden.

Levi noticed what Eren was doing and further pressed pressure on the bond mark. Eren cried out and laughed with tears in his eyes. Of course Levi would catch what he’s thinking. At this point in their relationship, there’s really nothing Levi can’t pick out anymore. His alpha seemed determined to know everything that has to do with Eren. It’s sweet. Eren’s libido seems to agree even more.

The omega opened up easily to Levi’s wandering fingers. With each coo and reassurance, Eren gasped and answered all of the sweet sounds with an enthusiastic thrust of his hips. Levi repeatedly keeps nipping at the bond mark; sometimes the smell of desperation tainted his scent. Eren grew a little worried but his alpha would silence him with a stroke of skilled hands.

Eren wailed long and hard when Levi finally knotted him in place. The creeping cold of foreign waters was completely rubbed off of their minds as their heated bodies tangled together. Levi was left panting above his equally dazed mate. The bond mark deepened but half of it sizzled close far too soon.

Levi made a frustrated noise before looking away.

Unfortunately for the alpha, Eren caught the grieving look on Levi’s face. With shaky palms, Eren forced his alpha to look at him.

“It’s not sinking in that well, isn’t it?”

It should have been. Their first few tries showed progress even if it required a little more effort on Levi’s part. The bond was holding well but there were times when Eren’s Titan blood and his shifting would regress whatever improvement they’ve made.

Levi pressed their foreheads together, an apology glittering in his grey eyes. Eren answered him back with a sad smile before they kissed a little too desperately.
They can make it; whatever this is.

They’ll have to fucking survive this, as Levi said.

Levi and his squad left for Maria the moment a messenger came back crawling to Legion. The beta male was panting heavily, covered in stains and sported scraped elbows and palms. Sina made its first official move and Maria got ransacked in the midst of it. The king had named potential traitors and all unfortunate mers who were named were dragged to the center of Maria and beheaded; their houses destroyed and their relatives gone missing. Sometimes there weren’t even investigations made to clear the accusations.

It was all the prompting Levi and Erwin needed before a team was deployed to the upper waters. Eren was furious and worried, bursting with energy as he cursed and swore to destroy the government of Sina and its pawn Titans along with it. His alpha pressed his lips together and promised to bring back Carla and the others as fast as he can. Eren didn’t doubt his mate for a second.

Levi along with Mike and Nanaba were the senior officers who led the team, with Levi taking the center stage. Armin tagged along and mixed perfectly with the other Legion soldiers who were just about his age. They swam towards Maria in frightening speed and barely any breaks in between. Armin was no soldier but he kept up diligently with everyone. Levi would occasionally nod at him; a form of encouragement for Eren’s found family. The omega would always smile broadly after that.

Maria was no longer the beautiful reef that Levi once knew.

Houses were crushed into bits and all plant life varied from wilting, pulled off, or dead. The schools of fish which surrounded the waters were all gone and those that were too weak to leave merely scavenged corpses to feed. Levi wrinkled his nose at the smell of the reef. The stink of blood, shit, and tears were almost overwhelming.

“Mike,” Levi grumbled from where they were hidden under the dark. “Find the rest of Eren’s podmates. If they’re not here, try to find out where they could possibly be held... or killed.”

Mike frowned at the last bit, knowing that it’s highly possible that those young mers were disposed of. Armin remained silent though he was shaking from where he was seated.

“Nanaba, take the rest of the team with you and find as much weapons as you can. Stay hidden and don’t engage unless necessary. You know what to do when someone finds you.”

Nanaba made an affirming noise before saluting, leading away young betas and alphas into the mess that was once Maria. Mike watched her disappear until he too bid his goodbye and left with his own team to find Eren’s friends. Armin wanted to come but Levi commanded him to stay.

“But I might be able to help them search through the place,” Armin argued. The omega was well-versed in this area since it’s literally where he was born. It would be faster if they had him.

Levi shook his head, “You and I will find Carla Jaeger.”

Armin made a surprised face before nodding at the captain. They headed toward the outer layer of the reef where most of the damage had receded. It still smelled of death but it was considerably more tolerable than the insides of Maria. It was too dark and the waters were murky, making Armin cough once or twice.
Destruction was fucking everywhere and for a moment Levi caught a glimpse of what the Underground looked like before. The alpha was thankful that Eren wasn’t here to see this. The kid would be devastated.

It was then that Levi caught the scent of another alpha. *An angry one.*

“Stop!” Levi yelled at the top of his lungs before a set of daggers came flying towards him and Armin. The omega cried out as he was bodily pushed away by Levi. The alpha gritted his teeth as the force of the foreign alpha pushed him and his twin swords further to the bottom of the ocean.

