Come To Me

by Sluttysnake

Summary

Want a long, multi-chapter Loki x reader story with heavy smut and a deliciously dark Loki? You came to the right place.

Summary: The cruel king of Asgard will drive the realm into ruin if someone doesn't stop him. That someone, is you. Sneaking into a palace ball, you have high hopes that this will be the night you end his life. Will you succeed, or are you in over your head? Maybe there are even other factors in play that cause this one night to spiral completely out of control in ways you never expected.

Notes

This isn't tied to any of the movies directly, though there might be references. I have a huge amount of this fic already written out and will update pretty quickly at the beginning. Enjoy!
Chapter 1

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

"You're going to walk in there. You're going to look all hot dressed in green and gold. And he's going to see you. He'll want you. You're going to flirt with him. And once he's distracted, you'll kill him."

"I won't have to... do anything, will I?"

"No. All you have to do is slit his throat. Then you'll be done. Then we'll all be saved."

The palace courtyard is crowded with carriages. You walk up the steps and present your forged invitation to the guards, already pushing inside.

Most guests are present, as planned, and you melt easily into the crowd. You're overwhelmed for a second— all the glittering jewels, the bright colored gowns, and the soft, elegant music filling the hall.

You push your way toward the buffet table and crane your neck to look for the king. He isn't hard to spot, standing near his throne in conversation with other high nobility. You wonder what devious things he might be planning, but that's exactly what you're going to put an end to.

You grab yourself some bites of this and that, wondering how best to get his attention. There are a few guests dancing. Maybe you should join them.

Just then, the king walks into the crowd. Some people move out of his way, others try to get his attention for themselves.

You eat your food slowly, realizing that you are stalling. Flirting with the king... Perhaps the most intimidating task you can think of. Even killing him will be easier.

You put your empty plate down on the table and fill yourself a goblet with ale. When you turn back around to look into the crowd, your heart leaps into your throat.

The king is standing right there, looking right at you, only a step away. He is far more intimidating up close. His green cape makes his shoulders seem wider than they are, and on his head is that golden horned helmet. It doesn't help that your dress is the exact same shade of green, your jewelry made of the same gold.

"Someone is wearing my colors," Loki notes, his eyes sweeping over you.

"Your majesty," you greet him, curtseying respectfully. Your heart is still pounding, but you keep your fear hidden.

"Were you hoping for my attention?" He steps closer, now looking down at you.

"I would not be so forward," you reply, frantically trying to remember the plan.
Loki looks amused. "Oh? So you are here for the party, then? Are you enjoying it?"

You nod. "Quite, my king."

Right, you're supposed to flirt and cater to his ego.

"A grand party for a grand ruler," you add.

"Indeed." His lip curls smugly. "Tell me your name. I'm afraid I don't know who you are."

"I'm... Lady Katharina," you lie, not wanting to reveal your real name. "It's so great to make your acquaintance."

"The pleasure is all mine." In a rather mocking gesture, he takes your hand and plants a kiss onto your knuckles.

You turn your head away, pretending to be blushing. In reality, you can't wait to finally get this over with.

You expect Loki to let your hand go, but he doesn't. When you look back at him, there is a curiosity in his eyes, as well as a sort of... hunger.

"There are perhaps a few hours left of this party," he begins, his green eyed stare almost unnerving. "We could, of course, continue exchanging formalities... But I think we both know what you're really here for."

His tone has become suggestive. You should feel uneasy, but in actuality, you’re quite relieved that he’s taken the bait so quickly.

"Are you sure no one will mind you leaving the party prematurely, your majesty?" you ask innocently, just to goad him.

"Oh, I'm sure they will," he chuckles, already pulling you toward an exit.

You put your drink down and walk with him, noticing some disapproving looks from other guests— but that is quickly behind you, because the hallway he leads you through is completely void of people.

You walk in silence up to the next floor, until you reach a set of double doors.

"I will tell you this, Lady Katharina," Loki warns as he opens the doors to his royal bedchambers. "Whatever you may be hoping to get from me, you will not get it. I will take from you what I want, and that will be all."

He strides into the room, and you follow him in.

"What makes you think I want anything more than that?" you reply, scanning your surroundings. It's quite a large bedroom, with a surprising amount of bookshelves along the wall.

"And I thought you were not to be forward," Loki chuckles.

With the door closed behind you, he goes over to a table where a pitcher and two goblets are placed.

"Care for a drink?"
You realize with a shock of adrenaline that his back is turned, that he's distracted, that this is your chance.

"Yes, I'd love a drink," you reply, your hand already reaching for the dagger tucked away in the front of your dress.

Loki begins pouring the deep red liquid into the goblets. Thankful for the carpet beneath your feet, you tiptoe closer, holding your breath.

You just have to reach up, and slit his throat-

As soon as you lift the knife, the pitcher slips from Loki's grasp. For a moment, time stands still.

The pitcher falls.

Your knife is aiming straight for his neck.

Then Loki has your wrist caught in his grasp, twisting your arm behind your back and slamming you face first onto the table. The pitcher tips over upon impact, sending a flood of wine toward you, which mixes with the blood now trickling from your nose.

You gasp from the sudden impact, your heart beating so fast it hurts. You begin to struggle on instinct, but Loki has you held down painfully.

"Little assassin," he hisses, danger in his voice. "Did you think I would not know? Did you truly think you could kill me?"

You grunt from the pain in your twisted arm, kicking out your legs helplessly.

Loki presses his body against yours, immobilizing you even further. He leans down, talking right next to your ear.

"I knew the minute you walked in what your intentions were."

You've gone completely still, feeling his weight on you. The way he's talking darkly into your ear sends a shiver down your back.

"You wanted my attention. You've got it."

You flinch when his fingertips touch your leg, drawing up the fabric of your dress. You should do something, but you're frozen, breathing heavily.

His hand moves up until it reaches your second dagger, strapped to your leg. He draws it from its sheath and lets your dress fall back into place.

"Do you know what happens now, little assassin?" He asks, pulling back.

You slowly right yourself, taking a deep breath and wiping some of the blood and wine from your face. You turn to him, but running isn't an option now that he has both your weapons.

"You're going to execute me," you say bluntly. "Well, get it over with."

Loki is smiling as if all this is greatly enjoyable to him. "Eager to die, are we?"

He steps right into your personal space, meticulously running one of your knives over your lips. "You know what I really want. It's not every day that someone comes to murder me. Who sent
"No one," you say immediately, trying not to move your lips too much. Your eyes are glued to the movements of the knife. "I work alone."

"Don't lie to me," Loki warns, bringing the knife to your cheek and pressing it into your skin just slightly.

You flinch when it draws blood, but make no sound.

"I'm telling the truth," you insist, keeping your face as blank as possible. "If you don't believe me, you might as well kill me. I won't change my answer."

"Katharina." His eyes move to yours as he speaks your false name. "You don't know what I'm capable of. I could crush you like an insect beneath my boot. But I think you do not truly wish to die. If you simply tell me what I want to know, you will walk free."

His voice is gentle, alluring, but his eyes are cold. His pale face shows no wrinkles of smiles, his hair is as black as raven's feathers. He's as cold and hard as the gold he wears on his head, and you can't ever give into such cruelty.

"Kill me," you insist. "I know that's what you want."

His other hand moves to your cheek. His touch is cold.

"How do you want to die?" he whispers, the false promise of mercy leaving his eyes.

You feel your own skin warm up as if to counteract his coldness.

"Make it quick."

The alarms start blaring in your mind, your need to survive overpowering your senses. You take a breath and ignore it.

"And painless."

"No death is truly quick." Loki tilts his head in consideration. "If you know what's coming, fear will torment you. You're afraid, aren't you?"

His fingers move to the side of your neck, making you feel your own rapid pulse.

You do feel afraid. You don't want to die. But you can't betray your mission. People's lives depend on you. You need to stall.

"...Kill me with poison," you quickly decide. "Uhm... A special kind of poison. You probably don't have it here."

"And what poison might that be?" Loki asks, his thumb absentmindedly stroking along your jawline.

"Uh, it's..." You think frantically, but his damn touch is so distracting. As your mind goes blank, you are suddenly filled with a sense of clarity.

Your eyes slowly move up to meet his unnerving gaze. "The sweetest of all poisons."

"You wish to die..." He leans in, his warm breath fanning over your face. "...of love?"
"Not love!" you quickly correct. Of course you didn’t mean love. He’d be arrogant to think that.

"That's good, because I love no one," the king concurs. "But are you... in love with me?"

You feel strangely flustered when he dares to ask that. You can’t just love someone you just met, someone you intend to kill. What a narcissist!

"This is a matter of who kills whom," you say as stiffly as you can. "I'd say love has no place here."

"Perhaps not love, no," he contemplates, staring at you from so close that he might see straight into your soul. "But you are enamored with me. For one reason or another, you wish me dead so badly, you walk into my bedchambers with no certainty of what might happen."

"That's my job," you whisper, holding his gaze. You slowly lift your arm, hoping he is distracted enough that you can pluck your knife right from his grasp.

He isn't, and immediately distances himself from you.

"Why don't you have a seat," he suggests, gesturing to a wooden chair. "You are my guest, after all."

You reluctantly sit down, never breaking eye contact. As soon as you're seated, ropes materialize out of thin air and bind your wrists to the armrests.

"Look, my little assassin, all I want are a few answers," Loki explains gently. "Give them to me, and you walk free. You can go on with your life as you please."

He makes the offer sound very appealing, but being the god of lies, you know not to trust him. You remain silent, testing the looseness of your bindings.

"You are not really Lady Katharina, are you?" the King begins his interrogation regardless. "What might I call you instead?"

Again, you say nothing. The ropes are too tight to wiggle out.

"Nothing? Alright, then I will simply call you my little kitten." Loki is unfazed by your silence. "Fitting, don't you think? You are nothing but a small, helpless kitten."

You narrow your eyes at his condescension. "I am not a kitten, and I am certainly not yours!"

"But you could be," he says immediately, as if he was waiting for you to say that. "You certainly know how to get my attention. Every criminal must pay their dues, and you could pay yours by pledging eternal servitude to me. I would allow it, just this once."

Now you scoff. "I would never surrender my dignity to you."

"You wish to die instead?" Loki asks, displeasure back in his voice.

"It's an easy choice," you quip and smile smugly, mainly to hide your terror.

"Alright." He leans over you. "If it's poison you want, I've got it."

He opens his hand, dropping both of your knives. Before they fall onto your lap, they have transformed into two horrible, vicious snakes.

You go rigid, panic setting in instantly. Snakes. Your worst fear.
When the snakes begin to move, coiling up your arms, you scream, and begin struggling against the ropes.

"No, please, not like this!" you gasp with desperation. "Loki, I changed my mind, I'll... I'll swear you servitude. Please, my king!"

You are trembling all over, looking frantically between the snakes and the king.

Loki regards you for a moment, then he reaches out and the snakes slither onto his arm instead. You take a deep breath of relief.

"Seems she doesn't like you," he says to the snakes, scratching them under their chins with one finger. The snakes shimmer and disappear from his hand.

"What a pitiful assassin you are," Loki turns back to you. "You fail to kill me, you reveal to me your greatest fear, and you no less than beg for your servitude."

You're still too relieved that the snakes are gone to take his insults to heart. Instead, you feel hopeful. Not dying means more chances to kill the king.

"I wonder what lengths you would go to in order to kill me," he says, as if reading your mind. "But for now, tell me why you want me dead."

That, you can answer. "Because you're cruel. You waste the resources of this land for your own worship, not caring who goes without a meal. You're a narcissist who loves being in charge and having people cower in fear at your arrival."

The king laughs darkly. "You are very right about that. And the best part is, no one is there to take this from me. Not my father, not my brother. Especially not you, little kitten."

"Not for lack of trying," you say through gritted teeth. "You murdered your family!"

Loki laughs again, the coldness in his eyes almost palpable. "Murdered? No, no, their disappearance was merely a tragic accident. Now, I believe we were about to have a glass of wine together."

He goes back to the table, and the ropes fall off your wrists. You stand up stiffly, watching as the spilled wine disappears and returns to the pitcher.

With a cold smile, the king hands you a filled goblet.

"I'm not drinking this," you say immediately, looking suspiciously into the red liquid. "This is probably drugged, or poisoned, or-"

Loki snatches the goblet from your hand, takes a swig, and hands it back to you.

"There. Safe enough for you now?"

You shoot him a distrustful look, but take a small sip to please him.

Loki smiles and goes over to sit down on an elegant sofa, where he takes off his helmet. He pats the space next to him and drinks from his own goblet.

You reluctantly come over, knowing you have only yourself to blame for this mess.

"There, isn't this so much better?" Loki croons with a dirty smirk, lowering his goblet. "Instead of killing me, you get to enjoy my company. A pleasure few will receive."
You scoff in disdain, staring into your wine listlessly.

"Come now, kitten, this is supposed to be fun," he coaxes.

"How can it be, when we both want each other dead," you say numbly.

"Oh, I have much better use of you alive." His words are heavy with suggestion.

"Well, I don't," you retort bitterly.

"Sure you don't, kitten." It sounds like Loki is far more cheerful than you are. "It's hard to imagine the benefits my good graces could bring you."

"Like not getting executed?" you ask, finally looking at him. "Right, and all that will cost is my pride."

"You know, you could be a lot more respectful," Loki remarks, regarding you with a thoughtful expression. "A little 'your majesty' here and 'my king' there will greatly improve my interest in your derisive words."

"Oh, excuse my insolence, my great and wonderful king," you say with sarcasm, returning to stare into your wine.

"That's better, kitten," he praises amusedly. "Now, as long as you curtsy when I enter the room, you're set."

"Wouldn't you rather I drop to my knees?" you question, unable to help yourself. Who knows, maybe you'll be dead in the next few hours, and then you'd really regret keeping all these quips to yourself.

"Of course, that would be preferable," Loki agrees. "I'd really like to see you on your knees."

Your cheeks heat up with embarrassment and anger. "Then I'll make sure to never do that."

"Oh, don't be like this, kitten." You can feel his eyes on you. "I'm not so bad, you'll see. I can be quite rewarding."

"I'd rather dig my heels into the ground every step of the way if it means making your life difficult," you decide.

"I thought you were a smart woman, Katharina." There is a hint of hardness back in his voice. "It's not wise to test my patience."

You hate how fast your heart is still beating. You look back at him. "I'm not afraid of you."

His gaze is as challenging as yours is. "A bold statement, after what just happened, don't you think?"

"I'm afraid of snakes," you say. "Not egocentric men."

That makes Loki laugh. "You are quite something. A fiery spirit that will, as all will, yield."

"I would never-"

Before you can finish, Loki leans in and pushes his fingers into your hair.
Your breath catches as he gently grasps the back of your head and angles it toward him. You don't know what's happening to you, but you feel neither calm nor confident anymore.

"Have you realized, yet, how much you want me, or should I hold a knife to your throat again?" he whispers darkly.

"Wha- what?" you stutter, feeling strange.

"Shhh." He places a finger over your lips. "Listen to your body. Won't it feel so much better to simply surrender, to let me show you what would have happened, had you never tried to kill me?"

"No, I don't want you," you disagree unconvincingly.

"Yes, you do," Loki says sternly, leaning closer and closer. "You felt excitement when I held your knife to your skin. You may think you hate me for my cruelty, but the truth is, you love it. You want me to take you, to make you mine. You want to be at my mercy. You never wanted to kill me. This is much more fun for you, no?"

His grip in your hair has tightened, his expression has become intense. You feel shocks of... something in your gut.

"No-" you begin, but Loki cuts you off.

"Do not lie to me, kitten. It's too late. The truth is written on your face."

You suddenly feel more helpless than you did with the snakes. You can't find anything to say.

"Think about it," he says. "Think of how your associates will feel when they see you in my arms. When they hear how I fucked you, over and over, until you were a mess in my arms. When they see the evidence of our sin on your skin, in the clothes you wear for me. How horribly wrong it will all be, and yet so, so intoxicating. I will poison you just like you wanted, kitten. I will destroy you. Watch you fall to your ruin. That's what you want, isn't it? That's what you came here for."

You're practically trembling, and now you know why. Because you're scared. And because your body burns hot with arousal.

"You didn't come here to kill," he whispers. "You came to die."

You don't resist when Loki pulls your head up and, looking coldly down at you, places his lips over yours.

Chapter End Notes

Last chance to turn back before the smut ;)
Okay, so this is basically just porn
Plot comes later

Your fingers clutch the leather of his coat, whether to pull him closer or push him away, you don't know. All you know is that he is cold, and cruel, and that you're hot and weak against him.

"Loki," you whisper, when he pulls away slightly.

"King," he corrects, the word tangible against your lips.

You're breathing heavily, your lips parted, your gaze flitting over Loki's face. You can't think. You need room to breathe.

You release him and turn away, reaching for your goblet. In one movement, you down its contents.

"Easy," he warns.

"What do you want?" you ask, as if he hadn't just made it perfectly clear. "How- Why would you- You're going to humiliate me! You're going to humiliate me before you kill me!"

It's the only answer you can decide on that makes sense. Nothing else does. Not the way you feel, not the things he said.

"Humiliate you?" Loki repeats, as if contemplating the suggestion. "I will destroy you, hurt you, make you beg for me, make you belong to me, make you drive yourself into ruin for me, and yes, perhaps you'll be dead by the end of it, but I don't intend to humiliate you. That would be far too crude."

"I-" Distraught, you stand up from the sofa. "I won't let you!"

You look around the room for anything that could be used as a weapon. There, on the desk, a candleholder. You rush over, but before you get very far, Loki is behind you.

He grabs your wrist and shoves you down onto the table, just like before. You make an angry sound, struggling, but it does nothing.

"You liked it when I held you here, didn't you?" Loki murmurs. "Had you hoped my hand would move just a little further up your leg?"

To your dismay, you realize your undergarments are soaking. You fix your gaze on the candleholder and try to ignore everything else.

"You're a criminal, little kitten." His hand lands on your lower back, rubbing over you through your dress. "...And criminals must be punished. You want to be punished, don't you?"

"I'm not a kitten!" you snap, feeling your knees go weak.
"Don't forget, you swore me your servitude." His voice is a singsong of seduction. "You're weak. Helpless. A kitten. My kitten."

You grunt and begin to struggle, but he only pushes you harder against the desk. You don't feel like an assassin at all. You feel like butter, melting into a pool of lust. Enjoying how he's holding you immobile. How he's talking down on you. So haughty and superior. No. You would never like that.

"What are you doing to me?" you gasp, squirming to attain some sort of friction.

"Making you realize what a whore you are," he growls, pressing his hips against your rear. "You think I've drugged you, or cast a spell on you, don't you? Well, let me make this clear now. Your desire for me comes out of your own depraved mind."

"No," you gasp, while simultaneously grinding against him. A contradiction, you realize. "No, I won't let you take my pride from me!"

"There is nothing wrong with being a slut," he grunts, grabbing a fistful of fabric from the skirt of your dress. "Your pride will only leave you if you let it. If you keep lying to yourself."

He pulls your dress up until your legs are bare, until he can see the evidence of your arousal. You stop struggling, realizing there is no point.

"And what a slut you are," he notes, a touch of cruel amusement in his tone. "Come now, don't be upset."

His hand begins kneading your ass, making you gasp again.

"You came here wanting something. This is it," he continues. "When I first saw you, I saw the lust in your eyes. The fear, the nervousness. Did you volunteer for this mission? Or were you selected?"

"I..." You pause, wondering if you should tell him, but decide this question is safe. "I was selected."

"No doubt because you could play the part so well, hm?" He teases, letting his hand caress your inner thighs. "So convincing, your desire to be led into my bedchambers."

You have to stifle the wanton sounds threatening to escape you. Loki squeezes the soft flesh of your thighs, pulling your legs apart without resistance.

"Look how wet you are." You can hear his own lust in his voice. "Look how much your sick mind craves me."

Two of his fingers press against the soaked fabric, dragging over your covered need.

You whimper, your legs trembling slightly. You feel so powerless, so completely at his mercy.

"Do you want this, whore?"

The epithet sends a shock through your core. You make a sound, somewhere between a plea to be released, and a surrender to your desire.

"What was that?" he growls impatiently, his fingers pressed hard against your clit, where they rub you ever so slightly.

You whimper in desperation, moving your hips to get more friction from him. "I'm not a whore," you wail.
That makes Loki laugh. "Then why are you bent over my desk, legs apart, your cunt soaking wet in front of me?"

"Do it," you continue wailing, limp on the surface of the table as you continue to grind against him.

"Do what?"

"Fuck me." You hate how whorish you do, indeed, sound. "Do... what you must. I won't resist."

His hand draws back and smacks over your ass. You lurch forward, a stifled moan falling from your lips.

"You're making it sound as if I'm forcing you," Loki points out with displeasure. "No, little slut, I want you to own up to your desires. Say that you want this."

You make another nondescript sound. Loki's hand loosens its hold on you, then draws back fully. You stay bent over the table, awaiting his touch. But it doesn't come.

You turn your head slightly, seeing him standing a step behind you, an impatient look on his face.

"Just take me," you urge. "Get it over with."

"Not until you say what I want you to say," he holds his ground.

"I want..." You begin, cringing at the thought of what is about to leave your lips. "I want you to fuck me."

Loki smirks. "Good. Now say it nicely."

"What?" you whimper, wanting this torment to end already.

Loki says nothing. Just waiting.

You turn your head again so you're no longer looking at him.

"Please, your majesty," you whisper. "Please fuck me."

Loki makes a sound of approval, closing the distance. His hand hooks under the waistband of your panties, yanking them down roughly. You shiver as the cool air touches your glistening wetness.

For a moment, he does nothing except build your desperation. Then his fingers make contact with your wet skin, caressing it, until two of them finally sink into you.

You gasp, feeling your nerve endings flare to life. Your walls are snug around his digits, long gone untouched by anyone, even you.

His fingertips begin rubbing against them tenderly, as if he's mapping out every inch of your core. You grip the table hard, trying to keep your composure at his relentless teasing.