Levi was quick though and with a twist of his wrist and his torso, the attacker fell forward. Levi growled menacingly; a warning to the other. It was so fucking dark and the water was practically mud. The raven haired alpha was attacked once again and he can feel that this mer’s blows were desperate and uncalculated. *Wild and cornered.*

With a shove of his tail, Levi used the muddy water to blind his attacker. It worked perfectly, making the other alpha yelp in pain and revealing—

“Fuck, Mikasa!?” Levi grunted as he eyed the female alpha. She was more rugged, with hair cut shorter that it’s touching her nape. Her body was covered with nicks and scars, almost worthy to be called part of Legion herself. Armin stood gaping at the side with a large rock in between his shaking hands, ready to be thrown.

The omega cried hard before tackling the red tailed alpha.

“Mikasa!” Armin made sad noises before nosing at her. Mikasa momentarily blinked before she realized who was with her. The mermaid’s eyes glittered with pearlescent tears before rubbing her cheeks against her friend’s blond head. Relief was painted all over her matured face.

“What the fuck are you doing back here, Armin?” Mikasa questioned after separating with the omega, “And with shorty no less. Are you two trying to get yourselves killed?”

Levi snorted before he sheathed his swords. “We’re here to get everyone’s asses out of this shithole.”

Mikasa suddenly looked young and vulnerable at hearing those words, “Thanks. It’s been crazy down here. We’re barely surviving as it is. How’s Eren?”

“Eren is fine but he’s not allowed to be part of this mission,” Levi explained before eyeing the surroundings. It’s better to be careful of spies in this situation. “We’re transferring Carla as well. The brat is worried sick about his mother. This is no place for her.”

Mikasa nodded at that and swam to lead the two to where Carla was nesting. It was difficult to maneuver with the corals left destroyed, exposing sharpened edges. Armin once got nicked and the omega made an annoyed face.

There were also Titans swimming around the area. Not much by Levi’s calculations. He can easily take down the three but he didn’t want to engage just yet. It seems that these monsters still had full bellies and were unmindful of the mers swimming several feet below them. Still, Levi’s alpha instincts were high and his hands never left the grip of his swords.

Carla’s nest was fortunately not too far away. It was hidden behind large boulders and the outer frame was covered with decayed kelp and brittle fish bones; a tactic used to trick the Titans into smelling something else other than a living omega.
Mikasa made a subtle call before opening a passage. Levi barely got the word ‘Mother’ out of his mouth when Carla all but threw herself to the alpha. The older omega wept openly, spilling words of relief at seeing him and Armin doing well. Levi’s heart broke at her condition. Carla’s face was gaunt and there were deep circles beneath her eyes. Her limp tail was almost devoid of color. Levi’s inner alpha knew that she had to intake more food than what she has. This simply wasn’t acceptable.

“How’s my Eren, Levi?” Carla asked as she wiped away her pearlescent tears. “He’s doing well, I hope. My little pup has you after all.”

Levi smiled, “Yes, he’s doing well but we couldn’t risk taking him to you. We’re actually here to evacuate all those loyal to Legion. I can take you with me if you’d prefer. Eren worries about you.”

Carla gasped happily, “Oh, that’d be wonderful! I don’t know if I would be able to keep up living in your home reef with the temperature and all, but I’m sure I’ll manage.”

Armin winced from the side, his tail twitching nervously.

“Krolva was raided,” Levi explained to a horrified Carla. “We escaped to the southern side. It will be colder out there but Squad Leader Hange has an herb that can amplify body heat.”

The older omega frowned before patting the alpha’s cheek, “It’s also been hard on all of you, hasn’t it?”

Levi nodded, “There’s also another thing that you must know before we leave.”

Carla blinked at the sudden seriousness before making eye contact with Mikasa, who is also equally intrigued and confused. “Well, what is it?”

“We found Grisha Jaeger.”

It took a full day before Mike could round up Eren’s podmates. Thankfully, they were still alive but barely so. Connie and Sasha suffered the most as they sported multiple bruises and cuts from when they were recently tortured for information. Connie lost some of his teeth and fin from his tail. Sasha’s hair was cut short and she could barely move her left arm.

Jean and Marco were also in a tight spot. The omega was pregnant and was cuffed to the military quarters when Jean refused to leave his mate’s side. Mike made a quick work of all the soldiers that stood in his way. All of them were dead, as per Erwin’s orders. Jean had never felt so thankful in his entire life.

Nanaba was successful in her raid, especially when Levi joined her team. The raven haired alpha was unforgiving as he killed fifteen mers in one of the storage units. The younger Legion soldiers watched in awe as older alphas shit themselves at the sight of Levi’s form. Death came to them faster than they could swim away.

They bagged as many weapons as they could. Unfortunately, they could not liberate the entire of Maria. There were too many soldiers and some of the Marians were hysterical and owed loyalty to Sina. Nanaba and Mike took in the refugees and the escapee soldiers from Trost, and soon Levi found himself leading a full team of twenty mers, including Eren’s family and podmates.

They left at dawn right after Levi killed the three lingering Titans in one blow.

Hope seemed brighter after that.
Chapter End Notes

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