"How tight you are," he remarks, his own dark desire filling his words. "How wet and ready for me. What a stroke of luck such a whore of an assassin would find her way into my bedchambers."

"Please," you almost sob. "Just fuck me."

"Alright, little kitten," he says with pretend sweetness.
Then his fingers curl and begin to thrust against your sweet spot.

Lewd sounds fall off your lips as finally, pleasure fills you. You rock your hips back at him, completely letting go of your pride, and simply fulfilling your own needs.

It feels so wrong to take pleasure from him. If he was getting pleasure, too, maybe you could pretend this wasn't your choice.

"Please, I need you inside me," you beg, hoping that's enough.

"Oh?" Loki sounds triumphant, his skillful fingers still making you gasp and moan. "You want my cock? Is that what you want, you dirty whore?"

"Yes! Please, I want it now!" You don't know what's compelling you to say all this. It's like you've become a whole different person, but you know your words to be true.

"Alright then." Loki withdraws his fingers, leaving you empty. "But I must warn you. I will not be gentle. Though, that is exactly what you want, isn't it? To be punished by me?"

You mewl in anticipation as you hear Loki shift behind you, opening his pants.

"Answer me, slut," he demands, and you feel something prod against your entrance.

"Yes, yes I want that," you breathe, bracing yourself for the intrusion.

His hands land on your hips, and you feel the head of his cock push inside you. Your walls are stretched apart to the point of discomfort, his cock spearing deeper and deeper inside of you until you're completely full, tethered to the cruel king.

You whimper from the sensation, trembling beneath him. But despite the pain and discomfort, it feels like an itch inside you is finally being scratched.

"Mmm, you're so tight, little slut," Loki breathes, reaching around to tease your clit.

With a wail your legs spasm, causing your walls to clench painfully hard around him.

"How well you take me," he praises, slowly drawing his hips back to thrust lazily into you. "You're such a good girl, taking my cock despite the pain."

You are utterly helpless now, your knees have given out; weren't you pinned to the table, you might have slid right off.

The king groans as he sets a slow rhythm, which quickly picks up speed. A small yelp escapes you with each thrust, one of dizzying pleasure and pain.

Loki keep his hand on your clit, sending a jolt through you every once in a while so that you clench down around him. Soon, his thrusts have become savage and brutal, your whole body jolting as he rams into you.

Your mind is being scrambled from the impact of pleasure. You dig your nails into the wood of the table, feeling your breasts chafe against the fabric of your dress with each jolt.

Between Loki's animalistic growls and grunts, you hear your own high pitched moans and whimpers.

"Fuck, you little slut, do you like this?" he snarls. "Do you like getting fucked by your king?"
When you don't answer, his other hand leaves your hip and grabs a fistful of your hair, yanking on it. A deep moan escapes you, and you hear yourself agreeing.

He laughs coldly. "Are you going to cum, whore? Are you going to cum on my cock? Do you want that?"


"Then cum." His hand rubs furiously against your clit. You can hear from the strain in his voice that he, too, is close. "Cum and let the shame of it destroy you."

You scream, clutching the table so hard that your fingers lock up. You see stars, a searing white light as everything comes to completion. You cum hard against him, shaking, your walls fluttering around him.

Loki gives off a strained growl, thrusting deep inside you one, two, three more times, until he shudders and you feel his cock pulse inside you, pumping out hot cum.

He resumes thrusting slowly, riding out the last bits of pleasure, before pulling out of you, leaving the evidence of sin to trickle down your thigh.

You're panting heavily, completely spent, letting yourself slide off the table and onto the carpet below. You sit there, waiting for your strength to return.

Loki's breaths are labored as well, but he remains standing, re-sorting himself into his clothes. Giving you a brief glance, he walks back to the sofa, where he sits down and picks up his goblet to finish the rest of his wine.

When you slowly begin to catch your breath, you shimmy back into your drenched panties, glad he hasn't destroyed them.

The reality of the situation begins to sink in. Instead of killing the horrible monster of a king, you let him pump you full of his seed. Never have you been so relieved that you had taken precautions against fertility.

You stand up on shaky legs, feeling the true weight of your shame settle in. You can never return to the resistance. You can never let them know what you did.

You begin walking toward the door, hoping against hope that he'll just let you leave.

"Where are you going?" his stern voice comes from behind you.

You freeze, hand held out to the doorknob. "May... May I leave?" you ask without looking at him, trying to keep your voice from trembling.

"No. Come here," comes the cold reply.

You don't move for a moment. You could make a run for it.

"I'm sure you're smarter than to think you could run," he remarks calmly, and you know he's ready to kill you if you try.

Slowly, you turn to him. He's leaned back on the sofa, legs hanging open, a cold statue of perfection. You put one foot in front of the other and force yourself to return to him, taking a seat beside him.
He immediately reaches out his hand and smooths out your hair. A patronizing gesture more than a gentle one.

"Did you enjoy getting your soul broken?" He asks lowly.

"Am I to bear your child?" you ask back bluntly, hoping to shock him.

He only laughs. "A whore like you?"

Your brow furrows in anger. You don't like getting insulted. "Well, you just came inside me and that's usually how that works."

He laughs again. "Are you concerned? Or does it excite you?"

"Neither!" you snap, pulling your head away from his caress. "It's never going to happen. And I'm not a whore. A whore sleeps with men for money. Last I checked, you weren't going to pay me."

"Cool your temper, kitten," he warns. "You aren't getting paid with coin, no, but you are getting paid with your life and your silence. You cannot afford not to be my whore."

"Good to know I have no choice in this," you say bitterly. "Then it was never my will to do this. You're just a monster."

Loki slowly puts down his goblet, stands up, and leans over you. Then he reaches out his hand and wraps it around your throat, pressing you against the back of the sofa.

You gasp and struggle for air, feeling the pressure on your windpipe almost completely cutting it off. You try to pull on his hand, but it's as unyielding as iron.

"If it's pain you want, insolent worm, if you wish for torture-" Loki's eyes are narrowed with anger. "-I will gladly supply it to you. I can make every waking minute of your life pure agony, until you not only beg for me to make use of your worthless body, but for me to snuff out your equally worthless life in a stroke of mercy."

The edges of your vision have gone black and you feel like you're about to pass out. You continue clawing at his hand until he finally releases you.

You slump forward, dragging in quick gulps of air. You feel miserable. Why did you ever let him do this to you?

"I'm sorry, my king," you mumble, not looking up.

"Look, little kitten," Loki begins speaking gently. "If you simply learned to yield under my hand like everyone else, we would have no problems. Now it is late. You are spent. I believe sleep is what you truly need."

You nod, defeated.

"I will allow you to sleep on the sofa," he offers. "Under three conditions."
You say nothing, but look at him expectantly.

"One: You henceforth serve my every whim with a smile. Two: You do not disturb me during my sleep. Three: You allow me to chain you up so that you will not suffer from any bad ideas during the night."

Your heart sinks. What a lousy arrangement. But you need the time. You need to get by, until you can escape, or until you can finish your job.

You stand up and force yourself to smile. "I accept." You pause. "...my king." And then you curtsey.

Loki's expression reveals no emotion. "Go to the washroom to ready yourself. You have ten minutes before I tie you up."

"Yes, your majesty," you say with a bow of your head, and hurry to the adjoined bathroom.

You get done with the necessities and hurry back out, still wearing your dress, but having removed your jewelry.

Loki has removed some layers of his elaborate leather garb, and there is a pillow and a blanket on the sofa.

You silently go over to it and lie down, tiredness overwhelming all your other emotions. Once you're comfortable, Loki comes over with manacles.

He secures them between one of your wrists and the leg of the sofa, connected by a length of chain. You hope it won't inhibit your sleep too much.

Without another word, Loki goes to his own bed, and with a wave of his hand, the room is plunged in darkness.

Sleep comes to you quickly, though you doubt you'll feel well rested when you wake.
Morning begins with a shadow looming over you.

You blink slowly, trying to shake your sleep from you. The surge of fear when you see the king above you helps you wake instantly.

You sit up, realizing your hand is no longer manacled.

"I require your services, kitten," Loki cuts straight to the chase, smiling mischievously. He's already fully dressed, sans helmet and cape.

You blink again, lowering your eyes to his crotch, which is about level with your face. Even with your sleep addled mind, you have a pretty good idea what he wants.

"Oh?" you say innocently, using humor to hide the sinking feeling in your stomach. "Does your majesty wish me to shine his shoes for him?"

"Only if it's with your tongue," he retorts. "But I'd rather you use your tongue for something else, pet."

"I don't know what you mean," you lie.

"Playing innocent, are we?" he asks, grabbing a fistful of your hair. He's still smiling. "You said you want poison. Well, I have poison for you to swallow. Think of how ruined you'll look afterward. Reduced to nothing, but my personal little cum deposit."

You think back to last night. How aroused you had been. How you just let him do those things to you. You still don't know why-

"Do you like that?" The grip on your hair tightens. "Feeling worthless? Serving only one purpose? Do you like the punishment I bring? Perhaps it's guilt compelling you to submit."

"I won't submit," you declare. "Let me go. I won't make this fun for you."

He laughs coldly, opening his pants with his other hand. "Oh, I don't need you to, little slut."

You watch with apprehension as he frees his growing erection, stroking it a few times to get it fully hard.

"Open up," he coaxes, pushing it against your lips.

"You're a monster," you say through gritted teeth.

"Only because you like it that way."
After realizing you won't open your mouth on your own, he simply grasps your jaw painfully and squeezes it open himself. As soon as it's open wide enough, he shoves his throbbing cock in, sighing contently.

"No biting, pet, or this will become rather painful for you," he says with a smile, thrusting lazily to coat himself in your saliva.

Your mouth is pried open to its limits, and despite his shallow thrusts, you already feel like you'll choke.

You could bite him. You could bite it all off, and then he could never fuck you or anyone again. He'd torture you into eternity, but you could do it.

You look up into his wicked eyes, feel the controlling grip on your hair, taste the masculine taste on your tongue. You're helpless. Not completely, but almost.

You need to bide your time, you tell yourself. Don't ruin your chances now. You'll kill him one day. You're a trained assassin. You can handle sucking a dick to carry out your mission.

"Do you think you can take me deeper, kitten?" Loki asks, still being comparatively gentle. "Do you want to try?"

You make a disapproving sound, which vibrates around his shaft, causing him to groan.

"There, now just keep breathing."

It begins pushing against the back of your throat and you feel your gag reflex set in.

You try not to panic, not to choke, and Loki waits until you've calmed. His fingers comb through your hair soothingly. Then he pushes deeper.

Tears well up in your eyes and you have to steady yourself against his thighs. Your mind rapidly alternates between breathing and retching. It hurts.

"Shhh, little kitten, it's alright," Loki croons, watching you carefully. He draws back again and gives you a moment to breathe, before attempting to push back in.

Drool is leaking from the sides of your mouth and you feel rather miserable, but Loki's soft voice and his caress have a calming effect on you.

"Try it yourself," he suggests. "See how far you can take me, and do make use of your tongue."

His grip relinquishes some control over to you, and you take a moment to calm yourself. Then you begin cautiously stroking him with your tongue, sucking lightly.

"Yes, that's good," he praises, his expression one of content pleasure.

You hesitantly reach out your hand and wrap it around the base, where your mouth doesn't reach. Then you bob your head up and down, stroking him simultaneously.

Sounds of pleasure come from the king, his fingers massaging your scalp as his hips match your rhythm.

You become absorbed in the task at hand, occasionally taking him out of your mouth and licking him all over.
"You're being so gentle," Loki notes with amusement. "Truly, you lick me like a kitten. I could have you do this for hours. Alas, I have not the time, so if you'd let me, I'd like to pick up the pace."

You draw back, looking up at him in what you hope is a lust clouded expression.

"Perhaps his majesty prefers taking me another way, seeing how I am so unskilled with my mouth," you say, hoping to avoid getting choked.

This causes him to grin. "You like getting fucked in your sweet little cunt, don't you?"

It's hard to keep a blank expression when he says things like that so bluntly.

"I'm ready for you," you breathe.

And it's true. You're wet, and the familiar itch has returned.

"Alright." Still smiling, the king sits down next to you. "Have a seat."

You quickly remove your panties and move over his lap. His hands land at your waist, positioning you over him.

It's somewhat different now that you can see his face. His triumphant smirk. He's waiting for you to lower yourself.

You steady yourself on his shoulders, trying to avoid his direct gaze. His cruelly handsome features. Looking away, you slide down, feeling him push inside of you.

It's still a sensation that needs getting used to, his massive length filling you up.

Loki groans with satisfaction once you're fully seated, hands sliding down to your ass. "Go on, kitten. Ride me."

You move your hips, impaling yourself on him again and again. His hands guide your movements, and he eventually thrusts up to meet you.

Your whole body rocks with pleasure, your slick pretty much dribbling down his cock.

Loki's head is leaning back against the sofa, his eyes closed, his lips slightly parted to make way for the sounds of his pleasure. You dare look at him now, studying each of his features as he drives you closer and closer to the edge.

He's beautiful like snow in winter. His hair is so dark, his skin so pale. Everything about him is slender, graceful and sharp.

You can hardly concentrate with how he's thrusting into you, but you feel a strange urge all of a sudden. Your hand moves into his hair, feeling the strands slide through your fingers. Slowly, as if mesmerized by the panting breaths coming from his parted lips, you lean forward.

His eyes open just as your own breaths touch his skin, and he slows the rhythm of his hips, laughing coldly.

"You want to kiss me?" he asks mockingly, his piercing gaze seeing right through you.

You're frozen, feeling like a child caught red handed.

"I'll give you something better."
He stops completely, causing you to whimper. Leaning forward, he slides his hands under your dress, lifting it over your head.

His hungry gaze lands on your breasts, and he resumes a slow rhythm, sliding his hands up your belly to touch them.

You feel weirdly exposed, almost blushing the way he leers at you.

One hand begins rubbing and pinching at one of your nipples, causing you to moan, the other slides higher and wraps around your throat, squeezing lightly.

Flooded with new arousal, you begin bouncing on his cock rapidly, now in desperate need for release.

A low growl comes from Loki and he squeezes a little harder, bucking up into you. His hand is still torturing your nipple, making you feel weak with need, until he shifts it to your other breast and replaces it with his teeth and vicious tongue.

That's when you practically scream his name. The hand on your throat moves to your the back of your neck and pulls on your hair, his thrusts and grunts getting more frantic.

You're a moaning mess, riding him as you get closer, closer, closer, screaming his name with each swipe of his tongue, pinch of his fingers, pull of your hair.

"L-Loki!"

The waves of pleasure crash down inside you with such a force you go blind and deaf to the world for a second.

Loki's hands slide to your hips, gripping you tightly, as he pounds into you, until he, too, finds his release. He lets out a sound of pure, animalistic pleasure, driving himself deep inside of you, where he releases spurts of his cum.

When he slowly stills inside of you, the sound of both your heavy breathing fills the room. You feel satisfied, as if he were your lover and this was a regular thing.

You can feel his cock going soft inside you, but he doesn't push you off him. Instead, his gaze begins to focus on your naked body. It's as if he's taking in the image of what he just fucked, memorizing it.

You let his eyes move all over you, until finally, he draws out of you and sets you down beside him.

You silently reach for your dress, but he stops you.

"No. I've sent a chambermaid to get you new garments." He stands up, pulling up his pants and tucking himself away. "You've been a good girl so far today, against my expectations. You've earned yourself some things, but I'm afraid I won't be there to enjoy them with you."

He walks toward the doors, where he pauses, turning to look back at you with an apologetic look. "As much as I'd like to fuck you all day until you truly are ruined, I have duties to attend to. Perhaps another day."

Then he opens it and steps out into the hallway.
You squeak and quickly cover yourself in your blanket when you see a servant waiting there.

She curtseys to Loki and comes in, closing the door behind her.

She seems about your age, wearing a plain off-white dress and a muted red apron. In her arms is a bundle of fabrics.

"Good morning, miss," she greets you, seemingly unfazed by your nudity. "You will receive breakfast shortly, but first, I assume you might want to take a bath."

You feel embarrassment creeping onto your face as you're painfully reminded of Loki's and your cum wetting your thighs.

"Yes, a bath," you agree stiffly.

She nods and sets the bundle on a chair—"I'll get that ready for you, miss, just a moment—" and walks into the bathroom.

"Wait, what's your name?" you call after her.

"Eala, miss," she replies, disappearing into the other room.

Hearing her rummaging around and pouring water, you begin to think. Something is off about all this. You need to do something about your situation, and you feel like now is the best chance you're going to get. Quickly, a plan solidifies in your mind.

"Your bath is ready, miss." She walks back over to you. "Here, let me take this."

She gathers up your discarded clothes, and then grabs for your blanket.

You make a sound of protest, attempting to keep yourself covered.

"There is no need to be ashamed," she says gently. "I've done this before. Come now, we're both women."

Not wanting her to think you a coward, you let her take the blanket. You walk over to the bathroom, where a tub of hot water is waiting for you.

Almost feeling a flicker of joy, you sink into it. You sigh as relaxation takes you, soothing your aches, especially that between your legs.

You think about Eala's words.

_I've done this before._

Does this mean Loki has had a lot of assassins come to kill him, or does that simply mean he has a lot of women to entertain him?

Probably the latter.

Deciding not to dwell on it, you begin the process of washing yourself, washing away your shame.

You stay in the tub until your fingers prune. That's when Eala comes in, carrying a towel and what you assume are your new clothes, judging by the emerald green color.

"I think you've been in there long enough, miss," she says. "Shall I dry you off?"
"No, I'll do it myself," you decline. "Leave them here."

"Of course." She places them beside the tub and leaves you to your privacy.

You slowly get out and dry yourself off, beginning to feel hungry. You wonder what someone like you will get for breakfast.

When you pick up the clothes, your temper begins to rise slightly.

They're nothing but lingerie. A see-through gown, lacy underwear, and delicate shoes with a heel. When a golden collar falls from the folds of the gown, you have to greatly restrain yourself not to dump them all in the bathwater.

Change of plans then.

You wrap the towel tightly around yourself to cover your modesty.

"Eala," you call out. "I need some help putting these on."

"Of course, miss," she says from the other room, and you hear her footsteps approaching.

As soon as she's through the door, you grab her, bend both her arms behind her back, and shove her against the wall.

She yelps, too surprised to even struggle.

"Eala," you growl. "How loyal are you to the king?"

"Uh, I- I-," she stammers, too shocked to speak properly.

You apply pressure to her arms, causing her to squeak. Still, she doesn't struggle.

"I- I would never disobey him, if that's what you're asking," she quickly answers.

You realize she's just an obedient little servant with no backbone. She'll have to do regardless.

"Okay, then let me tell you something, Eala," you begin. "I'm an assassin. I'm going to kill the king. And I know five different ways of killing you right now, so you'd better do what I tell you."

"O-okay," she breathes, buying your bluff.

"First, answer me some questions." You release the pressure somewhat, but keep her against the wall. "How many others like me does the king have?"

"You mean... companions?" she asks, and you're glad she didn't use another word. "He has a few. But he's busy often, and he grows tired of them quickly. Most of them are very willing to take the job, and that bores him. They often step out of line and he releases them from their duty. One even tried to blackmail him. She's in the dungeons now. Right now, I think he has about three hanging around court, just in case he needs them."

You wonder how she knows all this, but you have more urgent questions to ask.

"And how does he ensure they don't get pregnant?"

"Oh, there's potions for that," she explains, as if that wasn't common knowledge.
"I know, but why hasn't he given me any?" you pry, getting impatient.

"It'll be- can you please let me go? I promise I won't do anything."

You sigh and release her. She slowly turns to you, but doesn't move away from the wall.

"So, as I was saying, the potion is mixed into your food," she continues explaining. "Everyone has to eat, but not everyone is trustworthy enough not to make the king's heir theirs."

You nod. "Alright. Now tell me, is there anywhere I might find a weapon?"

She thinks for a moment. "Yes. The weaponry is... I think on one side of the courtyard. It's to the back of the palace, but I've never been there. Also, there's a guard outside these chambers. You'll never get there."

"Oh, I have a plan. Here's what you'll do for me, okay?" You pause for to make sure she's paying good attention. "You're going to put on these clothes. I'll wear yours. We'll go to wherever I was supposed to have breakfast. You stay there in my stead, and I'll find myself a weapon."

You're glad now that Eala is so plain looking, similar to you. This just might work.

"You want me to-" Her eyes move to the pile of lingerie. "...and if I don't, you'll kill me?"

You take a breath. "...yes."

"Okay." She doesn't seem very afraid. Maybe working for Loki has hardened her to such threats.

She unties her apron, then takes off her dress, handing it to you. You avert your eyes to give her privacy.

"Do you... need my undergarments, too?" she asks.

"No. I'll just go without them. Put them with the other laundry and hurry up."

You hear her grab the lingerie and leave the bathroom to give you privacy as well.

You put on her dress and apron, then attempt to dry your hair as best you can.

When Eala returns, you find yourself staring for a moment. The lingerie is really all too revealing, and the collar is just belittling. Still, she looks stunning. You can see why Loki wanted you to wear that.

"I've never had such elegant clothes," Eala whispers in awe, looking down at herself.

"I wouldn't call those clothes," you remark, before pushing her to the tub. "Now get your hair wet."

She bends over the water and dunks her hair in. You hover over her, drying it just so it won't drip too much. You can only hope the guard doesn't question why your hair is damp, too.

"Okay, now do you know how to act the part in front of the guard?" you ask, feeling the pressure of time increasing.

"Uhm..." Eala thinks for a moment. Then she bats her eyes at you, pushing out her bottom lip.

"Oh, your majesty", she breathes. "How handsome and strong you are."
You feel mildly uncomfortable, but give her a nod. "Good. Maybe limp a little, too, you know--"

"But he'll know that I'm not you," she interrupts. "What if he gets mad at me?"

"Look, you don't actually have to do anything with him," you explain with exasperation. "He's busy. You'll just eat breakfast and then hang around here. Just until I get done with what I need to do. And even if he sees you, just tell him I threatened your life and forced you into this. Which I did."

She nods. "Okay."

"Then let's go." You take her arm and drag her with you, picking up the laundry on the way. She stumbles along with you on her heeled shoes.

You take another deep breath, release her arm, and open the door to the hallway.

"Right this way, miss," you imitate Eala, and step out.

There is, indeed, a guard outside. A woman clad in golden armor, holding a spear.

She eyes you for a moment, but as soon as Eala steps over the threshold, she sneers at her.

"Come now, miss," you say with as much friendliness as you can muster, already distancing yourself from the guard. "I know you're sore, but you've got to eat."

Eala hurries after you, looking somewhat flustered.

"Uhm, the dining room is this way," she whispers into your ear, gently nudging you in the right direction.

You hope the guard isn't watching too closely as she follows behind you.

With Eala's help, you make it to a cozy room where a table is set out with a pretty decent meal of fresh bread, fruit, and cheese.

"Have a seat, miss," you tell her, watching from the corner of your eye as the guard takes her place beside the door.

Eala looks like she might start drooling at the sight of the food. You hear your stomach rumble, too.

She sits down, in awe, and cautiously reaches out for a piece of fruit, as if she were afraid it might disappear.

You also walk over, hoping to sneakily grab yourself a bite. But as soon as you reach for it, the guard speaks up begin you.

"Hey! Get your dirty paws away, servant!" she barks. "You know his majesty doesn't like his whores malnourished."

You feel your heart jitter as you regretfully take your hand away.

"Yes, I'm sorry," you mumble, and turn to make your leave, when something catches your foot.

You fall onto the carpet, dropping some of your laundry.

"Oh no, I'm sorry!" Eala squeaks, ducking under the table to help you.
You're about to glare at her, when she tucks an apple into the green dress, bunches it up and puts it back in your arms. You stare at her in surprise, and she gives you a smile.

"Get off the ground, whore, you'll dirty yourself," the guard orders, and Eala quickly complies.

You move out from under the table and hurry out of the room with a lowered head. Finally, you're alone.

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You bite hungrily into the apple, retracing your steps from last night. With only one wrong turn, you find yourself back on the ground floor.

You look around, wondering where to go now. You recognize the way you came from the great hall, and decide to head in the opposite direction.

There are more guards and servants around now, but they pay you little mind. As you walk through the maze of hallways, you begin to realize how hopelessly lost you are. No way will you find the courtyard at this rate.

"Pardon me." You step in the way of a servant boy, who's carrying an armful of firewood. "I'm new here, and I need to find the courtyard."

He looks down at the laundry in your arms. "Are you sure? Shouldn't you be washing that?"

You feel your patience wearing thinner and thinner. "No. I need to find the courtyard."

He gives you a suspicious look, but gives in. "Right along this hallway. Take a left. Pass by the kitchens, and it'll be right there."

"Thank you." You smile sweetly.

He gives you a nod and keeps going on his way.

Practically running now, you follow his directions until you reach a wooden door that opens up into the courtyard.

It's a shadowy place, surrounded on all sides by palace walls. There are five doors around it in total. One opposite you, next to some training dummies. Two on the left, then the one you came through, and a gate that leads further outside on the right. There are some crates stacked in a corner, behind which you dump the laundry.

Now where is that weaponry? You'll just have to try the doors and see if you find it.

You go to the opposite door first, following the logic of the training dummies being beside it. When you pull on the handle, however, you find it to be locked.

You rattle on it harder. It doesn't budge. Of course not. Of course you can't just get lucky and-"Need any help there, lass?"

You swing around to see a middle aged man making his way through the gate. He's carrying a crate, which he sets down with the others, before straightening up and wiping his brow.

"Did someone forget to give you the key?"
He looks friendly, strolling over to you. His clothes are dirtied, his skin weathered, as if he's had to do a lot of outside labor.

You immediately slip back into your role. "Yes! I'm new here, and I broke something so I was sent here as punishment. They said to polish every single weapon in the armory, but I don't even know where that is!"

"Now, calm down, lass." He grabs something from his belt and holds it up. It's a ring of keys. "I can unlock that for you."

With a nod toward you, he inserts a key into the lock, turns it, and pulls the door open. You almost can't believe that it would be so easy.

Looking inside the dim room, you can see rows and rows of gleaming metal. Axes, spears, swords, daggers, bows. This will be so perfect.

"Huh," you hear the man remark behind you. "They don't seem to have given you any sort of tools to clean with. Don't worry, I can help ya out. Wouldn't want you to suffer for a small mistake."

"No, I'm fine." You turn to him with a smile. "You've helped me enough! Thank you!"

"Nonsense!" He clasps his hand on your shoulder. "Let me get that for you. Let's show whoever sent you here that they can't get you down!"

He turns and walks back out from where he came.

You watch him leave, then quickly enter the weaponry. You're in awe at all the beautiful shows of craftsmanship, but you can't allow yourself to admire them all. You go over to the daggers, your weapon of choice. They're the easiest to conceal, after all, and they get the job done.

You grab one and shove it into your apron, before quickly turning to leave. Just as you step outside, however, you see the man come back into the courtyard. He's holding a bucket of water, a brush, and a rag.

"There you are, lass," he sets it down in front of you. "This I use for the horses, but right now, you need it more."

"Thank you," you mumble, hoping he'll just leave now.

He doesn't, instead peering into the weaponry behind you.

"Now that's a lot of blades," he realizes. "No way you'll get through them all by yourself. Come, I have a bit of time before I must get back to work. Let me help you."

He picks up the bucket again and walks inside.

"Really, no, I can do this myself," you protest, thinking how you just left Eala alone up there. Anything could have happened by now.

"Nonsense," he says again, and sits down on a wooden stool. "Here's how we'll do this: You bring me the weapons and I'll scrub them clean for ya. Then you can dry them off so they're nice and shiny and put them back on the rack. We'll get done in no time."

You feel your heart sink. Will you really have to polish Loki's entire collection of weapons before you can get back?
Yes. The answer is yes.

Feeling absolutely dismal, you bring this annoying man an armful of weapons, wait until he scrubs them clean, then you dry them off and return them to rack. By the end of it, there's dirt and grime, even old blood on the brush and the rag, but the blades are all gleaming nicely.

Exhausted, you finally step back outside, and realize to your further horror that the sun as moved quite a bit across the sky.

As the man re-locks the door, you quickly excuse yourself and hurry back the way you came.

You rush through the hallways, only slowing down when you pass a guard. Finally, finally, you see the familiar guard at Loki's bedchambers.

You slow your speed and walk over.

"She's inside, right?" you dare to ask.

"Otherwise I wouldn't be here," the guard replies drily.

You nod and reach for the door, deciding to knock twice before pulling it open.

Eala is sitting on the sofa, her head already turned in your direction, a nervous look on her face. No wonder asking herself why you took so long.

You step inside and close the door behind you, relieved that nothing seems to have happened.

"Sorry, Eala," you begin, coming over to her. "Things did not go according to-

Before you can take another step, someone grabs you from behind, pulling you against them in an unyielding grip.

"Oh, kitten. What a bad girl you've been."
Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

Seems like some of you are actually enjoying this filth I've written :D
Thanks for the kudos, comments, and bookmarks! Here is one more chapter before I spread the upload date a bit further apart to keep a regular schedule. Idk, is once a week too rare? I'm trying not to stress myself with this, so let me know how often you'd like an update.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"Oh, kitten. What a bad girl you've been."

Your body is frozen in complete fear. You look at Eala, betrayal in your eyes. She returns your gaze with one of guilt.

You can feel Loki's breath on the back of your neck. His hand slowly slides down your body until he has found the dagger you've hidden in your apron. He pulls it out and holds it to your throat, causing your heart to hammer harder against your ribs.

"Did you truly think you could betray me?" he asks in a low voice.

Tears threaten to well up in your eyes. After everything you've done, he's still here, still in control. You keep looking at Eala.

"Why?" you get out through gritted teeth.

She lowers her gaze shamefully. "I told you I wouldn't disobey my king," she mumbles.

"So you get him here, knowing full well he'll do horrible things to me?" you practically shout.

"I came here on my own," Loki corrects. "As you can imagine, I was not pleased with your disappearance. The replacement you left me is... not quite the same."

You wonder how he can make jokes in a situation like this.

"But I suppose, if that is what you wish for..." He grabs a fistful of your dress, pressing the knife into your back, and walks you to a chair. He pushes you onto it, and with a wave of his hand, ties you to it by your wrists and ankles.

You glare at him, hating how he exudes power, how he is three steps ahead of you at any given time.

Loki makes the dagger disappear from his hand and sits down next to the treacherous Eala. His hand moves to her back, gently caressing her.
She sits stiffly, staring intently at the floor.

"Doesn't she look pretty?" Loki purrs, looking over to you. He's smiling a lecherous smile, and you know he's doing this just for you.

"Let her leave," you demand. "I forced her into this."

"Yes, she told me." Loki's hand moves to her hair, affectionately playing with it. "I'm touched by your concern for her, but my chambermaids don't mind me nearly as much as you do."

"Only because they're too scared to say so," you insist, feeling your temper rise by the second.

"Is that so?" Loki looks completely undisturbed, stroking over Eala's cheek now. "Are you afraid of me, servant?"

Eala is still completely stiff and staring at the floor, but her expression shows just how flustered she is.

"She has a name, you know," you call over before she can answer.

"So do you, yet I do not know it either." Loki's green eyes move to you briefly, before he returns his attention to Eala.

"Her name is Eala," you growl, wishing to be able to break free of your bonds. "Let her go."

"And why would I do that?" he asks innocently, and then he has the audacity to lean in real close to her, pressing his lips to her neck, all the while staring you right in the eyes.

Eala squeaks at the contact, a shudder running through her.

"Look how uncomfortable she is!" you practically yell, pulling on the ropes.

"Are you uncomfortable, Eala?" Loki asks, grasping her chin and turning her face to him, hovering so close that their lips are almost touching.

She's trembling all over; you can see her shoulders heave with each breath.

"You- Your majesty..." she breathes, barely audible to you.

Loki's hands land on her knees, sliding up her thighs, until he pulls her onto his lap. His green eyes are right on you, a cool smile on his lips when Eala puts her hands on his leather covered chest and leans her head on his shoulder.

You are furious, shooting him deadly glares and wishing he'd set on fire.

He doesn't break eye contact with you, only smirking wider while his hands slide over her body, down her back, grabbing her ass, until she lets out a soft moan.

"The only one uncomfortable here..." He grins now. "...is you."

You grit your teeth and make a point of looking away. Fine. This is great actually. At least it's not you on his lap, his hands all over you.

"Your majesty!" you hear Eala gasp.

You glance back over and see that her head is thrown back, Loki's mouth on her neck, his hands
pushed under the lacy bra to cup her breasts. It's a delectable display, and you feel your own cheeks warm up involuntarily.

"No," she breathes, writhing in his grasp. "I'm not worthy of this. I'm not- ahh!"

She grabs onto his shoulders, moaning and grinding her hips against him.

You can't look away now, watching like a deer caught in headlights.

Loki yanks her bra and gown over her head, leaving her bare chested. His hands return to her breasts, his mouth moves to her shoulder, where he bites down slightly.

His eyes meet yours again, and you feel small and powerless all of a sudden, watching in abhorred fascination as Eala writhes in pleasure on his lap.

"My king," she gasps. "My king, please, I do not deserve your touch! I am not a noble lady, nor a beautiful seductress! I'm not worthy of you!"

You wonder if Loki gets turned on by hearing her tell him how unworthy of him she is.

He keeps nipping at her, caressing her with his skillful hands, all the while giving you lust filled looks.

You are beginning to feel aroused watching them, but you'd never reveal that.

"Eala..." Loki says in a low voice, his hands dipping into her panties.

"Yes- your majesty?" she squeaks.

"You're going to take me. This is your punishment."

You give him a pleading look, but his gaze remains without mercy.

"...Yes, your majesty," Eala whispers obediently.

He pulls on her panties and she helps him take them off. His fingers push into her, loosening her up. You can't see much of her face, but you know she's scared.

You keep silently pleading with Loki, but he remains stoic, coldly staring at you. You know this is your punishment, too. An innocent servant girl you pulled into this is going to suffer in your stead. Only guilt will be left for you.

Finally, Loki's eyes move away from you. He draws his fingers out of the softly mewling Eala and loosens his pants, drawing out his hard cock. Without much further hesitation, he pushes her down and impales her.

She makes a pained sound, her hands clenching against his shoulders. Still, she doesn't resist when he pushes her further until he has filled her completely. His eyes move back to you as he does this.

She's whimpering softly, no doubt in horrible discomfort. You don't think she would have been as wet as you were when he pushed inside. Maybe this was even her first time.

His hips roll and he begins thrusting into her, completely ignoring her pained yelps.

His eyes are full of cruelty, full of hatred, full of lust. And it's all directed at you. You have no doubt he's imagining that he's driving himself into you instead.
You squeeze your legs together, remembering the feeling of him inside you. How can you be so turned on by something as horrid as this?

Eala fades from your perception and you imagine it, too, getting fucked by him. Riding him like you did just a couple hours ago. Every time he thrusts into her, you practically feel it.

Your lips move, mouthing his name.

His eyes widen slightly. Then he narrows them, giving you a look as if to say: *If you want to be hurt like I'm hurting her, that can be arranged.*

Your body feels hot, and you hate yourself for it.

Eala is still obediently bouncing on his cock, making a bit more pleasured sounds. Loki drives himself harder into her, grunting as he chases his release.

The spectacle goes on for a little longer, until Loki lets out a snarl and finishes inside of her. She goes limp, sagging against him.

For a moment, he catches his breath. Then he shoves her off his lap and rises, pulling up his pants.

"Leave," he orders without looking at her.

"Yes, your majesty. Thank you, your majesty," comes her breathless answer. She grabs the discarded lingerie and covers herself with it as best she can. She walks stiffly, almost limping.

When she leaves, something inside you feels broken.

Loki walks over to a table with a pitcher and pours himself a drink before returning to the sofa. He empties half the goblet before looking back at where you're sitting, still tied to the chair.

"My guards have been scouring the city tirelessly, looking for your group of traitors," he begins to speak. "They've found nothing yet, as you'll be happy to hear."

He looks to the side, taking in a breath.

"You don't realize what I want to do to you," he says, much quieter. "How much I hate you for thinking you could kill me. How much I want to hurt you for it. But I won't yet. Not here, not now."

He empties his goblet, looking back to you.

"Tell me where they are. Where I can find them."

You're still soaking in self-hatred. You feel defeated. Ready to give up.

"They've probably left by now," you mumble, averting your eyes under his scrutinizing gaze. "They will assume I've been tortured."

"Tell me regardless," Loki demands calmly. "Or their assumptions might prove correct."

"What will you do with me after?" you ask hoarsely. Information is your only leverage.

He stands up to refill his cup. "I have yet to decide. Our agreement is off the table. Don't think your body can save you again."
"Can't you just... Let me go?" you suggest hopelessly. "I'll tell you what you want. You've already taken my pride and my home from me. I'll live on the streets in shame."

He turns to you, slowly, holding the goblet forgotten in his hand.

"If you expect me to feel sympathy for you, kitten, you've got the wrong perception of me."

Kitten.

"Please..." you whisper, tears brimming in your eyes. "I've made a mistake. I realize now I'm nothing against you, and I've been humiliated for thinking it. I let you do things to me. Is that not enough for you to gloat over?"

He takes a step toward you. "Tell me where they are."

"We had a camp at the edge of Asgard," you begin. "Right where the forest meets the universe. We trained there. Me, and four others. We love Asgard. Enough to keep it from someone like you. Your father, Odin. Thor. They would have been preferable to someone like you by a long shot. But they're gone. They can't save us, and so we thought we'd save ourselves.

"We trained ever since you took the throne. Months, just preparing for this one mission. I was selected. We all agreed I might be the most appealing to you. At least, I was able to play the part well.

"You know the rest. We underestimated you. That was the mistake. And then... I underestimated you once more. And here I am. My life ruined. Almost ready to die now."

He takes another step closer, narrowing his eyes in interest, the wine in his hand a long gone memory.

"Almost?"

You nod. "I wish... I wish I could tell them. That we made a mistake. I don't know where they are, but I think they're going to try again. To kill you. I want to tell them to hide. That you, regretfully, have the crown secure atop your head. It will take a greater force to dethrone you than four ambitious rebels. So, until then-

You smile sadly.

"-all hail King Loki."

He's standing right in front of you, his green eyes darkened by the shadows in his face.

"Perhaps... there is a way you can tell them," he contemplates. "A public event. A gathering of all who can come, where I tell Asgard about your miserable little attempt at rebellion. You will be there, beside me, kneeling by my throne, showing everyone what I made of you. You'll get to stand up and speak. You'll get to say what you just said. If your cohorts are there, watching, they'll get to wonder whether you have betrayed them, or whether I have simply... broken you."

You shiver at the softness of his words. Cold, and yet merciful. As are his eyes.

You wonder yourself, which is the case. Were you broken? Or was this your own betrayal?
"And then what will happen to me?" you dare to ask.

"I told you, I have yet to decide," he repeats his previous answer. "I suppose, if you play your part well, I-"

There's a knock at the door, interrupting his words.

"Your majesty, your meal has been prepared in the dining room," a female voice calls out.

He stands still for a second. Then he turns away from you. "Come in for a moment."

To your surprise, the ropes fall off your wrists and ankles in that moment.

A new chambermaid enters, older than Eala, but still young by the king's standards.

She curtsies. "What do you wish for, your majesty?"

He steps aside to give her full view of you. "Bring a suitable dress for my guest. She will join me for my midday meal."

She dips her head- "Understood, your majesty. Right away- " and leaves the room.

You look at Loki, who is running his fingers through his hair, pushing it back.

"You haven't eaten today, have you?" he asks without looking at you.

"Not really," you mumble, taken aback by what you can only assume is a stroke of kindness.

There is silence for a while, before he speaks again. "You are different. So different from my chambermaids."

He pauses, turning back to look at you. "I could have any of them at any moment. They would not refuse me. They would weep, they would scream, but they would not resist."

You look at the floor, pained to think back to what he did with Eala. She really just sat there and let him take her, all the while saying she didn't deserve him.

"You, however, keep resisting me, while at the same time crying out and begging for me, begging for my pleasure."

His boots appear in your field of vision.

"When you look at me, your eyes are screaming for me to take you. To grab you, to have my way with you. You are begging for ruin, for my sweet, sweet poison to pour over your lips, for me to drive you into the ground and destroy you. You loathe me, you fear me, but more than that, you loathe and fear yourself."

He takes ahold of your chin, bringing your head up. You keep your eyes downcast, trembling slightly.

"You yearn for my rage. For my punishment. I can hear it in each your breaths. Hurt me. Destroy me. Break me."

Each emphasized word matches one of your shaking breaths. Hurt me. Destroy me. Break me.

Loki. Break me. Hurt me. Destroy me. Kill me. Kill me softly. Rip my heart out. Hurt me. Hurt me
badly. I need you. Please hurt me.

You feel his breath on your cheek as he leans down.

"Sh sh sh sh," he soothes. "It's going to be alright. You need to eat now."

Chapter End Notes

I have about fourteen chapters already written out, and a number more planned. I hope the story gets better and better as it goes on, and I can guarantee that it gets even smuttier ;)

The dress is beautiful. A brilliant turquoise and a light fabric that brushes down to your ankles. It shows only a hint of cleavage, only subtly draping over your curves. It's a look of pretend innocence.

It was delivered with matching velvet flats, but sadly no undergarments. Luckily, you aren't too worried about that factor.

There's a tentative knock at the bathroom door. "Madam, the king wishes me to comb your hair."

Your eyes move up to your reflected face and realize your hair is sticking up in all kinds of weird places.

"Come in," you sigh.

The chambermaid enters with a comb and a brush, and after guiding you over to a stool, begins to tidy out your hair. You wait patiently until she's done, which does take quite a while. By the end of it, your hair looks as beautiful as the dress.

"There, doesn't that look good!" the servant admires her work. "The king will absolutely love it! If you sway your hips a little, he'll tear that dress right off you!"

You feel your pulse flutter. "I don't think so."

"Oh, come now, dear," she coos. "There's no need to look so glum. I'm sure the king is quite fond of you."

You laugh hollowly and walk out of the bathroom.

Loki is waiting for you, smiling slightly when you come in.

"My, don't you look delicious, kitten," he says, as if it were the normal thing to say.

You have to force yourself to keep walking.

He accepts your silence and opens the door, ushering you into the hallway. The guard is still outside, but she doesn't follow as you and the king walk to the dining room.

***

It's bigger and cozier than the one you were in this morning. There's a long table in the center laden with different dishes of light food. On one end of the room, a fire crackles in a fireplace.
You immediately walk over to the table, already eyeing the food. It looks and smells great, making your stomach growl. There are piles of steaming vegetables, crisp meat, toasted bread, and a sauce to tie it all together.

You're about to sit down in the next best chair, when Loki's arm snakes around your waist. He guides you over to a larger chair at the head of the table, where he takes a seat and pulls you onto his lap.

Your eyes widen, and you struggle against his grip, but he holds you still.

"There, there, kitten," he murmurs into your ear. "Just stay calm."

Your mind is reeling with wild thoughts. What's he planning? Why is he doing this?

You watch as Loki picks up a morsel of food with his fork and holds it in front your mouth. "Try it."

"No-!" you want to protest, but he pushes it against your lips.

It's so warm, and the sauce is already trickling into your mouth...

You give in and take it off his fork. As you chew it, the luxurious flavor fills your mouth and you close your eyes to enjoy it further.

"Do you want more?" Loki asks, already picking up another piece.

"Yes, please," you whisper, letting him feed it to you. You almost moan at how good it is.

"Which do you want to try next?" he asks.

"This one," you point to what you want, and he gives it to you. This time, you sigh contently.

Maybe your emotions were a little heightened because of your hunger. Loki is being so kind now, his arm around you so comforting. He hasn't even taken anything to eat for himself yet.

That's how it continues for the next few minutes. You point, and he feeds it to you. Sometimes his hand slides up your waist a little, caressing you. That's when you would make small sounds of happiness—because of the food, of course, not him.

"Kitten, if you don't stop making those sounds, I'll have to sit you on this table and eat you instead," he warns suddenly.

You feel your face heat up and you go completely still in his arms. You realize just how it must have felt for him—you, moving about on his lap, giving off soft moans...

Loki begins eating for himself now, leaving you to sit in silence on his lap and reflect on what he just said. You feel a lot more relaxed now, and allow your mind to wander.

How would it feel? To have him put you on the table and use his skillful tongue to pleasure you? To make you writhe and call out his name, to simply surrender yourself to him?

You fidget slightly on his lap, feeling the arousal grow at your core. No, that can't be; one statement of his can't get you aroused. Maybe it's just the food. It was very good food, after all.

"Pet," you hear the low rasp of his voice in your ear. "If you don't stop your squirming, I will make true on my threat."
You freeze. *Please do*, you want to say- but you don’t, because your pride stands in the way.

What would it take for him to do what he just promised, without you being so blatant as to disobey his wishes?

"My king," you say.

"Yes?" His voice is husky. "Do you want more food?"

"No, I'm good," you decline. "I just wanted to ask if I might be allowed to leave and get something. You see, the servant didn't bring me any undergarments to wear and after switching clothes with Eala, I didn't have any this morning, so-"

With a *clack*, Loki drops his cutlery onto the table.

"You haven't been wearing undergarments all day," he says, voice strained. "And you didn't tell me until now?"

Not waiting for a reply, he forcefully turns you around and lifts you onto the table, shoving the plates out of the way without care.

He pushes the skirt of your dress up and parts your legs, sitting back down on his chair in between them.

You shiver, feeling exposed under his hungry gaze.

"So you were telling the truth," he remarks. Then his expression darkens with his usual combination of rage and lust. "You shouldn't make it so easy for me to destroy you."

He leans in and his lips land on your thigh. You draw in a sharp breath, feeling the arousal leaking out of you.

He grazes you with his teeth and you whimper. His hand massages the flesh of whatever his mouth doesn’t reach as he slowly kisses, nibbles, bites, squeezes, licks, and pinches every inch of your legs. It becomes torturous after only a moment, but he draws it out until you’re a shaking, wet mess.

He pulls back, finally, skimming his fingers up and down your thighs as his gaze returns to your dripping cunt.

"This was a mistake," he speaks, his voice full of emotion. Of the need to hurt you, and the need to pleasure you. "If you think this will be fun for you, that I won't hold you in my hand completely by the end of this, you are a naive, foolish girl."

Foolish girl. That’s you. You’re far too aroused to be cautious.

He suddenly grabs your ankles, scooting closer and pulling them over his shoulders.

You quiver in anticipation, his cool breath hitting your wetness. He has yet to touch you there, where you really, *really* need to be touched right now.

"What do you crave?" he asks, still staring at your glistening mound. "What do you crave most in all the nine realms?"

"You, Loki," you whisper, then quickly correct yourself. "You, my king."

"I can tell when you’re lying, you know," he murmurs. "And you’re not."
For a moment, your mind spins. Can he really just know what's truth and what's lie? And if he can, does that mean he can know whether something is true even if you yourself don’t?

You are torn from your thoughts when Loki leans in and licks up your thigh, pressing his tongue hard against your flesh. You whimper in desperation, your skin having already been prickling with heat since the beginning.

"You smell so delectable," he rasps. "And it's all for me. This belongs to me. You belong to me now. I won't let you go."

You are so, so aroused you can't bear it any longer, when finally, finally he presses his face against your wet folds. You feel the bridge of his nose, his soft lips, and it's almost too much already.

His hands grip you hard, holding you against him, as he lets your arousal coat his face. Then his tongue slides up your slit, pressing hard against your throbbing pearl, and your legs spasms.

You almost fall back onto all the plates as his tongue licks you with quick, vicious strokes. Your legs are trembling, arousal gushing out of you while you make helpless noises.

You try to squirm from his grasp, overwhelmed and overstimulated, but Loki growls and holds you tighter. He moves away from your clit and licks around it, before moving lower and teasing your opening. He's going at it with the ferocity of a starved animal, making sounds to match.

You wail and whimper as once again he tortures you endlessly before eventually pushing his tongue inside you.

His nose is pressed into your curls and against your clit while his tongue delivers vicious strokes to your walls. Your hips buck as you cry out his name, flailing around on the table for a handhold. Plates and cutlery fall to the floor with a clatter, thankfully not breaking on the soft carpet.

You arch your back and thrust against him, feeling him drink up your juices as if it were the most divine nectar. His tongue delves into you again and again, and with his nose bumping against your clit, you feel yourself flying to the brink of orgasm.

"Loki, I'm going to—"

Just as you say this, he draws back, leaving you empty and throbbing with need.

Tears spring to your eyes and you slump flat against the table, feeling your orgasm ebbing fast out of your reach.

"You don't get to cum unless I want it," he instructs darkly. "If I wanted, I could do this for hours, and there is nothing you can say to sway me."

You make a miserable sound and he leans back in, beginning to lick you again to build your pleasure up anew.

Your hips move against him as you writhe on the table, causing more dishes to fall. You endure another denial of your orgasm before you start begging, tears streaking down your cheeks.

"Please, Loki, please let me cum! Please, my king?"

He ignores you, keeping you in his grip as he starts sucking on your clit. You scream out, pure raw pleasure coursing through you, yet never enough to push you off the edge. He always knows exactly when to draw back, when to keep you bucking against empty air.
You're begging the entire time, not caring that you're getting hoarse, or that he isn't listening.

"Please, majesty. Loki! Please let me cum! ...I- I'll do anything you say, majesty. What do you want? I'll be your little slut, okay? I'll do whatever you say! Let me- Let me cum please. Please, Loki!!"

You scream out when his teeth graze over your swollen and hypersensitive button. Every single touch is now far more extreme, but it feels so good at the same time.

"Plea- Please... my king!" you wail. "Let m-me cum and I'll return the favor! I'll suck you off... while you... sit on your th-throne, and I d-don't care... if your guards are wa-watching, majesty."

As soon as you've said this, Loki jerks his head back.

"Damn it, pet," he growls, his lips glistening with your slick, his eyes sparking with sheer, violent lust. "You are truly the filthiest harlot in all of Asgard."

You are too far gone to take offense. If anything, his words turn you on even more. Despite the lack of touch, you still feel the pleasure zap through you with every second.

"Go ahead, then," he says. "Cum."

For a second, nothing happens. Then it's as if this one word, this little command, jolts through your body and sends you flying off the edge.

You scream, arching off the table as your muscles contract. Your body practically spasms from the force of it, a flood wave of intense pleasure ripping through your every limb. It's the best orgasm you've ever had in your entire life.

By the end of it, you're lying limp on the table, gasping and full of bliss. You must look utterly debauched, but so does Loki.

He licks the slick from his fingers, then wipes it from his mouth. His own need is bulging in his pants, his eyes full of vicious hunger.

You smile at him, feeling so... happy. You expect him start fucking you right there on the table to sate his own need- and honestly, you are still aroused enough for round two- but he doesn't.

"You can't expect to say those things and let me forget about them," he says, his gaze burning over your disheveled form. "You're going to have to make true on all of those promises."

"You liked what I said, didn't you, my lord?" you gloat.

He doesn't answer. All he does is grab you by the front of your dress and yank you off the table.

You stumble against him, your legs too weak to support you. Around you, is the aftermath of your explosive passions. Food is spilled everywhere, bowls and plates lying upturned.

"Sorry about that," you apologize, actually feeling guilty.

"The servants will handle it," Loki dismisses you, dragging you away from it and toward the door.

"Are you really taking me to the throne room?" you ask.

"Shush, or I will have your wicked little mouth gagged," he warns, continuing to drag you toward the door.
You feel renewed excitement at the idea, but decide against provoking him.

He opens the door and pulls you with him into the hallway.

***

Walking through the palace now is completely different from when you were dressed in servant clothes.

Every guard you pass salutes to their king, every servant drops into a bow or a curtsey.

You recognize the route he takes. Indeed, he is bringing you to the throne room.

There are guards outside who open the doors for him when he approaches.

"Make sure no one else enters," Loki says to no one in particular and pulls you inside.

The doors close with an echo and you see now that there are several guards inside as well. They are guarding every exit and entrance, but they keep their gaze and their face straight, focusing only on their duties.

Loki pulls you straight toward the throne, but you stall behind to admire the golden architecture, now that there are no guests here.

Tired of pulling you, Loki simply lets your hand go and walks up the steps to take a seat on his throne.

Sitting there, legs hanging open, he looks very much like an imposing ruler. A king atop a golden throne, staring down at his lesser subjects.

You slowly move up the steps toward him, then sink to your knees at his feet. You feel nervous, if not for the intimidating position you're in, then because you know the guards are all around you, able to perceive whatever you might be about to do.

You're aroused still, and the adrenaline thrumming through you makes you bold.

You lean forward and press your lips against the king's cold hand.

"Your majesty," you say, giving him doe eyes. "Let me worship you."

He has masterful control over his expression, but his knuckles clench against the throne's armrest. You feel triumphant.

You shuffle in between his legs, staring at where his leather pants bulge out with his need.

You feel so aroused, and you don't waste a moment's more time, before drawing his pants open and yanking them down enough for his erection to spring free.

His cock is swollen and throbbing, leaking precum from its tip. Again, you can't wait a moment longer.

You lick over both your palms, then reach out to cup his balls. With your other hand, you stroke over the top of his shaft, while licking the precum where it has run down the bottom.

Loki's breath becomes labored instantly, his whole body tense, as if he's trying desperately not to shove you down on him.
You moan. He tastes salty and bitter as you'd expect, but more than that, he tastes forbidden and intoxicating. You take the head into your mouth and suck lightly, while your hands are still fondling and stroking him.

You realize by the way his cock is twitching with each renewed touch that this must be torturous for him, but listening to his choppy breaths is the most arousing thing you've done today.

Slowly, your mind foggy with desire, you push yourself down on his length. Your hands are still continuing their ministrations, but you are determined to get all of him into your mouth as quickly as possible.

When the head bumps against the back of your throat, you're almost halfway there. You keep focusing on breathing, which is easier now that you're relaxed and in control, and push further.

It begins to slide down your throat, and it's quite painful, but you keep going nonetheless. Drool is dripping down your chin and tears have sprung to your eyes, but finally, finally, you've reached his base.

From the corner of your eye you see Loki's hand hovering beside your head, as if he's preparing to pull you off him the second you start choking.

You pull back slightly until he slips out of your throat, but that's as far as you go. You keep him in your mouth, softly sucking and licking at him.

Now Loki does grab hold of your head, gently massaging it, but also holding it still.

Grunting slightly, he begins thrusting into you, his need outweighing any concern he might have had.

He pushes you down on his length again, and your eyes roll back in your head. You're glad he's taken over. For one, it means you can just relax and enjoy the soft caress of his fingers. For the other, it feels so good to be jammed onto his full length, held down by his hands with nowhere to go, in a room full of guards.

You feel so completely powerless whenever he thrusts fully down your throat, that you feel yourself simply gushing new arousal. He's using you to pleasure himself, and even your need to breathe is a second to his need for release. You absolutely love it, and you love it even more that he's giving off strangled sounds, unable to control himself.

You tilt your head back and begin moaning with each his thrusts, vibrating around him. He's becoming wilder, more desperate to cum, shoving you down on him again and again.

You have to brace yourself against his thighs, feeling so completely used and on the verge of ruin.

"Fuck," he mutters, slamming into you with unhinged need. "What a little slut you are, hm? You like this, whore?"

You let out an indiscernible sound, which is fitting, because what you're feeling right now is indescribable. You just know that you love it.

"Fuck, pet, I'm gonna cum-" he gasps, his voice changing in pitch. "I'm gonna cum in you while my guard are wa-"

He draws out of your throat and you feel spurts of his hot seed filling your mouth. You are completely lost to pleasure, and so is he. You suck on him, milking out every last drop as he thrusts
It's so much, it's warm and it coats your tongue with that intoxicating taste. You let it slide down your throat like it's pure nectar, savoring every bit of it until he draws out of your mouth.

You lean against his leg, listening to both of your rapid breathing. He doesn't bother pulling his pants back up, and you watch as his spent cock slowly softens.

His hand is still in your hair, lovingly massaging your scalp. You reach for his wrist and bring his hand to your mouth, kissing his palm. He lets you, and when you lick up his fingers, he pushes two of them into your mouth, stroking over your tongue.

You moan and begin to suck on them as if they were your pacifier, closing your eyes and feeling complete relaxation wash over you. You have no doubt Loki feels the same way. You listen to his breathing as it slowly steadies.

Both of you sit like that for at least a minute, silently steeping in post orgasmic bliss.

At one of the heavy doors opens just a little, and one of the outside guards pokes their head through.

"Sir, you have several of your officials requesting an audience," they say into the silence.

Loki slowly shifts, drawing his hand back and pulling up his pants.

"Kitten, go and rest in my chambers," he tells you. "One of my guards will escort you back."

You slowly stand up, disappointed that you have to leave so soon, but you realize that the king is a busy man.

Without looking at him, you go down the steps and toward the guard. They open the door further and you step outside.

In the hallway is a group of important looking people, some carrying scrolls in their arms. The guard ushers them in and closes the door behind them, then begins to walk, leading you back toward the royal bedchambers.
I've gotten a lot of writing done this weekend, so here is the next chapter! Mainly though, because I love seeing your guys' comments and reactions. Thank you <3 and keep 'em coming! (No, but thank you honestly. I didn't think I'd have people enjoying my work so soon.)

You fall asleep on Loki's bed, not caring if you're even allowed there. By the time you wake up, the sky has already turned red with the setting sun, but you're still alone in the room.

You stand up, walking stiffly over to the window. As you stare at the glittering city, you're filled with melancholy.

Your life has become a mess. You have no way of getting back to your friends, and in the near future, you'll have to announce to them that you've surrendered to the king.

The king, whom you've been granting sexual favors in exchange for not being tortured and thrown in the dungeon.

You sigh, leaning forward and resting your head against the glass.

How long will this continue? How long will you have to give away your body so that you can escape pain, hunger, and misery?

You don't think you'd mind doing this for a little while longer. Loki, despite being unpredictable and oftentimes cruel, is someone who you can talk to, someone who provides you with your basic needs.

You think about all the people out there, in Asgard and elsewhere, who might have to sell their bodies in less fortunate circumstances. All their suffering is far greater than what you're experiencing, and you shouldn't feel sorry for yourself.

You step away from the window and look around the room. The light is getting lower, but you don't feel like lighting any candles or torches.

You walk around the perimeter, opening every drawer and closet you come across.

The desk drawers are all locked. In the closet, you find a huge selection of royal outfits, some with more armoring, some with more elegant green fabric, some simple and casual. You let your hands skim over the leather as you rifle through them. One of his nightstands is also locked. In the other’s top drawer you find some spare candles, a small vial of an unknown substance, and a book. In the bottom drawer are a pile of ropes, a set of manacles, and a blindfold.

You stare at your findings, feeling halfway bashful and halfway giddy at discovering something secret. You wonder how many women have been tied up in these. You also wonder if you are one of those women, seeing as he has tied you to a chair twice and manacled you to the sofa once. Then you wonder why he didn't just chain you to his bed to punish you. Why he had to drag Eala into this.
You close the drawer and explore the bathroom next. You find some various cleaning and styling products, but no dirty secrets.

You begin to get a little antsy the more the room darkens, and go to his desk to light a small candle there.

There's empty parchment on the desk, as well as ink and a quill. You think back to yesterday, when you were bent over and surrendering yourself to the king. A lot has happened since then. You wonder what tomorrow will bring.

You tear off a piece of parchment and dip the quill into the ink.

Frederikke
Matej
Leander

Please forgive me. Stay safe.

You put the quill down and hold the parchment into the flame, sending a prayer to your ancestors in Valhalla to pass on the message and give you guidance.

Once that's done, you feel a little better. You pick up the candle and walk around the bookshelves, seeing if there is one you could pass the time with.

A lot of the books have strange writings on the spine and you can't seem to be able to pull them from the shelf. You have a hunch these books contain magic. There are other books, too, legends and stories, poems and plays, some even in languages foreign to you. You wonder if some might even come from another realm.

While you're busy being filled with childlike wonder, there's a knock at the door.

"Miss? I've brought you dinner."

It's a young male voice you don't recognize.

"Come in," you call out, stepping into the middle of the room.

A servant boy enters, carrying a tray of a very simple meal. Bread, cheese, and water. You don't mind, however, seeing as you already had a great meal earlier.

"Where do you want me to put it down?" he asks, letting you decide.

"Uh..." Your eyes sweep the room. "On the small table next to the sofa please."

It's the most comfortable spot, besides the bed, of course.

As he sets it down, you steal a glance out the door. Indeed, it's still guarded.

"It's so dark in here. Let me light some candles," he decides, and sets to work.

"Thank you," you tell him once he's done, and with a quick bow, he takes his leave.

You return to the bookshelves, pick the next best one, and return to the sofa to eat while you read.
The story is fairly interesting. You expected it to be about great heroes slaying beasts, but instead it's about a sorcerer who wished for infinite wealth and power, then ended up turning his most beloved to solid gold.

You are quite enthralled by the story as you pick your way through your food. So much so, that you don't put it down as you get yourself ready for bed.

You have nothing to wear besides your dress, so you just leave it on as you crawl under the covers of Loki's bed. It's so soft and comfortable there.

You keep reading for hours, not very tired after your nap.

*And so, the sorcerer made his way up the treacherous slope, hoping the flower of legend was at its peak. His foot did slip on jagged rock many a times, which led him to utter curses that might have split the mountain, had there been magic behind them.*

You're startled out of the world of fiction when the bedroom door opens without warning.

It's the raven haired king, shadows dancing over his tired face. He doesn't spare you a glance, going straight for his alcohol.

You wonder how stressed he might be, and whether that has led to a dependency.

"You know, it's not good to depend on the drink to take your problems away," you say into the silence.

Loki downs his chalice, then laughs drily.

"Don't tell me you're concerned for my well-being," he mocks.

Now that he says it, you realize how ridiculous your worry was, when you're the one who wants him dead in the first place.

"Perhaps you're right, though..." he ponders, putting the drink down. "Perhaps there are other ways to take out stress."

His eyes land on you, and you feel like a little prey animal all of a sudden.

"Haven't you done that enough today already?" you ask, your voice rising in pitch somewhat.

He laughs again, approaching the bed. "Are you afraid of me, little kitten? I thought you liked this."

"Afraid? No, never," you lie. "I'm just busy at the moment. You see, the sorcerer is just climbing up the moun-"

Loki plucks the book from your hand and puts it on the nightstand.

"You're still dressed," he notices. "Were you waiting for me to remove it for you?"

You feel the heat crawl into your face. "No, I just have nothing to wear to bed. You haven't given me any-"

"Who says I want you to be anything but naked?" he questions, effectively shutting you up for a moment.

"You, uh, you are still clothed as well," you stammer, staring at his leather covered chest rather than
"Mm, and you'd just love to see me naked, wouldn't you?" he teases darkly. "Well, that's a privilege you'll have to earn, kitten."

"I- No! I never." You stop realizing it's pointless to argue with someone so skilled at twisting your words.

Loki's form shimmers, and his leather armor is replaced with soft green sleepwear. He looks... enticing somehow. Like, if you just reached out your hand you could let it slip under his shirt and...

"Giving me lusting stares won't sway me, kitten," he tears you from your thoughts. "Now, get out of that dress or I will do it for you."

Your face is burning as you quickly get up and begin pulling on the dress. It still feels strange to completely undress in front of him, especially since you still have not a scrap of underwear on you. You feel so completely vulnerable as you stand naked before him, that you shiver slightly.

His gaze sweeps over your naked form, clinging to each your curves until it returns to your face.

"I'll have to teach you not to be so shy in showing me what is mine," he says and steps forward, wrapping his arms around you and pulling you against him.

You expect him to feel warm, but his skin is surprisingly cold through the thin fabric. Not in an unpleasant way, but it does startle you for a moment. You lean your head against him, feeling for the first time the definition of his muscles against you. Once again you want to push your hands under his shirt and feel them, but realize he will stop you if you try.

"You've been such a bad girl today, trying to kill me," Loki's voice grumbles in your ear as his hands cress up your back. "Perhaps I should bend you over my knees and really make sure you won't do it again."

You shiver with excitement, feeling one of his hands move back down to give your ass a squeeze.

"...but you've also been so good, taking my entire cock in your mouth," he adds. "Perhaps I should reward you. Perhaps I should let you take control and show me what it is you crave."

Once again, you feel excited at the idea. Maybe you could just... be gentle with him.

"But you'll have to choose, kitten." Loki draws his arms back and steps away from you. "Which will it be? The punishment, or the reward?"

*Easy choice*, you think, but then you realize it isn't. You crave both. You want him to hurt you, and then you want him to be gentle with you. Your body is alight at the idea.

"Do I... have to choose?" you ask pleadingly.

This causes him to smile. "Oh? You want both? Well, kitten, I'm flattered, but I really do need an answer soon."

You squirm. "Then... then I want... I want to..."

"The longer you stall, the more you make me think you wish to be punished." His pupils have blown, eyes dark in the flickering candlelight. "Are you simply too afraid to admit it?"

"No, I don't- I don't want to be punished," you splutter. "I choose the other option!"
Loki just smiles for a moment, then he chuckles. "I see. Alright, well I'm tired. I should go to bed."

"What...?" you're confused. "But-!"

"Kitten." Loki has already turned and walked to the other side of the bed. "You should know by now you don't simply get what you want from me. I just wanted to see what you'd choose."

Feeling utterly disappointed, you crawl under the covers with Loki. You're about to reach for the book when all the candles in the room go out.

"You should be grateful for the chance to rest, kitten," he says as he gets comfortable. "Perhaps soon there will come a night where we will do little sleeping."

Once again, a brief bit of excitement fills you, before you accept the truth in his statement. There is nothing left to do except resign yourself to sleep.

Chapter End Notes

Okay, this was a shorter chapter. If you lovely people want, I can just post the next one, too :P
Your dreams replay the day's events, but with that typical level of surrealism that differentiates them from reality. At one point, you dream you're back between Loki's legs at the throne, but this time, instead of guards, Frederikke, Matej, and Leander are there, watching.

You turn to them, full of guilt and shame, desperately trying to explain everything, but Loki grips the back of your head and yanks on it so it falls back against his crotch. You go silent when you feel something in your mouth, forcing its way out. You gag and retch until it falls out, and then you scream, because it's a horrible slimy snake. You want to run, but now your limbs have turned to solid gold, heavy and immobile.

You panic until your eyes wrench open and you wake up sweating and shaking in someone's arms.

Green eyes are the first thing you see. Your heart is beating rapidly, and the fact that they're so close doesn't help you calm down.

As reality returns to you, you realize with shock that your hands are clutching Loki's shirt in a death grip, and that his arms are around you, holding you against him.

"So- sorry," you stammer, releasing him and trying to smooth out the wrinkles you caused in the fabric.

"Bad dream?" Loki asks calmly. You nod. "I hope I wasn't in it."

You smile a little. "You were, but not the reason I almost ruined your shirt."

"No?" Loki looks surprised. "Then what's got you so riled up?"

You feel calmer already, his soothing voice and his comforting embrace doing wonders. It's strange, really.

"You know," you mumble. "A snake."

"Right." His tone isn't mocking at all. "Is there a reason you are so afraid of them?"

You squirm a little. "I'd prefer not to talk about it."
His green eyes are boring into you, but he doesn't push it further.

You're so close to his face, you can see every detail. Every angle, every slope of his regal countenance. Your eyes are drawn to his lips again, but you feel too cautious to attempt to kiss him.

"How late is it?" you ask instead.

"The sun is just now rising," he answers, one of his hands moving up to play with your hair. "I must rise soon, but you have no such obligation. All you must do is make my morning a little less sour than it usually is."

You twist in his arms to lie on your back. You think you can manage this, as long as he goes slow and doesn't hurt you.

"Alright," you agree. "How do you wish me to do that?"

"Oh, there are so many ways," he says, his voice dropping low in a way that causes your spine to tingle. "Why don't we try to add something new?"

You glance at him. "And what would that be?"

He draws his arm out from under you in order to sit up. "Discipline."

Discipline.

The word rings through your head and there is a bit of apprehension there with it. Discipline. That could mean a lot.

"Now, you know I like you being obedient," Loki begins to explain. "But I've been rather lenient on your freedoms so far. I want to see how far you're willing to go for me."

A test. You don't like tests. You slowly sit up, too, looking at him with uncertainty.

"I don't have much time, sadly, so we'll only get to brush the very surface of what might be in store for you," he adds.

The surface. Maybe you can handle the surface. You give him a nod. "Okay."

"Okay what?" he asks immediately.

For a moment, you panic, not knowing what to say. Then you remember.

"Okay... my king?"

By the expression he's wearing, you're filled with uncertainty again.

"Hm, my royal title is nice, pet, but I was hoping you'd say something else," he prompts.

Your cheeks flush and you feel like a schoolgirl who just delivered the wrong answer.

"M- master?" you choke out, the word not feeling right on your tongue at all.

Loki smiles, which is enough of an answer for you.

Your body already feels overheated, and you haven't even started.

"Now, how do you feel about surrendering me your mobility?" he asks.
You think back to the ropes you found in his nightstand, and how excited you were at the idea.

"You've already tied me to a chair and a sofa, so I don't think asking now has much of a point," you joke.

The king's expression hardens. "You may think it fun to test your boundaries now, pet, but I warn you not to underestimate me."

That shuts you up immediately.

"Lie back down," Loki instructs, speaking calmly, but with a hint of danger.

You do, and he takes your wrists to guides them above your head. You feel the magical ropes wrap around them, tying you to the headboard. Then he brings one of his hands to cover your eyes, and you feel a blindfold of black fabric appear there.

You begin to realize what a bad situation you just got yourself into. You won't even be able to see the things he'll do to you. For all you know, he could be about to cut open your body and dissect your organs.

"You're afraid, aren't you?" you hear the low murmur of his voice. "I quite like that. I wonder what you're expecting me to do."

You don't dare say anything for fear of giving him ideas.

You hear him shift, which is enough to send a new thrum of nervousness through your limbs.

"Hm? Tell me, pet," he coaxes. "Are you expecting me to hurt you?"

You swallow fearfully. "N-no," you lie.

The comforter is pulled off you suddenly, exposing you to the cold air. You shiver.

"Yes, you are, pet," you hear him growl from somewhere above you. "And why do you expect me to hurt you? Do you think there is a reason I should?"

"Please don't," you whisper, absolutely terrified at where this is going.

"Now, pet, I didn't tell you to beg," he scolds. "I asked you a question, and you'd best answer it before I really do hurt you."

You choke back tears. "I... I don't know, I just thought... you'd be the type of person who'd enjoy that... ma-master."

You hear him laugh mockingly. "Oh, did you figure that out so soon? I'm so proud of you."

His hand moves to your left nipple and gives it a hard pinch.

You gasp, flinching back slightly.

"I like you like this," you hear him say, his voice interlaced with desire. "So afraid. So compliant. So needy. Not so long ago, I thought I might just have you killed--that you're more trouble than you're worth, but then you reminded me again just how depraved you truly are. How I can have you sprawled on my table and have you promising to do filthy things with me in a matter of seconds. And you did do filthy things with me, you did them so well, choking yourself on my cock as if nothing mattered more to you than my pleasure."
His hand dips between your legs, skimming over your heated core. You're dripping from his sinister words, and now you push your hips against him, seeking friction.

"Ah, ah, pet, lie still," he warns, giving your nipple another sharp tug. You cry out, but it only arouses you more.

His fingers move lazily over your clit, stoking the fire in your belly as he continues to talk.

"I want to see how much discipline you have over yourself. I want you to stave off your release until I permit it. And I won't be helping you this time. My touch will not stop when you get close. Your mind is the only thing that will keep you from a punishment you will not be looking forward to."

"What... what kind of punishment?" you ask nervously.

"Shush, pet. As long as you're good, it won't happen," he calms you, but his voice holds the promise for something bad, something he really wants to do to you.

He draws his hand back and pushes your legs apart, moving in between them judging by the dip of the mattress.

"Mm, pet, this excites you, doesn't it?" he teases, running his fingers through your slick lips, before pushing three of them inside of you.

You're afraid. You're afraid you'll fail. You're so turned on, and you know how skilled he is, you fear you won't be able to control yourself. You try to steady your breathing as his fingers curl and rub against your pleasure spot.

"There, kitten, doesn't that feel nice?"

It does, and that worries you. With your vision robbed of you, each his touches is far more intense. You writhe on the bed, mewling softly as you try to keep calm.

Loki plays you like an instrument, working you quickly toward orgasm with his skilled fingers.

"There now, don't cum, pet," he reminds you, no doubt feeling that you're close.

"I can't do this!" you gasp, teetering on the edge and having to deny yourself.

Every second your mind is screaming for you to give in, to find pleasure, and it's all you can do to resist it.

You writhe wildly, trying to get away from his fingers.

"Stay still, pet," you hear the warning growl. His free hand holds down your hips, while his thumb is still delivering short strokes over your clit, his fingers rubbing and pushing against your walls.

"Please, Loki," you wail, knowing you won't last much longer. "I can't!"

"Yes, you can," he says gently. "Be a good girl for me, kitten. You don't want me to hurt you, do you?"

You stifle the sounds coming out of your mouth and focus back on your breathing. For a short while, this serves as a distraction, but not for long. The pleasure is far too overwhelming.

When Loki leans down and takes one of your nipples in your mouth, you simply surrender and let yourself cum. You gasp out, arching your back and clenching around his fingers.
Loki draws back, removing his fingers from inside you. You can hear him licking off your slick.

"Mm, pet, I'm disappointed," he says, a fake pout to his tone.

You almost feel a twinge in your heart. "I'm sorry! Please, master, I didn't mean to."

"Oh, but I think you did," Loki contradicts. "You liked coming on my fingers, didn't you?"

You make a nondescript sound, caring more about what's next.

"What... what are you going to do?"

"I'm going to have to teach you a lesson, pet." He still sounds theatrically disappointed, but you know he's very much looking forward to this.

He shifts, and you hear the clank of metal. After a few more moments, his hands move to your breasts and something cold and hard clamps around your nipples, first one, then the other.

You whimper and squirm, the feeling not quite painful, but definitely intense.

"What is that?" you ask fearfully.

"Don't worry, pet, nothing harmful," he assures you.

He moves around again, doing things you can't determine from sound alone.

"Now, I have something else for you," he begins, settling back between your legs. "If you could see what it is, you'd definitely be protesting right now."

You shiver at the darkness in his voice, and then again when something cold, smooth, and slippery presses against your asshole, then slowly pushes inside you.

"Gahh-! Loki!" you cry out at the intrusion, arching off the bed as your fingers grips the sheets.

"Shh, shh, shh." He places a soothing hand on your belly and pushes you gently back down onto the mattress.

You take deep breaths. Once again, you're not in pain, just discomfort. The object wasn't very big or long, but it's foreign and hard getting used to, sitting inside you.

"Such a good girl," Loki praises, hand smoothing over your stomach. "Such a good whore."

Once more, he reaches for something.

Your breathing quickens in anticipation. You're dripping now. Had he not tied and blindfolded you, you might never have realized how much you like this.

You feel something skim across your skin and you shiver, breath bated. It feels leathery, and when Loki whacks it lightly against your cheek, you realize it must be a riding crop or similar.

"I told you, I would hurt you, pet," he whispers, trailing it along your jawline.

At this point, you are more aroused than you've ever been before. You want him to hurt you. For real now.

"Does this excite you?" His voice is closer to you now, and you can feel the tips of his hair tickle
against your face.

You crane your neck up, seeking contact with him. He draws back, laughing lightly.

"Yes," you breathe. "Please hurt me."

The crop whacks against your parted lips, barely enough to sting.

"Patience, pet." He sounds amused. "I'm not sure you can handle this all at once."

You're simply gushing arousal, letting out a whining noise. Loki gives a tug at one of your clamped nipples, making you gasp.

"Now, pet, tell me again why you deserve this punishment," he instructs.

"I've been a bad girl, master," you say immediately. You know you're going to die of shame later for participating like this, but right now, you don't care.

"Exactly." The crop smacks across your cheek, this time enough to sting quite a bit.

You draw in a breath, feeling so damned aroused.

"You came without my permission." It whacks over your other cheek. You bite your lip. "And now I'll teach you why you shouldn't do that."

When he smacks it over your already tortured nipples, you arch off the bed and let out a drawn out moan of pure pleasure.

"Hm, pet, something tells me you're enjoying this," he scolds with amusement. "This is supposed to be a punishment."

You feel a light whack against your clit and groan in satisfaction.

"Stars, Loki," you breathe, flooded with emotion. "I really thought you were going to cut my fingers off or something, but this is amazing."

You hear nothing in response, as if you startled him into silence.

"Loki?" you ask, getting worried. "Master?"

Then you hear his low, genuine laugh.

"You make me forget we are not lovers," he says, and you can hear the smile in his voice. "What a quaint little thing you are, kitten. You seem to love everything I do to you, even when I mean it to scare and hurt you."

You have trouble fully understand the meaning behind his words, as you are too far gone in lust, but you realize that there is suddenly a sort of affection between you and him, similarly to when you sucked him off on his throne.

A harsh smack against the side of your leg brings you back to reality.

You hiss in pleasure. He always keeps the level of pain low enough to be pleasurable, when he could easily just slice through your skin.

There are more whacks against your legs, several on the inside of your thighs. You writhe around,
greatly enjoying this. You realize there are sure to be streaks left on your skin for hours.

"Pet, you're dripping all over my bed sheets," he remarks, a playful scolding to his voice. "If I'd known just what sort of a whore you are, I might have simply chained you to my bed from the beginning and kept you there until your body expired."

You shiver at his dark words, wondering whether they are an exaggeration at all.

"You don't know what you do to me, pet." His voice drops even lower than it already was, almost into a predatory growl. "I want to fuck you until you scream for mercy. Until you pass out from sheer exhaustion. Until I've laid claim to your tortured body again and again, until there is no doubt in your mind who owns you, body, mind, and soul."

You have barely a moment to register his sinister wishes before his massive cock slides into you, burying itself to the hilt.

Your eyes roll back under the blindfold. His cock fits so perfectly inside of you, stretching you to your limit and reaching so deep inside. And now, with your nipples clamped and the plug in your ass, you feel every possible way of pleasure your body has to offer.

Loki groans, gliding easily in and out of you with how slick you are. He angles his cock to bump up against your g-spot with languid strokes, making you feel utterly drowned in bliss. You jerk your hips to match his rhythm, letting sounds of pleasure flow freely from your lips.

"Oh, kitten, you look so perfect like this," he sighs, going purposefully slow as if to savor the moment. "So perfect, drunk on my cock."

He sounds drunk on pleasure himself, making just as many noises as you are. It's like two animals rutting and in heat. You can't think of anything but the way his cock rams so deliciously against your pleasure spot, sliding along your walls at a steady pace.

Your whole face is flushed, your breathing erratic, and you feel so strangely happy, you almost smile.

Very rapidly, Loki begins to pick up the pace, brutally slamming into you while making animalistic noises. Your whole body rocks and shakes on the mattress, and his name mixes with your moans.

"Fuck, Loki, that's so good," you drawl. "Fuck, that's amazing!"

You wrap your legs around him and he lifts up your hips to slam even deeper.

"You like this, slut?" he snarls. "You like taking your master's cock in your tight little cunt? You want to cum, whore? Hm? You want to come on my cock?"

"Yes!" you scream, drowning in absolute pleasure. "Stars, Loki, yes!"

"Then cum, slut. Cum and milk my cock of its seed. Take it all in."

A few more thrusts, and you cum hard around him, squeezing his cock as it rocks through you. Then, all you feel is bliss.

He doesn't last very long after that, grunting and emptying himself inside you with a few shallow thrusts. Slowly, the sound of heavy breathing fills the room. He draws out of you and collapses on the bed beside you.
You feel some of his cum running out of you. For the first time, you don't mind it being there. In your womb, in your cunt, dripping down onto the mattress. You feel full and sated.

"Seems I failed in my attempts at punishing you," Loki says after a while. "I'll have to try again next time."

"Can't control your urges for long, my king?" you ask, stupid with bliss.

You feel the mattress dip and then whack a stinging streak on the top of your leg. The pain is a bit more noticeable now that you are no longer heated with lust.

"Ow," you say slowly, though it doesn't hurt too much.

"Best learn how to hold your tongue, pet," Loki lectures. "It'll save you a lot of pain. Sadly, I cannot teach you that lesson now. I must soon return to my duties."

The mattress dips again as he moves about. You feel him slowly draw the plug from your ass, then remove the clamps. Finally, the blindfold and ropes disappear with a wave of his magic.

You sit up and blink into the morning light. Looking about the bed, you see no remnants of what just transpired. The sheets are no more tousled than they would be from normal sleeping, and all the toys have been magicked away.

Loki is sitting beside you, leaning against the headboard. He looks calm, beautiful and somewhat intimidating, like he usually does. His raven feather hair is sticking to his sweaty skin in some places, and his eyes are half closed in contentment.

You get the urge to snuggle up to him, but you feel like he's not the kind of guy to cuddle after sex. At least, not with someone like you.

Instead, you decide to get your aftercare another way.

"Was I to your satisfaction, your majesty?" you ask, as if you really were a paid whore.

He glances over at you. "Do you really need to ask that?"

You smile. "Guess not."

You expect that to be that, but he says more.

"You're different from the other whores I've had. Probably, because you aren't one, not truly. You're an assassin who I coerced into this arrangement. You enjoy the things I do to you, truly and from your own heart. It's not a role you slip into to please me. It's not something you do out of fear. You're simply perfect for me all on your own."

You almost blush like a schoolgirl from the compliment. Did he really just call you perfect? For a moment, you are thrilled. Then you have to remind yourself that all he meant by that was "perfect for his pleasure."

You also lean back against the headboard and close your eyes. "Well, I hope I have relieved some of your stress, my king."

"You almost make it sound convincing that you care," he retorts. "Don't worry, pet, I don't need you to play the part of my emotional caregiver. I've become quite good at dealing with that myself over the centuries."
You open your eyes, watching him as he drags himself out of bed.

"Sounds lonely."

He ignores you and heads for a bathroom. A few minutes later, he returns, clad in his usual leather armor.

"Breakfast will be brought to you," he says. "Use whatever you wish in here. I'm hoping to perhaps join you for the next meal, but that is no guarantee."

You nod. A day to relax, then. "May I leave the room at all?"

He pauses on his way to the door. "I'd prefer you didn't after what happened yesterday. I don't want you tempted to flee. My guard, Brenna, will be outside as always. Talk to her if you need anything."

"The rude one?" you call after him as he strides out the door.

"You'll manage." With that, the door clicks shut and you're alone.

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You heave yourself out of bed and go to the bathroom to clean yourself up. You do notice streaks left on your thighs, but they will probably fade soon enough.

Who knew you were the kind of person who'd enjoy something like this? Had you really begged him to hurt you? Had you really enjoyed the feeling of something filling your ass as his cock pounded into you?

You shudder as you remember the sensation. What was becoming of you?

You leave the bathroom and realize you have nothing to wear. You look around, but the dress isn't where you dropped it. You aren't just about to stay here buck nude for anyone to walk in on, so you once again rifle through Loki's wardrobe.

After a more thorough search, you find a light cotton tunic that hangs loosely off your frame and manages to cover your decency. You still have no undergarments, though.

Sighing, you sit back down on the bed and read until a servant arrives with breakfast. It's a plain meal once again, but there are fruits with it that are quite tasty.

Eating, reading, wandering about the room. It gets boring quickly. You don't want to go out and talk to Brenna, but the more time passes, the more you feel like you'll go brain dead if you don't.

You slowly walk toward the door and cautiously open it. The guard immediately reacts, going to stand in front of you to block the way.

"What do you want?" she asks gruffly.

"Am I allowed outside the room at all?" you ask.

"Not without the king's permission, no." Her gaze is sharp and intimidating.

"Okay, but, what if we do something together?" you offer. "I'm bored, you're probably bored. What do you like doing? Sparring? We can spar. I'd need clothes, though."
She sneers. "A whore like you, sparring a trained guard? I think the king would be furious if I beat his property into a pulp."

"Right..." This was never going to work in the first place. "I could totally take you, though. If you remove the armor and give me some clothes, we can have a go."

"How stupid do you think I am?" She sounds annoyed. "I'm not letting you escape. If the king wants you in there, you stay in there."

She jabs the tip of her spear at you and you jump back. The door closes in your face.

Guess being bored is your only option. You continue pacing about the room and occasionally picking up a book again until you are brought lunch.

For a moment, you are hopeful that Loki might join you again. He doesn't. You ask the servant about him and they tell you he's too busy.

The hours pass, the sun sets, you eat dinner alone. After finishing that, you decide to just go to bed early. You leave the lights on, and get under the blankets.

When the door opens and Loki returns, you practically jump out of bed in greeting.

He smiles slightly upon seeing you dressed in nothing but one of his tunics, so excited to see him again.

"Hello, pet," he greets you. "I'm afraid I've had a rather busy day. But, you will be happy to hear that I have arranged a public event one day hence, where you can warn your accomplices about me. If that goes well, I might release you from your duties after that."

You feel giddy at the thought of getting your freedom back. Only one more full day, and it could happen!

"You know, I was really bored today," you say to mask your excitement.

Loki, to no surprise, heads over to his table to pour himself some alcoholic drink. He only answers once he's had a drag.

"You can always ask for anything to be sent to the room," he reminds you, but both of you know that's no real solution.

"I want to go outside, tomorrow," you say softly. "Please? Just the gardens or something. I need my muscles moving. I asked your guard to spar with me, but she refused."

"Hmhm." He finishes his drink, seeming distracted. "I'll see what I can do, pet."

"Is something the matter?" you're becoming slightly concerned. "Do you need a massage or something?"

His eyes darken and he puts the goblet down. "You know what I really want, kitten. I couldn't stop thinking about you as I performed my tedious duties. I just wanted to return to my chambers and bury myself between your legs. I've never thought about a whore that way. You're dangerous, kitten, as is expected of an assassin. If you're in it for the long game, poisoning me with your sweet cunt, then you might just succeed. I'm glad to be rid of you soon."

At first, you feel kind of warm and fuzzy at the way he really thinks of you. Then, when he says that
last part, your mood crashes back down.

"You seem... paranoid," is all you can think of saying.

He laughs darkly and approaches you. "Oh, really, kitten; Do I?"

Right. You did try to kill him. Twice.

You take a few steps backwards just to keep a safer distance.

"S-so," you try to change that topic while he herds you into a corner. "It must be really stressful being king. You must be really dedicated and responsible to keep Asgard running. I guess, building giant statues of yourself is part of the deal."

Loki looks quite annoyed at this point. "Cease your babbling, pet; you don't know what you're talking about. Besides, you have proven more than the monument that I am worthy of worship. Now, get on your knees and do just that."

You put on a reluctant expression. "Do I have to?"

You don't feel nearly aroused enough to do a repeat of what you did on the throne.

Loki narrows his eyes. "Are you disobeying a direct order from your king?"

You flinch, squirming under his gaze. "N-no... I just... I'm not sure I can handle it. It was quite a strain last time. It hurt."

He narrows his eyes, looking confused. "And you think I care, because...?"

You gape at him in shock. "You... you want me to do it anyway? What-? Why-?"

Loki's lips draw into a mocking pout. "Oh, dear, it seems there's been a misunderstanding. You thought I cared for your pleasure, didn't you? Well, the reality is, you simply found everything pleasurable that I did to you. Until now."

Your muscles tense. Was that really the case?

Your head begins to spin. You thought he cared just a little bit--but no, that couldn't be. Why would you ever think that? Just this morning, he was intent on denying your orgasm. How-

"Dear me, you aren't developing feelings for me are you, pet?"

The way he says it is like a slap to your face.

"N-no, I just... I thought..." You don't know what you thought.

He waits for you to continue, and when you don't, he speaks again, his voice cold and demanding. "Kneel."

Feeling miserable, you sink to your knees, already reaching out to pull open his pants.

He watches you in silence, not needing to guide you as you pull out his slowly stiffening cock and give it a few pumps with your hand.

You like this cock, you just don't like who's attached to it. You begin to lick at the head while your hands unemotionally keep up their stroking. You just want this done with.
Loki's hands move to your head, urging you to put it in your mouth. You do so, reluctantly, and he thrusts against the back of your throat.

"I like you like this," he murmurs, sounding pleased with what you're doing. "So obedient."

His words trigger something in you, a spark of rebellion. You draw your head back, scraping his teeth along his length as you go.

He lets out a hiss and jerks out of your mouth. His grip instantly tightens and becomes painful, and despite avoiding looking up, you know he's angry.

"You want to play rough, kitten?" he threatens, yanking your head back.

You know what he's about to do, and you feel like it's preferable to doing this on your own.

"By all means," you say stiffly. "Be as rough as you want."

And he is. He shoves back into your mouth, forcing himself down your throat. You gag and retch, but he just keeps going, drawing back only on occasion for you to take a breath. With the force he's going at, your head practically slams against the wall behind you.

"Mm, do you like this, pet?" he mocks. "Is this what you wanted? Admit it, you're enjoying this. Why else would you provoke me?"

You are most definitely not enjoying this. It hurts, and you certainly don't like him getting any sort of pleasure from you. Your eyes are watering, drool is leaking from your mouth, and being brutalized against a wall is definitely not fun.

You just let it happen and wait for it to be over. That's all you care about at the moment. If you weren't so angry, you might have been crying, but you'd never be so pathetic. It's not like you should have expected anything different from someone like him.

"Mm, fuck, you look broken," he groans, as if that pleases him. "Are you going to cry?"

You look up at him now, throwing him the most murderous glare.

To your surprise, he's smiling. "There you are, kitten. There's that look I like. It doesn't have nearly the effect you think it does, though, when you're drooling around my cock."

He's infuriating! Was he trying to rile you up on purpose?

"Oh, fuck, I'm gonna cum, pet." His breathing is labored. "Do you want it? Do you want to swallow it all down?"

You roll your eyes. Just get on with it already.

"I think you do, pet. I think you want to swallow it like a good little slut." His voice rises in pitch and his cock pulses in your mouth as he thrusts in one more time.

Finally, you feel his hot release fill your mouth, and then he draws out with a satisfied groan.

You keep it in your mouth and glare at him with the full intent of spitting it all out on his boots.

"Ah, ah, ah, pet, don't do anything you might regret," he warns, breathing heavily while pulling up his pants.
You look down at his boots, then back up at him.

His eyes are wide, fearful that you might actually disobey him and ruin his fun.

For a moment, you feel powerful. Then the tides quickly change when he bends down and covers your nose and mouth with his hand so you can't breathe.

"Swallow." His eyes are merciless.

You obey and swallow down his cum. It tastes as you last remembered it, not too unpleasant.

Once you're done, Loki draws his hand back, but keeps staring at you.

"Interesting..." he says, his expression cryptic.

You stare back at him, no idea what he's referring to.

"Stand up," he finally says, walking over to his bed, where he sits down on the edge.

You do as he says, following after him. Once you're in range, he grabs your arm and pulls on it, so that you fall forward onto his lap.

"Hey-!"

You attempt to get back up, but he holds you still, positioning you so you are bent over his knees. You get the feeling you know what's about to happen.

Sure enough, Loki draws the tunic up and slaps you on your exposed rear.

You jolt forward, stifling a sound. It stings, but it also feels kind of good.

"Do you like getting punished?" he asks, rubbing over your ass. "Do you like being a little brat so that I lose my temper and hurt you?"

You scoff, mainly to hide how aroused you're beginning to feel. "It's not very difficult to make you lose your temper."

He hits you again, harder this time. You yelp, and already you feel yourself dripping.

"You're proving my point." His voice is low, and so delicious.

His hand is squeezing your prickling ass cheeks again, and of course he notices your arousal.

"So I was right. You like it when I hurt you. You like being afraid of what might happen when you disobey me. You're self-destructive, that much is clear."

Self-destructive. No, that can't be it.

You get torn out of your thoughts from another slap.

"Ngg, Loki..." you make a sound of complaint, trying to get off his lap.

"You're dripping, pet." He holds you back with his strong grip. "Don't pretend. You want more, don't you?"

Yes, you do. You just don't want to say it.
Another slap. You practically moan. It just feels too good.

You writhe on his lap when he spanks you again. And again. And again. You're sure to be sore by the end of this.

"I'm sorry!" you eventually get out. "I didn't mean to be a brat. You were just... being cold."

"Cold?" he repeats. "You want a taste of true cold?"

The hand on your ass is suddenly icy, and you don't know why. It feels so good, though, so soothing, and you let out a pleased sound.

"Yes! Stars, Loki, I need you!"

His icy hand slips between your legs and brushes over your clit. You yelp at the intense sensation, feeling so very much turned on.

"By the ancients, Loki! How do you always manage to do this to me?"

"Shush, pet." His icy fingers keep massaging you, never lingering long enough to cause any damage. "There is so much more I could introduce you to. So much more we could explore in the thralls of passion."

"Well, you have less than two days," you joke, then gasp when two of his fingers slip inside of you, bringing with them a strange news sensation against your heated flesh.

"Only if you're a good girl for me, kitten."

He thrusts his icy fingers against your pleasure spot and your whole body arches in pure ecstasy.

"Ah-! Loki!" you cry out, squirming and writhing against his fingers.

"Do you even realize how much I've already brought you to your ruin?" he asks darkly. "How you seethe with rage at my roughness, just to cry out my name in deep bliss not a moment later? Face it, pet, I could do anything I wanted to you, and you'd love me for it."

You groan and try to climb off his lap again. What he's saying is horrifying, and what he's doing to you with his fingers is so intense you feel like you can't handle it.

To your surprise, he lets you escape him.

You lie face down on the bed, your mind not quite catching up with everything that just happened.

Loki crawls over you, practically pushing his weight against you and pressing you into the mattress. You feel the leather against your skin, his hot breath against your ear. You can't move, completely enveloped by him.

"Let me tell you something, pet," he murmurs. "I always put my whores through a test. I want to see which of them have been pretending to enjoy me, and which have truly enjoyed me. I hurt them, and they scream and cry and beg for me to stop. Some do it silently. Some pretend they're still enjoying it. Some ask for more. I don't care either way; I care about my own pleasure, and that's it. In fact, I like seeing them break."

You feel like you're being let in on a dark secret, like he's confessing you his sins.

"You were right about me being cruel," he continues. "I like inflicting pain on others. But you,
kitten, you're different than them. You like pain inflicted on you. In a sick, twisted way, the universe has sent me my missing piece."

You don't know how to react to that. You. The king's missing piece.

"...But I also enjoy hurting you, even when you don't enjoy being hurt."

Now that's a real confession.

"I like seeing you afraid. I like seeing you miserable. I like making you feel worthless."

His voice has taken a sadistic thrill to it, one you are very cautious off. You try to squirm your way out from under him, but he's too heavy.

"When I say I want to destroy you, I mean it. I want to break you like a toy. I want to hurt you, then pleasure you, then do the same again and again until you can no longer tell the difference. I realize I shouldn't; I realize an obsession with you will lead us both to ruin, but then again, who's going to stop me? Certainly not you."

You feel trapped, trapped in the claws of a monster. This wasn't what you expected when you agreed to whore yourself out to him.

"You don't have to do that," you say, your voice strained from the pressure on your back. "I know you can be kind. I saw it."

"Kindness?" he repeats. "Is that what you mistook that for?"

He lifts off of you slightly, and you realize his erection had been pressing against you for a while now. His hands move to your wrists and pin them to the mattress, while his lips move to your neck.

You feel weak when he licks against your skin, and then you feel his teeth. He bites you hard, and it hurts.

You squeak, squirming underneath him, but all that does is cause him to grind himself against you. He doesn't stop until you are thoroughly bruised.

"Mine," he says with a satisfied sound. "Now be a good girl and stick that pretty ass up for me."

You wail in desperation, wanting to escape, but know he's far too strong. You stick up you rear, and you hate that you're aroused, that you want him inside you.

Manacles appear around your wrists, chaining you to the headboard. As soon as you're restrained, Loki's hands grip your hips. He yanks down his pants and prods his erection against you, letting it coat in your slick.

"You want me," he notes, sounding pleased. "You can't resist me."

He doesn't wait for an answer before he pushes inside you. You moan involuntarily as your walls stretch around him, welcoming him.

"We're such a perfect fit, wouldn't you say?" he asks, slowly dragging his cock in and out of you. "I don't think you'll ever find someone who can fill you up quite like I can. You'll always belong to me, no matter where you are. Isn't that right, pet?"

You are weak, weak and helpless. You can't do anything, not when your body betrays you to him.
"Yes..." you whisper, because it's true.

"Good." He snaps his hips, causing your body to jolt. "And you like what I do to you, don't you? You need this. To feel powerless. To be taken advantage of. In your sick little mind, this is what gives you pleasure."

He picks up the pace, the head of his cock pounding against you so nicely. You gasp from the pleasure now rocking through your body.

"Yes, yes I do," you answer, not even prompted.

He hums in approval and reaches around to pleasure you, as if as a reward.

Quickly, he works you up toward orgasm. Pleasure overtakes you, and then you shudder and squeeze around him, feeling so full and so good.

Loki keeps pounding into you until he finds his own release. It feels familiar by now, having him cum inside you.

When the restraints disappear and he draws out of you, you expect him to drop you onto the bed and move away. You're surprised when he doesn't.

He tugs the tunic you're wearing back down, then wraps his arms around your waist and pulls you onto your side. He's holding you against him, fitting your body to his. You feel that his armor has been replaced with his soft sleepwear, and you can feel the definition of his muscles against your back.

For a while, only heavy breathing fills the room. You're exhausted by now, and it's strange that he would want to cuddle like this. Still, it's comforting and you close your eyes.

Loki's cool hand slips under the tunic, playing with your breasts as if they were his stress toys. You let him, and eventually drift off to sleep under his constant caress.

Chapter End Notes

There, was that what you guys wanted? Don't worry, this isn't the filthiest chapter I've written by far. ;-) More highs, lows, and cold shower worthy scenes to come. But this will have to tide you over for now. Hope you liked it :))) (Also, your comments really make me smile)
Chapter Notes

I've noticed I write really long chapters, so I'm splitting them up. That way, I can post a bit more often and give you guys more organized chunks to read. Also, it will draw the story out longer, so you have more of it :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

You wake up aroused and with something lodged inside you. As the remnants of sleep fall off you, you realize Loki is still holding you in his arms, breathing against your neck, and that his hard cock is fully nestled inside you.

He isn't moving, probably not wanting to wake you just yet. One of his hands is holding you against him, the other is still under the tunic, cupped around your breast.

You wonder if he held you like this all night. Maybe he was never asleep. The sun is rising, though, so at least you got a good night's sleep before he decided to poke you with his morning wood.

You contemplate signaling to him that you're awake, but it's strangely erotic to feel him throbbing inside you. You also want to know what he'll do next.

To your surprise, he begins caressing you. His hand slips down to your belly, where he softly strokes you. Then he draws it out of the tunic and strokes your cheek, then your lips.

You close your eyes so he won't feel you blink.

His hand trails down to your throat, where he splays his fingers, feeling your pulse. Then his hips begin to move, rocking softly into you.

You hold your breath as not to make a sound.

"Pet, your heartbeat picked up as soon as you woke. Now breathe."

Your muscles tense and your eyes pop open. He knew you were awake the entire time.

"Did you want me to stay asleep?" you ask, feeling pleasure growing in your core.

"If I truly wanted you to sleep through it all, I would have drugged you," comes the disconcerting answer.

His hand slides to your leg and lifts it up, granting him better access to thrust into you. It feels good, and somewhat relaxing. You close your eyes again and just let the pleasure fill you. You feel like a doll, limp and only there for Loki's pleasure.

He's silent the entire time, the only sound in the room heavy breaths and the occasional quiet grunt. Loki doesn't seem intent on bringing you to climax, but you don't mind. You're still sated from last night, and the way he thrusts against your pleasure spot is good enough on its own.

He finishes inside of you and draws out, relinquishing you from his embrace. You take the chance to
turn around and face him.

He is really close. Were you to lean forward just a bit, the tips of your noses would touch.

He's looking at you, gazing into your soul.

You make me forget we are not lovers.

You can feel his every breath on your skin.

The universe has sent me my missing piece.

You bring your hand up, brushing one of the soot black strands out of his face.

I realize an obsession with you will lead us both to ruin.

Your hand traces along his jawline, your thumb caressing his high cheekbone.

But then again,

You close your eyes partway and slowly move closer, your lips parting to make way for your erratic breaths.

Who's going to stop me?

Your lips barely, just barely brush against his.

Certainly not you.

Loki jerks his head away and sits up. "I won't leave you here today. Tomorrow is the speech and I must prepare you. First, we will spar. You said you wanted to, and I could use the exercise."

Not looking at you or waiting for an answer, he gets out of bed and disappear into the bathroom.

You gape after him. "What...?"

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"I suppose you'll need clothes," Loki assesses.

"Yeah, I suppose," you agree, still confused.

"Then, let me..." He reaches out his hand and touches your shoulder. In a glimmer of green light, you're now dressed in a tight black leather outfit with some padding, and practical shoes. It doesn't leave much to the imagination, that's for sure, but you'll be able to fight in it.

"You mean you could have just conjured me clothes this entire time, and yet you chose to leave me naked for the most part?" is the first thing you can think of saying.

"I see nothing wrong with that," Loki responds with a smirk, assessing your new outfit.

He looks pleased with it and places a hand on your shoulder to guide you out of his room.

Brenna is there, guarding the door as always. She salutes to Loki immediately, bowing her head and clasping her fist over her heart.

"Good morning, your majesty."
"Have you been here all day and all night?" you blurt out before anyone can say anything else.

Loki's hand tenses on your shoulder and Brenna gives you a glare.

"No, I have the day shift," she says curtly.

"That's still a long shift," you mumble. "Twelve hours?"

"I take breaks, you little-" She cuts herself off before she can hurl insults at you.

"There are few guards I can trust the way I can trust Brenna," Loki explains for you. "Now come, we must get going. Brenna, follow us if you wish to see me humiliate my little assassin in a sparring match."

She smirks and starts following as Loki leads you down the hall. You aren't all too happy about her tagging along.

To your surprise, you end up in the courtyard with the training dummies. There's no one there at the moment, so it might make for a good arena.

Brenna takes her place at the entrance, and you take a few steps away from Loki, stretching your muscles.

"Now, I don't want to truly hurt you," Loki begins, and you already know that's a lie. "So I will hold back, just for you."

"There is no need for that, your majesty," you respond drily and get into stance.

Sure, he may be stronger than you, but you've been training for a very long time, and you doubt he can be as nimble.

"Alright, then come at me." Also in stance, Loki beckons you with his hands.

You'd love to. You run at him with full force and send a flurry of blows his way. You're surprised at his speed, blocking or dodging every one of them.

He returns the blows, but you deftly dodge them all, doubting your strength against his fist.

You twirl around him, kicking with your legs, aiming for weak points with your hands.

It seems Loki stays more on the defense, assessing you before making any real moves. When you swing at him again, he catches your fist and twists your arm back.

You quickly spin around and deliver a kick against the back of his knee. It buckles and he has to weaken his grip to steady himself. You pull free and attempt to punch him in the face.

He just barely jumps out of the way and lunges at you, knocking you flat on your back. You grunt from the impact on the hard stone floor, but it only takes you a second to scramble out from under him and kick him in the chest. He lurches back and you attempt to jump to your feet, but he grabs your ankle and yanks you back to the ground.

You don't want to get pinned, so you twist around and kick him with your other leg. You manage to shove him back enough to get free and stand up, but he pursues you closely.

You run away to duck behind the training dummies for cover, reassessing the situation. Loki is more dexterous than you thought, and you're pretty sure he has more stamina.
He's taking his time approaching you, smiling confidently.
"You can run little rabbit, but you can't escape me."

Brenna laughs. "Go get her, your majesty!"

You narrow your eyes. Rabbit is a downgrade from kitten. Kittens have claws.
You jump out from behind the dummies and run at him, wanting to punch the smugness off his face.

As you swing, pain flares up in your shoulder and your punch falls short. You wince, seeing that
Loki got to you first.
"Don't be so predictable, kitten," he says, still smiling.

Then you head-butt him with all your strength and he loses his footing, falling backwards to the
ground. A little dizzy from the impact, you plant your foot on his chest.

Loki is staring at you wide eyed, completely forgetting he could easily grab your ankle and yank you
down with him.

You are feeling the beginnings of a headache, and your arm will be pretty much useless for fighting
for the next day, so your triumph is short lived.

That's when Brenna whacks you in the back with her spear and you crash face first onto the ground
beside Loki. She helps him up, but leaves you lying in the dirt.

You groan, your headache now far worse. Thankfully, you broke the fall with your arms, but now
they hurt, too, as well as your back. You don't feel like getting up for the moment, the cold stone
soothing your aches.

Loki's boot nudges your side, compelling you to stand up. You ignore him.
"You're not too bad," he says, as if you didn't have him on the ground just a moment ago. "But I
suppose you're too weakened now to go for another round. Pity."

You scoff and heave yourself up. "You have your guard to thank for that."

"You dare address his majesty that way?" she snaps, stepping between you and him.

You greatly want to avoid another encounter with her spear, so you take a few steps back. Still, you
do not want to play by her rules either.

You drop into an exaggerated bow. "My apologies, your exaltedness."

"Cease, Brenna," Loki calls out, probably before she can give you a concussion.

You straighten up and see that the king approaching you, Brenna reluctantly standing to the side.

"You look miserable," he observes. "Get yourself cleaned up. We will have breakfast after."

You hate that he looks like there isn't a single scratch on him.

Begrudgingly, you follow him back into the palace. He hands you off to a servant, who checks you
for damage and prepares a quick bath for you.
You get a set of new clothes, a low-cut blue dress that turns translucent over your legs, and finally some underwear—albeit lingerie.

You join the king for breakfast, and thankfully, he doesn't force you to sit on his lap.

You eat in silence, mainly just enjoying the luxurious food normally reserved for royalty.

Partway through the meal, a dark skinned woman enters the room, carrying a scroll.

"Your majesty." She curtsies without pausing her talking. "Please be quick, I have received the reports and they require your immediate attention."

You glance between her and Loki. She's dressed in muted colors, clearly not an important general or anything, but she seems to be important enough to boss the king around. You guess she's one of his advisors.

Loki slowly lowers his cutlery and then looks at her. "It can wait."

She takes a breath. "That is ill advised."

"I must prepare for my speech."

"This is more important."

You feel the tension grow in the room.

Loki slowly stands up. "Do whatever you must with those reports, but don't bother me with them. Must I remind you what happened to the last advisor?"

She stares at him for a moment, as if she can't believe how irresponsible he is. Then she shakes her head and turns to leave. "No, your majesty."

"What... what happened to the last advisor?" you ask as soon as she has left.

Loki pinches the bridge of his nose as if he's getting a headache and sits back down. "I killed him."

"No, you didn't." You stare at him in disbelief. "What happened?"

"He was being a nuisance." Loki returns to his food as if this conversation was about nothing more than the weather.

"A nuisance?" you repeat. "Like, a he-tried-to-kill-you-nuisance? Not a he's-annoying-nuisance, right...?"

You falter when Loki gives you a you're-an-annoying-nuisance-right-now look.

"So... He was being annoying and you just killed him?" you clarify, unable to drop this. "Just... Ended his life? Right there?"

Loki sighs. "If you wish to know the details, yes, he was pesterling me, and I drove a sword through his gut."

You grimace at the thought. "That doesn't sound like what a good ruler would do. See, this is why I tried to kill you. That makes me think... Why did you spare my life when you took his so easily? Oh, nevermind. You didn't want him to be your sex sl- mmpgh!"
A gag appears in your mouth, tied tightly behind your head. Your arms have also been restrained behind your back by what feels like smooth ribbons. You begin to struggle against them, but Loki's magic holds fast.

"There, that's much better," he says, looking pleased at what he did. "I think I prefer my pets when they cannot speak. And my, don't you look pretty like this?"

He smiles a sleazy smile and you glare at him.

You sit like this, throwing him murderous looks while he leisurely finishes his meal. Once he's done, he gets up and beckons for you to follow him.

"Come, pet, we'll prepare for tomorrow's event."

You make an angry sound.

He turns back to you and smiles again. "No, I think I'll leave you like that until you've learned your lesson. Come now."

Begrudgingly, you follow him out and to the throne room, getting a lot of weird looks on the way.

Chapter End Notes

I recently discovered that one clip from Tom's audiobook of The Red Necklace. I'm sure you all know about it already, but for those that don't, here it is:
https://youtu.be/dXb9wu9rq2I

This particular version has 3D audio, so if you have headphones you should put them on, close your eyes, and imagine Loki standing behind you.
"Tomorrow, when we're in here, I want you to kneel right there beside my feet."

He points to the place, having taken a seat on the throne. You walk over to him and sit down on your knees where he indicated.

"Yes, that looks very nice." He smiles approvingly. "Feel free to lean your head against my leg at any point."

You do so, having pushed down your anger far enough to participate in the dry run. You are still gagged and bound, and you have no doubt you look as much a sex slave as ever in that moment.

Loki's hand comes to rest on your head, mussing through your hair. "There, now isn't that a lovely sight? I'm sure your friends will delight in seeing you like this. So submissive for your king."

You decide not to take his words to heart and simply roll your eyes at no one in particular.

"Now, there's a few things I want you to do, pet," he continues. "Up until it is your turn to speak, you are to smile and cast your doting eyes on no one but me. Then I will stand to deliver my speech."

He does so, stepping forward as if to address an invisible crowd. "I will tell them about your pathetic attempts at rebellion, and then I will introduce you to speak. You may rise then, and briefly tell them how you regret your attempted assassination and how you're working hard to pay off your debt to me. Tell your friends to flee, praise me as your king, then sink to your knees again and plant your pretty lips upon my boots."

You cringe. That will be the most humiliating experience of your life. Kissing his feet, literally kissing his feet in front of all of Asgard, wasn't part of the deal.

You give him a disapproving look and make a few angry sounds from behind your gag.

He just smiles. "What's that, pet? I can't understand you."

You shake your head and say something you hope resembles "I'm not doing that!"

He seems to get the gist, because he sighs and sits back down. "It's either that or a public execution. Your choice, pet."

You still don't know what's better. Why does he have to be so unnecessarily cruel all the time? It's like he can't stand you being out of his control for even a moment.

In that exact moment, a guard bursts into the room, dropping to his knees in front of the throne.

"Your majesty!" he gets out breathlessly. "Some of your guards have refused to take their posts. If you don't go now, there might be a riot!"

You feel the atmosphere in the room change instantly.

"How many?" Loki snaps, standing up abruptly.
"About ten, sir, but they might rally more," the guard explains, keeping his gaze wisely lowered to the floor. "They're in the barracks."

"Gather more guards. Join me there at once." Angrily, Loki strides down the steps. While he does so, his form shimmers until there is a green cape flapping behind him, the curved golden horns on his head, and the spear Gungnir in his hands, symbol of his power.

"Yes, sir." The guard dashes off.

You make a small sound, hoping Loki might remove the gag before he leaves.

He stops walking, turns to you, and seems to make a decision. The gag and restraints disappear.

"Come with me," your king orders.

You get to your feet, too intimidated to question him.

He strides out of the room and you trail after him.

Loki practically kicks down the door to the barracks. The ten deserters are inside, sitting on their beds as if they were convening. They give him wary looks as he strides in, followed by you.

"To your posts at once!" Loki commands, his expression torn with anger. "Lest you wish me to execute every last one of you."

One of them gets to their feet, grabbing a short sword that was lying next to him.

"We demand better treatment!" He's by far more muscular than the king. "Give us back the posts and schedules we had under King Odin, or I have no qualm killing you right here!"

Some of the other guards have noticed you and are throwing you curious looks.

Loki laughs coldly. "You will obey your king, soldier. You do value the lives of your family, no?"

The guard's eyes widen, his muscles going stiff.

Loki begins to walk closer as if he has no fear, his voice soft and threatening. "You have a wife, no? A daughter? You know you can't kill me. And you best think hard before committing treason. What'll happen to them now, I wonder, hm?"

With a clang, the sword falls from the the guard's hand. His expression is that of a broken man.

An icy smile curls around Loki's lips. "Kneel."

Looking utterly defeated, he sinks to the floor, bowing his head.

Loki lets out a triumphant scoff. "Does anyone else wish to prove their stupidity?"

A woman jumps up, wielding her spear.

"I have no family to lose!" she yells and lunges at him.

Loki spins and with supernatural force whacks the weapon out of her hands with Gungnir. Her spear goes flying, forcing some other guards to duck out of the way, but she's still barreling at him, too close to stop her momentum. Just before she's about to collide with him, he brings his empty hand between them and her body lurches.
She's slumped against him, eyes wide, mouth gaping open as if she can't breathe.

Loki's expression is hard as stone. "Shhhh," he croons, bringing the hand with Gungnir to stroke over her back.

She coughs, and blood spills from her mouth.

You stare in horror at the spectacle, and so does everyone else. You can hear the reinforcement come up behind you, but they stop as soon as they see what's going on.

Loki waits a moment longer, then draws the dagger from where he drove it between the plates of her armor. Her body slumps to the floor, and Loki makes the dagger vanish, before turning to the new arrivals.

"Throw them in the dungeons," he commands, striding out of the room without so much as a side glance.

You stare at the body, then at the other guards. They're all as shocked as you are.

Tearing yourself away from all this, you turn and run after the king.

He's almost around the corner by the time you catch up.

"Why did you make me watch that?" you ask, feeling disturbed by his mercilessness.

"You didn't seem to believe I had really killed my previous advisor," he says casually. "I was also considering using you as my shield, should things go wrong."

You're so shocked, you stop walking, rooted to the spot.

Noticing, Loki stops, too, turning around to face you. He regards you for a moment before talking again.

"You know, something tells me you've never actually taken a life before. Did it upset you, when I took hers? When I drove my dagger into her chest and snuffed the light out in her eyes? Hm? Was that too much for you?"

You feel made fun of, but it's all true. You try to look angry, but you feel like your face looks more like you're about to cry, judging by Loki's mocking look.

"Hm, pet, you know what I'm thinking?" he saunters toward you, regarding you with pity. "I don't think you could kill me. After everything I've done to you, I don't think you have the guts to kill me."

He circles around you, placing a patronizing hand on your shoulder. "Oh, and to show you how sure I am of this, I'm going to give you back your knives."

He makes Gungnir disappear and holds them out in front of you. The knives you had with you that first night. With shaking hands, you take them.

His hand is still on your shoulder, and he gently steers you in a direction you don't recognize.

"Come, pet, let's go for a walk. The gardens sound nice, no?"

You don't care where you're going, just staring at the knives.
There is a painful squeeze around your heart. Something is happening, something you neither like nor understand.

It all started off with your weakness, your foolishness. You had failed to kill this monster and instead given yourself to him. Then you failed again. And then you had stopped trying. You let him do things to you that you should have fought against with tooth and nail, and instead you had liked them.

He is cold, cruel, and he always will be. He kills innocent people. He enjoys hurting you. Humiliating you. Degrading you. Using you. Breaking you. And you had... you had tried to kiss him. For some reason, you had tried kissing him this morning.

Sunlight hits your face. Your feet walk over grass. Loki's hand is still on your shoulder.

"Tomorrow, I will release you," he says, leading you through the gardens. "You saw what happened with the guards. Your little speech will quell any attempt at further rebellion, at least for a while. Play it well, pet, and you are free. I will miss your body, I admit, but I can always find another. In the end, you are too much trouble than you are worth."

You've reached a little creek, which you're walking along now. Despite the whirl of emotions inside you, the thought of freedom is strangely pacifying. You feel tranquil, listening to the soft ripple of the water.

"It's nice here, isn't it?" Loki's voice has softened. "I'm sad to realize I haven't been here since taking the throne."

You look around you for the first time. It's the very edge of the forest. The trees let enough sunlight in for it to still be warm. The grass around your shoes is lush and green. Birds are chirping in the trees. Bees and butterflies flit around the clover.

You take a deep breath of the fresh air. Loki twirls a strand of your hair around his finger.

"And I haven't been here with someone else in centuries," he adds, leading you onward. "You must be truly special."

You reach a pond, covered in lily pads with a few reeds on one side.

Loki stops at the edge of the pond, simply gazing over the twinkling water.

"I liked being here," he speaks. "As a child. Catching frogs and dragonflies. Hiding from responsibility. ...I would put the frogs in my chambermaid's drawers."

He smiles, genuinely smiles at the memory. A mischievous, child-like smile. You stare at him.

"I miss that." His smile fades and is replaced with a more solemn expression. "Now, it's all pain, war, and murder."

You open your mouth to respond, perhaps wanting to give him a word of comfort, but then you are pushed headfirst into the pond and get a mouthful of water instead.

You gasp, splashing about in the icy water to right yourself. It's a shock to your senses. Thankfully, it isn't very deep, and you manage to stand up. You're soaking wet, and you stare at the king in betrayal.

He smiles slyly, as if he had nothing to do with it.
You hold your hand out to him so that he can pull you out.

He takes it, and you yank as hard as you can, causing him to crash down on top of you and throw you both back in.

It's a flailing of limbs and spitting out of pond water until you both are standing in the middle of the pond, equally soaking wet and equally miserable.

The water is dripping off of Loki's armor. His hair is sticking to his face, hanging limply, and he's staring at you with an indiscernible expression.

"It's c-cold," you comment, rubbing over your arms.

"Is it?" he sounds genuinely surprised, as if he doesn't feel it. "I suppose we should get out of our clothes, then."

With a wave of his hand your clothes disappear, but more importantly, his clothes do the same.

You stare at him. The water reaches just above his hips, leaving the entirety of his chiseled stomach and chest for you to see.

"I suppose..." His voice is quiet. "...You could kill me now. Now that I'm unarmored."

You realized your fingers are still clenched around your knives. You could.

You keep staring at him. He is lithe, as expected, but almost statuesquely beautiful and sculpted. Far more than you imagined. You never thought cold and cruel could look like this.

Your eyes skim back up to his face, and your heart jumps to your throat. He's staring at you as if hypnotized, his mouth partly open, and unless you're imagining things, he's leaned down a little.

You take a step forward, and suddenly, the cold doesn't seem to bother you anymore. You tip your chin up. Just a little.

His head moves. Leaning down further, slowly, almost unnoticeably. Tilting to the side just a little. His gaze slips down to your lips and sticks there.

You take another half step closer. You tilt your head up further.

For a moment, you simply stare at each other. Then Loki bends down and fits his cold, wet lips over yours.

Chapter End Notes

Yes, perfect place to end the chapter. *Hits post* :P
Chapter 10

Chapter Notes

I think this chapter will have made the cliff hanger from last time worth it. Sit back, and enjoy~

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

For a moment, you simply stare at each other. Then Loki bends down and fits his cold, wet lips over yours.

It feels hot to you. His gaze. His breath. His closeness. The hammering of your heart.

He's not meeting your gaze, but his lips begin to move slowly. Almost cautiously, he lifts one of his hands out of the water and brings it to your cheek, turning you more perfectly against him.

The knives slip out of your grip and sink into the pond as your own hands move to his chest. His skin is cold. Wet. His breath fans over your face.

He nips against your lips, coaxing them open, and pushes his tongue into your mouth. You feel it stroke against the inside, exploring it, and now his intense gaze snaps to yours.

You move your tongue weakly against his, losing yourself in his eyes. He overtakes your senses, pushes into your lungs, fills you up until you're drowning.

You're so, so cold in the icy water, but you can't move away. Your hands slide over his muscles, around his back, until you've slung your arms around him. You press close, and he holds you there.

He hasn't broken the kiss, still licking against the inside of your mouth. You feel like you're going to die like this. Frozen to death in the arms of a cold man, your hands around his icy heart.

It doesn't seem like either of you want to break apart. If you do, if you leave this pond, things will go back to how they were. He'll be all leather and metal and murder, and you'll be nothing but a mild distraction. Only the water keeps your secrets safe.

"You're cold." Loki draws his head back and reality crashes back into you all too painfully.

Your teeth are chattering and your entire body is trembling to generate even a bit of heat.

"Iss not g-good t-to sstand-d in c-cold water-r," you stutter, feeling slightly panicked now.

"Come." Loki bends down and sweeps up your legs, picking you up like a bride.

You're stunned at the gesture, staring at him and holding on tightly.

He carries you out of the water and lays you down on the grass in a patch of sun. Then he holds out
his hands and summons one of his green capes. Then another. And another.

"Dry yourself off, and I will summon clothes for you." He leans down and hands them to you.

You take them, absolutely stunned.

"These... These a-are your r-royal capes," you remind him.

His gaze hardens. "Dry off. I have no towels at the ready for you."

You take one of the capes and begin dabbing at your skin. Then you take another and soak up some of the water from your hair. Then you take the third and wrap it around yourself, standing up.

Loki makes the two wet ones disappear, then touches your shoulder and clothes you in thick woolen winter clothes, down to the socks. He wraps the cape closer around you and gathers you back up in his arms, walking quickly toward the palace.

"Aren't you cold?" you ask, noticing that he's still naked.

"No," he answers curtly, but makes clothes appear on his body nonetheless.

He carries you through the palace doors, all the way into a cozy library where a fire is crackling in the fireplace. He sets you down in front of it, and you immediately feel better.

"Stay there," he instructs and steps back out into the hallway to flag down a servant.

When he returns, he is silent, simply sitting down behind you and pulling you against his chest. You feel safe. Wrapped in wool. In his cape. In his arms. You lean your head back against him. His hair is still wet, dripping down on you. You reach up and move it out of the way.

He holds you tightly up until the point where a servant enters with a tray of steaming tea and bits of food. That's when he gestures for the servant to set it down beside you, grabs a cup of tea, hands it to you, and wraps his arms back around you, as if he's afraid you might fall apart if he doesn't.

You hold the tea in front of you until it's no longer scalding, then take a cautious sip. It feels really good.

When you've finished your tea, Loki picks up a piece of food and holds it in front of your lips. You take it from his fingers and shudder with delight. It's a warm piece of bread with molten cheese. He keeps feeding you until the tray is empty, occasionally refilling your cup. You don't feel guilty at all for not sharing, because it's just that good.

After you've finished, you both continue sitting the way you have been, until you are thoroughly warmed up. That makes you wonder. For some reason, Loki's hands still feel cold.

"Why are you always so cold?" you ask into the silence.

Loki doesn't answer for a while, and you wonder if it was rude.

"It's just... part of who I am," he finally says, not revealing much at all.

You nod and accept his answer. There are far more pressing questions you have.

Why did you kill the guard? What's going to happen to the rest of them?
Why did you bring me to the pond? Why did you push me in? Why did you not get mad when I pulled you in, too?

Why did you kiss me?

Why, for the love of all the stars in the universe, did you stand naked in a pond with me and why did you kiss me? Why did you give me your capes to dry off? Why did you carry me? Why do you have your arms around me? Why have you not left?

Out of all those questions, the one you asked certainly matters the least. And yet, you can't bring yourself to ask any of the others.

You sit like this for at least another hour. At one point, you just turn and snuggle up against him, closing your eyes. Then, you simply lose track of time.

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"Your majesty, please." The advisor has returned, standing in the doorway with even more scrolls in her hands. "You cannot abandon your duties for so long! And why ever did you throw nine of your guards into the dungeon? That is not a wise-"

Loki silences her with merely a look. You twist in his arms, seeing the murderous intent in his eyes.

"My apologies, your majesty," the advisor says slowly, and backs out of the room.

You feel the tenseness in his body.

"Please don't kill her," you urge, realizing that he just might be planning that.

He turns to you, his expression immediately softening. "She's a pest, but alright, I won't kill her. If, however, she happens to be within range of my blade at any point while being exceptionally irritating, I make no guarantees that she won't slip and fall onto it."

You give him a worried look. "Like with the guard?"

He sighs. "I apologize that your innocent little eyes had to see that, but to be fair, she was attacking me."

You decide to ignore the sarcasm. "What'll happen to them now? What about that guy's family? Will you kill them?"

Loki looks at you for a moment, as if trying to decide whether you truly mean that.

"Do you have so little faith in me?" he asks. "Don't you think I can be a generous ruler at times?"

You contemplate. "Not if you keep killing your subjects."

Loki sighs again and heaves himself up, leaving you on the floor. "I should get back to the important things, then, before you ask any more questions. Stay here, if you like."

You almost pout. "Can't I come with you?"

He smiles slightly, stopping on his way out. "No. I don't think I'll get much done if you're there to distract me."

With that, he marches out of the room, leaving you behind.
You realize you still didn't ask the most important question. Maybe you never will.

You yawn and curl up in front of the fire again, missing his embrace. You want to kiss him again. It felt so right. You stare into the flames for a while longer, until a servant enters the room.

"Miss? Thank the ancients I've found you alone!"

Your whole body tenses. You know that voice. Slowly, you turn seeing Eala standing in the doorway.

She looks fine, but you can't help the guilty feeling rising up inside you.

"Eala, look, I'm so sorry, I-' you begin, but she interrupts you, coming into the room.

"No, miss, I should apologize. I should have lied for you." She sits down beside you.

"Eala, I threatened you. I get why you told him. He... Are you hurt?" You look her up and down again.

"I'm alright, miss. It's fine, really, what he did. I ate your food that morning, I shouldn't get pregnant. It's better than throwing me into the dungeons. But, miss, I want to tell you something. If you do end up killing him and taking the throne, I'll serve you gladly."

You stare at her. She just smiles.

"Eala, I don't plan on taking the thro-"

"Here, miss, I brought you something."

Still smiling, she hands you a kitchen knife. "Do you think you can kill him with that?"

Guilt. Even more fucking guilt.

"I... I'll see what I can do." You take the knife from her.

"Are you alright, miss?" Eala asks.

"Yeah, yeah, I'm fine," you mumble.

"Want me to kill him for you?"

You blink. "What?"

"I could put poison in his food. He wouldn't even notice."

To your great concern, she is still smiling.

"Poison. Do you even have poison?" you question.

She thinks for a moment, the smile fading. "No..."

"Good. Leave the killing up to me, please." You do not want a revenge crazed Eala running about the palace with knives and poison.
"Alright, miss, whatever you say," she agrees. "Anything else I can do for you?"

You think for a moment. She could actually be very useful. As a servant, she can go anywhere without sticking out.

"Yes. Can you check on the guards in the dungeon? If any of them go missing, tell me at once."

Eala nods eagerly. "Okay, miss, will do. I'll check back with you when I have any news."

She jumps up and runs out of the room as if she's excited to follow your command. You're still slightly concerned for her wellbeing.

You hide the knife in your clothes and stand up, slowly going toward the door. Peeking your head out, you see that there is no guard outside. Did Loki forget, or does he simply trust you not to run?

Regardless, you take your chance and begin to wander through the palace halls. You have no particular destination; you just want to explore.

Running away isn't an option, and it never was. Not until Loki is dead.

You stroll through the corridors, passing by paintings of battle scenes, unused sitting rooms, and you even manage to find the servants' quarters.

There is hardly anyone there, the beds neatly made and empty. You realize you still have Loki's cape, so you step inside and give it to a girl who's currently mending a blanket.

"Here. This is the king's cape; could you have it washed and then brought back to him?"

She looks up, "Of course, my lady," and takes it from you.

My lady. You haven't been called that before. Does the fact that you had the king's cape make you important enough that the servant thought you were nobility?

Walking back out of the servants' quarters, you almost bump into a guard passing by.

"Sorry," you mumble, taking a step back to let him pass.

He gives you barely a glance, takes a step, then does a double take. You recognize him, too, now. He's the guard that ran in today to warn Loki about the deserters.

"Hey, wait a minute," he says. "You're not a servant, you're the king's pet! What are you doing here?"

"Uh," you fumble for an answer. "I was just walking around. Getting a lay of the land, so to speak."

The guard contemplates for a moment, then furrows his brow. "I don't think the king would like you wandering about unguarded. I shall bring you to his chambers."

He takes your arm and gently pulls you with him.

"No," you protest, not wanting to rot in the bedroom again. "I was at a library. The king allowed me to stay there as long as I liked."

"Oh?" The guard stops. "Okay, I'll bring you there, then. I'm afraid his majesty is in a meeting with the counsel, so he might not return until later tonight. You'll have to kill some time there."
He leads you back where you came, to the library with the fireplace.

"Do I really have to stay in here for several more hours?" you complain, seeing the guard take position at the door. You were hoping he'd just leave and you could run off again.

"I'm afraid so." The guard sounds apologetic, watching you as you sit down on a lounge chair. "You're a special pet, and we all have instructions not to leave you unattended."

"What about the other... 'pets'?” you ask. "Where are they?"

"They come and go," he replies indifferently. "Some stay at the palace in guest rooms. It is not often the king seeks out their company, so they mainly idle about. I doubt they'll be seeing him anytime soon, when it is you who has the king so enamored."

You're beginning to like this guy. He's very talkative, unlike Brenna. You might ask Loki to replace her with him.

"What makes you think the king is enamored with me?" you ask, curious of a different perspective on the topic.

"Oh, it is quite obvious." Now the guard smiles, flashing his pearly teeth. "Ever since you arrived, he has been distracted, less eager to work. It seems you've taken over his mind."

Taken over his mind with thoughts of how to punish me, you add in your head.

"...And pardon me if this is too forward, but when you showed your devotion to him in the throne room, it was like-"

"Oh, by the ancients," you interrupt, sinking your burning face into your hands. "You were there?"

"I'm sorry, I did not mean to make you embarrassed," he immediately apologizes. "If it is any consolation, we are used by now to the king's less than modest behavior. I did not watch, either. But I heard. I heard how you played the king in just the right way. The two of you are truly matched perfectly."

You feel less embarrassed now, and lift your head up. So all he heard was Loki's lecherous groans, and he thinks you're a match made by the Norns. That's almost humorous.

"So..." You slowly look at him, not quite believing what you're about to ask. "Is there any point of comparison for that? Like, has he been... 'worshipped' on his throne often?"

The guard keeps a perfectly straight face. "Would it upset you, if I said yes?"

You just shake your head. "Often?"

The guard pauses for a moment. "...I would not say often, but... frequently."

You almost snort. "Alright. And you think he reacted the best to me?"

"By far. Most other times I've heard he looks almost bored. Not with you. You had all his attention; that, I am sure of."

You can't help but smile. "You're a great person to talk to. What's your name?"

"Sven. What's yours, miss?"
You look into his chocolate brown eyes. "...Katharina." You still feel it is unwise to reveal your true name.

"What a lovely name, for a lovely woman." He smiles again.

You laugh. "I'm not that lovely."

"On the contrary. Anyone who manages to put a spell on the king must be exceedingly lovely."

Your good mood quickly fades and you stare at the floor. "I don't think so. He doesn't care for me. Not much, at least. He simply enjoys hurting me."

The kiss replays in your mind, and your heart begins to ache in protest. But you know your words are true. Anything else would be delusion.

"Hurt you?" Sven sounds concerned. "Has he... What has he done to you? Do you need to be examined?"

"No, no, it's fine," you hastily backtrack. "He doesn't... cause any permanent damage to my body. He simply enjoys being cruel. Whenever he shows me a bit of kindness, the next moment he destroys it by being extra cruel. It's as if he wants to undo it. To prove to me how horrible he is."

There's silence for a while as the heavy subject lingers in the air.

"That sounds to me like..." Sven stops, as if he's unsure of his next words. "It sounds like the king does not wish you to know how much he truly cares for you. You have him weak, and he hates you for it. Pardon, if that is too harsh a word, but I do believe it is true."

You slowly look back at him, eyes wide. "That can't be. We've only known each other a couple of days, and tomorrow I am leaving."

"Oh." He nods in understanding. "That is kind of him, to let you go free. It is, perhaps, the truest form of devotion. I'm sure he's made the most of those few days, though, no? I can only hope he doesn't fly into a rage once you're gone."

You nod slowly. "Yeah... Me, too. I think it's for the best that I leave so soon. If anything, he has become obsessed with me. He wishes to control me. I think, what he truly needs is someone to love. Not someone to own."

"Wise words, from a bright young lady," Sven agrees, giving you a soft smile.

You feel warmth coming from him and his words. Not at all like the coldness you are used to.

"Will you stay with me until the king returns?" you ask.

Sven thinks for a moment. "If that is your wish. I had nothing much else to do at the moment, anyway."

You give him a smile of your own. "Thank you. You can sit down, you know."

He shakes his head. "I am still on duty. I will stand."

You roll your eyes at him, but feel much better with his company regardless.

He stays with you as the sun slowly sets over Asgard. On occasion, you exchange a few more words, but mostly you wait in silence. At one point, you get up and look through the books, only to
find that most of them are educational and rather boring.

You begin to feel a little tired the longer you wait. Sven becomes impatient, too. Did Loki forget about you, or is he still busy?

"Katharina," Sven grabs your attention. "I should return you to his majesty's chambers. Even if he has not yet returned, you should get your sleep."

You nod, covering up a yawn, and slowly get to your feet, coming over to him. This time, he doesn't take you by the arm, simply letting you walk beside him as he brings you back up to the royal bedroom.

Another guard stands outside, the night shift, who gives Sven a nod as he brings you over. Sven opens the door for you and you step in.

"Goodnight," you hear him say before the door closes behind you.

You want to turn back to wish him goodnight as well, but decide that would be a bit over the top. Instead you, focus your attention on the room.

The lights are still on, the window is open, and to your surprise, there is Loki, sprawled out on his bed, wearing nothing but a forest green silk robe.

It hangs open, completely exposing his naked body. His head is resting back against a stack of pillows, his mouth hanging open slightly. There's a goblet in his hand, and it seems whatever he drank from it has trickled down his chin from one corner of his mouth. His eyes are half closed, but they're looking at you, squinting as if he can't quite make out who you are. In other words, he looks very, very drunk.

You pull the knife out of your clothes and hide it behind your back. He doesn't react in the slightest. Then you begin to undress. It is much harder to flee when your clothes are soaked with blood, after all.

As soon as all your clothes have landed on the floor, Loki smiles.

"Kitten?" he asks, sounding hopeful, and extends one hand toward you.

You begin to worry why, what, and how much he drank to get this intoxicated, but approach him nonetheless.

He looks so happy when his eyes show recognition. You crawl onto the bed, and as soon as you're in reach, press the knife to his throat.

His eyes go wide in genuine fear. He tries to scramble away from you, but gets tangled in his robe and manages to upturn his goblet, spilling the contents on himself.

He goes still, not even paying mind to the spill. He just stares at you with absolute terror.

Your heart squeezes. Drunk as he is, he has an almost childlike innocence to him. He seems so scared, but he isn't even trying to defend himself, like he realizes he can't fight you off in this state.

You watch how his throat bobs under the knife in a nervous swallow. You need to calm him down somehow, or else you're never going to get yourself to do this.

You bend down and press your lips against his. He doesn't move, seeing as the knife is still on his
throat. You can feel his nervous breaths against your mouth. You can taste the strong alcohol.

The longer you linger against his lips, however, the more he seems to calm down. His eyes close halfway, and he lifts one of his hands slowly to cradle the back of your head. His breathing evens out and he starts softly kissing you.

Now. Now is when you kill him. He's calm. Because he trusts you. Or maybe because he accepts death, as long as you're kissing him in his last moments.

Your heart clenches and you feel yourself go limp against him. You don't know what possibility would be worse.

You pull the knife away from his throat, sagging against his drink stained chest. You can't do this. You can't. This is horrible.

Loki seems startled at your sudden shift in intent, but slowly brings his arms to wrap around you.

"Kitten," he slurs. "I thhh- thought you were gonna kill mm-me."

"You're drunk, Loki," you whisper, trying to hide the quiver in your words.

"Ddd-did you www-want to play with the kn-knife?" he asks, plucking it from your hand. "Sh- shouldn't I be hav- having it?"

He flips you onto your back, pinning you to the mattress.

His eyes glaze, then refocus. He holds the knife to your throat now. His hand is unsteady, and you feel like he might nick you.

You stare up at him, not trying to struggle. You aren't sure what to even feel in that moment.

Slowly, his lips stretch into that mischievous smile.

"Little sss... slut," he drawls.

You feel the knife press against your throat, cutting into your skin. You flinch at the first shock of pain, and Loki immediately draws his hand back.

His eyes move down to where the blade has drawn a thin line of blood, and he looks rather sheepish, like he didn't mean to do that.

After a few moments more of just staring at your neck, he rolls off you, sinking back against the pillows.

His eyes slide half shut, then he beckons you with the knife. "Wor... Worship me."

You lift yourself up, grab the knife, and toss it out the open window. Loki stares after it as if he is questioning whether you really did that, or whether he imagined it in his drunken state.

When your lips meet his neck, though, his attention is fully back on you. He sighs in content and relaxes against the pillows as you begin to kiss, nip, and lick over his skin.

You move down his neck and set to licking the spilled drink off his chest. Loki groans and relaxes further. You can feel his muscles shifting beneath your lips.

You lick down his chest, over his stomach. You can see that his cock has stiffened somewhat, but
you ignore it for now. He wanted you to worship him, and so you will.

You grab one of his hand and kiss his fingers, then take them one by one into your mouth and suck on them lightly.

He watches you in a lusty haze.

You lick over his palm and his slender fingers flex against you briefly. Your hands move up his arm, massaging his muscles. You massage his shoulders, then move down his other arm. You take that hand, too, kissing and sucking on his fingers.

If Loki wasn't so drunk, he probably would have thrown you on the bed and fucked you senseless for all the teasing, but right now, he isn't doing anything except watching you.

You trail your hands down his stomach and feel his breath catch. Still, you ignore where he wants them most. You massage down his legs, grabbing one of his feet and angling his leg up.

You meet his eyes as you massage his foot. His attention is on you, fully and completely. The lust in his eyes is palpable. His cock is rock hard.

"I'm yours, master," you whisper huskily. You lean forward and kiss his knee.

Loki's pupils are blown. His cock twitches, desperate for attention. As much as you want to give it to him, that wasn't what you were planning. You keep massaging him, until you're sure he's going crazy with need. Then you slowly slide off the bed, grab the edge of his blanket and pull it over him.

He stares at you in betrayal.

"But you're drunk, master," you add with a sweet smile. "I'd be taking advantage of you. You should sleep it off."

He narrows his eyes and tries grabbing for you, but his hand clumsily misses. You quickly walk out of reach, getting a spare pillow and blanket from a cabinet and setting them out on the sofa. Then you go to close the window and blow out all the candles.

Loki has a tortured look on his face, but seems to be too drowsy to get out of bed and pursue you.

"Come... back," he orders, though he still has trouble speaking coherently. "Ssslut, suck my cock!"

"Sorry, my lord, no can do." You turn away from him and lie down on the sofa. If you looked at him a moment longer, you might have given in to his wishes.

You take a deep breath and try to keep your own need down. You want him to suffer for what he did. It's a small punishment compared to his crimes, but it's the only thing you can think of doing besides killing him.

You hear him groan slightly. He must be taking care of the problem himself.

Listening to him pleasure himself makes it even more difficult for you to ignore the growing need at your core. Eventually, you give in and slide a hand between your legs.

The both of you pleasure yourself, listening to each other's choppy breaths and occasional moans, secretly wishing the other would just get up and come over.

It doesn't happen, and soon, you both find your release. Loki drifts off to sleep immediately. You
stay awake a little longer, your mind whirling with all the things that happened today.

Chapter End Notes

Between posting the last chapter and posting this one, I managed to write about five sentences. Good thing I have a large buffer, but maybe that's part of the problem. Where I'm at in the story, I keep questioning whether the decisions I made are good ones, even if I'm still sticking to my general plot outline. I think I'll let the buffer catch up a little and let your guys' reactions guide me.
Chapter 11

Chapter Notes

Thanks to all your comments I figured out what problems I was having and am now working on fixing them. Unfortunately, though, it takes much longer to fix a problem than to make one, so I'll stick to uploading once a week until I've caught up with myself. Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

You get startled out of your sleep by a knock on the door.

"Your majesty? You must get ready," a woman's voice calls out.

You glance over at Loki. He's still fully knocked out, sleeping off the alcohol.

You stand up, grabbing the woolen clothes from yesterday to appear decent, and go to the door, opening it.

The chambermaid who replaced Eala is outside.

"Oh, hello, madam," she greets. "Is the king awake?"

You step aside, letting her take a look. "I think you need to wake him."

She comes in, but doesn't go much further. "Oh, no, madam, I think you should do that. He has bad sleep, you see, so in the few occasions where he does manage to get rest, it is unwise to be the one to wake him. But he likes you. He will not hurt you."

She doesn't sound very convincing. You are pretty sure he will punish you for waking him in some way, but you suppose you're altruistic enough to take the burden off her hands.

You sigh and go over to the bed. Loki is sprawled out across it, jet black hair splayed over the white pillow. He looks fast asleep.

You stand there for a moment, contemplating how best to do this.

You could pour water over his face. No, as tempting as that seems, you don’t have a death wish.

"Lo- Your majesty?" you say softly, placing a hand on his shoulder and gently shaking him.

He hardly even stirs. Helpless, you look over your shoulder to the chambermaid. She has begun tidying up the room, pretending she has nothing to do with waking the king.

Maybe you could cause a loud noise and hope to startle him awake while safely out of reach. You grab a metal plate from a table and drop it to the floor.

It causes a loud clattering noise and the chambermaid flinches noticeably. Loki, however, only briefly groans and turns over to his side.

Defeated, you walk back over and climb onto the bed. You'd love to perhaps snuggle up to him and
fall back asleep, but you know the speech is far more important, and that Loki is only this agreeable drunk or asleep.

You pull the blanket off of him and grab his hand. Sticking one of his fingers in your mouth, you bite down.

Loki immediately reacts by attempting to draw his hand back, but you keep it between your teeth, forcing his eyes to pry open.

He looks at you, squinting, trying to figure out what's happening. He is no doubt terribly hungover.

You release his hand and gently shake him again so that he can't fall back asleep.

"Your majesty," you say sternly. "You must wake. You have a speech to hold."

He groans again as if that reminder displeases him and clutches at his head in discomfort.

"Kitten, I had the worst kind of dream," he mumbles.

You pull his hand away from his eyes. "Tell me about it. And get up while you're at it."

He blinks at you again, as if he had just been about to drift off again.

"I don't remember much," he begins, making no move to rise. "But I know you were in it. You were naked, which was good, but you had a knife. I think... you tried to kill me, yes, but for some reason instead you decided you'd rather lick my entire body."

Your cheeks burn. You had not licked his entire body. Too bad you can't tell him that, because then he'll have you executed for the third attempt on his life.

"Please, get up," you say again, your patience slowly wearing thin.

Loki reaches for your arm and yanks you down with him, wrapping you up in an embrace. You try to squirm out of it, but he holds you tight, grinning.

"Mm, pet, I feel absolutely miserable," he says. "But I think you can help relieve my pain a little."

You look back at the chambermaid. She has her back turned, cleaning the windows.

"I... I think the king needs someone to attend to his hangover," you call out, your voice rising in pitch just a bit when Loki's hand dips into your woolen pants.

"Oh, yes, right away." She hurries over, drawing a vial out of her apron pocket. She hands it to Loki, who slams it back, then she quickly distances herself again.

Loki tosses the bottle aside and returns his hands to you. You squeak when he pushes one between your thighs.

"Not- Not with her here," you urge in a whisper.

Loki just smiles wickedly. "I thought you liked an audience."

His fingers begin rubbing against you, causing you to squirm.

"We have to get ready for the speech!" you remind him, unsure how much time is left.
"That's what I'm doing." His fingers circle over your clit. "I'm going to fuck you senseless, to hammer in your head where you stand with me."

"And..." You gasp when two of his fingers slip into you. "And where do I stand with you?"

He smirks in a self-satisfied way. "You're my personal little whore, and you love everything I do to you."

You were hoping he'd say something besides the usual, but right now his wicked fingers are your main concern. You brace yourself against his bare chest, hoping not to make a noise as pleasure rocks through you.

"I can't wait to show everyone what I made of you," he whispers, fucking you hard with his fingers. "I want you to be proud of my ownership over you. It is naught to be ashamed of. You belong to a great ruler, after all."

"You won't own me for much longer," you gasp out, squeezing your eyes shut to keep from making any sound. "I'll be free today."

Loki says nothing to that, simply swipes over your clit until your orgasm bursts forth from his fingertips. You manage to make almost no noise, falling breathlessly against him once the pleasure subsides.

He draws his fingers out and wipes them on the bed sheets.

"Hmm, what if I made sure to fuck you so well you no longer want to leave?" he asks darkly. There is a genuine threat in his voice.

You open your eyes, staring at him, wondering if he is truly serious. His expression certainly looks possessive.

"You want to be a good girl for your master, don't you?" he asks, a rasp to his voice that makes you shiver.

You feel uneasy. The chambermaid is still in the room, and Loki doesn't seem to care. This is all taking a turn in a direction you weren't expecting. You had just wanted to wake him.

"I... I think we should get up," you remind him, trying again to free yourself from his arms.

His hand moves to your throat and he squeezes. He looks... dangerous. Threatening. Dominating. A possessive need in his eyes. You wonder what set that off, or if it's always there, simmering below the surface.

You feel the blood and the oxygen to your brain and lungs being throttled. You try to pull his hand away, but he doesn't relent. You feel completely helpless, simply staring at him. Is this how he felt when you held the knife to his throat? So close to death, at the mercy of someone you know you can never trust?

"You will be good for me," he says. "Because bad pets need to be disciplined, and you don't want that, do you? If I am to release you in a couple hours, you must submit to me until then. Show me. Show me true submission, and I will release you after."

His grip relaxes and you wriggle for air, disturbed by his words. Is this part of the performance you have to put on for Asgard, or is this something that sprung from his dark fantasies?
"What... do you want me to do?" you breathe.

"You know what." His voice is low and unforgiving. He lifts himself so he is on top of you, caging you to the mattress. "I want you to be mine. I want my every will to be carried out by you, and I want you to feel good doing it. I want here to be nothing that brings you greater joy than obeying my commands. Truly, what greater pleasure is there, than obeying your master?"

Your heart is pounding. His words have power. They're soft, smooth, liquid silver creeping into every crack of your barriers, penetrating your weak spots and sinking in their claws. You need to do something before this turns real.

You hear the bedroom door click shut as the chambermaid leaves. A wise choice on her part, no doubt.

"You... You want me to be your mindless slave?" you ask. It sounds ridiculous.

"Mindless," he repeats, leaning down so his breath hits your face. There's something manic in his eyes. "Obedient. Mine. A slave to my will."

He's a hungry beast, right on top of you. Alarms are ringing in your head. Sure, you could pretend to be that. You could put on a show. But something's off, something that screams trap. He never wanted this from you until now, hours away from your freedom.

You take a deep breath. "I don't think I want to do that."

You expect him to threaten you. To push your face into the mattress and inflict you with pain. To snarl at you that you don't have a choice.

Instead, he smiles. He leans down, brushing his lips over yours. Briefly. Not a kiss.

"Of course not," he agrees, a singsong lilt to his voice. "You're afraid, little kitten. You can't truly obey me when you're afraid. But you care for me, no? Your heart beats for me. Maybe you're beginning to like me. Maybe you already love me."

Your blood runs cold. Love? No way. Never. How dare he even suggest that? How dare he be so arrogant, so deluded, so certain of himself to speak those words with such confidence?

You open your mouth to protest, but he shushes you.

"Shhh, pet. It took but a kiss and your hands no longer could wield the daggers with which to kill me. Even in my dream you rather wept against me, before licking over my skin like the doting kitten that you are. You love me."

You're dizzy. No. You don't. Every time he speaks that wretched word, it is he who is driving a dagger into your heart. His soft voice stabs you painfully again and again, and you know that this is his intent.

"You love me," he croons, smiling at your distraught look. "You're in love with me. Your heart yearns for me."

It's a lie; it's such a blatant lie, and you both know it. Yet he says it over and over, and it hurts you over and over until the tears prick in your eyes.

You try to shove him, to get him away, but he grasps your wrists and gently pins them to the bed.
"Do not cry, dear, it is a beautiful thing," he murmurs sweetly. "Love is nothing to be afraid of."

Dear. How can he call you that, after everything? How can he call it beautiful? This is so wrong.

"Shh, don't cry, pet. You love me, and that is wonderful." He nuzzles against your cheek, still smiling a completely disarming smile.

"N-no," you stammer. How can this hurt so much more than his usual mockery?

"It's normal for you to feel this way," he answers your unasked question. "All the emotions pent up inside you. Coming out all at once when you can no longer deny them. It is overwhelming. Weep, if you must, but weep with joy."

You try to tug your wrists away, but his hands keep you still.

"Let me go!" you demand, feeling panicked. Your eyes flit this way and that, searching for a distraction from his wicked words.

"Not until you admit it, darling."

Darling. How... How dare he? The arrogance!

"What have I to admit to?" you snap. "You just use my body for your pleasure!"

"And you let me." His gaze has darkened again. "Now, dearest pet, I want you to cry your love for me to the stars."

You feel the clothes vanish from your body.

"No, I don't love you," you wail, still trying to get away from him. "I hate you! You're cruel; I could never love you!"

Loki just watches you for a moment. "Alright. Perhaps you don't love me, yet. But you will. I think you can. For now, just pretend you do. Put on a show for me and Asgard."

You begin to calm down, but you're still shaken. "Why do you even want that?" you ask with a grimace. "I'm leaving today! ...Do you love me?"

"I love no one, pet. Not a whore's body, nor a fair princess. But I've grown fond of you. I enjoy having you in my bed. I would describe my feelings toward you as the sort of devotion that a master feels toward their pet."

You narrow your eyes. So that's what he wants. For you to love him with all your heart, and for him to occasionally pet your head with his merciful hand.

You take a deep breath and finally manage to pull out of his grip. "We should get ready."

"Yes." He sits up behind you. "But first, we shall eat and have a bath."

***

The water if warm. Soothing. Your eyes are closed and you're sitting between Loki's legs, leaning back against his chest. His arms are around you, holding you loosely. His lips are on your neck, softly nibbling and kissing your skin.

It took you a while, but now you feel calm. Maybe your "master's" affection isn't so bad sometimes.
You begin to realize how stupid you are. There is no reason to be upset. He was just messing with your head because it amuses him. He made you a deal, and you took it. You deliver the speech, pretend you're his broken love doll or something, and he lets you run back to the hole you came from. It doesn't matter what you say or do in your last moments with him. You won't ever see him again after today.

You turn around in the water, causing some to slosh over the edge of the tub. Loki is looking at you with a mildly curious expression.

You grab the sides of his face and kiss him, thinking he'll push you away and prove that all of his words were nonsense. Instead, he grabs a fistful of your hair and tilts your head at a better angle, instantly nipping at your lower lip.

His gaze is challenging. You narrow your eyes and try to pry his teeth apart with your tongue. He opens his mouth against you and shoves his tongue out to meet yours.

Your breaths become one and the same, your tongues sloppily trying to one up the other.

You fist your hand into his hair, too, and pull. He tightens his grip in retaliation. You push your other hand against his chest and rake your nails down it.

He hisses and shoves you onto your back, spilling even more water. He manages to do so without breaking the kiss, where he's now biting harder at your bottom lip.

You reach your hands around him, pulling harder at his hair. He draws away from the kiss and pushes his hand against your windpipe. His eyes are sparkling, and you have no doubt yours are, too.

You begin to cough, and now you rake the nails of both hands down his back, hard, with the intent to hurt.

Loki pushes you out of the water more and replaces the hand at your neck with his teeth. He bites you, hard, also with the intent to hurt.

You try to push him away, but he grabs your arms, pulling you back and turning you around so your chest is pressed against the edge of the tub. He knocks your legs apart and pushes his hand between your thighs, cupping your heat.

He rubs you until your knees go weak and your hips grind back against him.

"Who do you belong to?" he growls.

"You," you breathe.

His fingers push inside you, curling against your pleasure spot. Your hands are clutching the edge of the tub as you rock back against him.

"Who owns you?" He grabs your hair and pulls on it, his fingers mercilessly thrusting into you.

"You!" you wail.

"That's right, pet, and never you forget it. I'm your master. Your king. Submission was always in your cards. There's nothing you can do about it. You're a slave to the pleasures I grant your body.
You'll never find someone who compares to me; do you understand that by now?"

The last part he practically snarls at you. His fingers are brutally thrusting into you. You mewl with pleasure, clinging to the tub for dear life.

"You're mine. Even if you leave, you'll always belong to me."

You feel his thumb press against your other hole, and you whimper when he slowly pushes it in. It's slick with something, and you're grateful for that.

He slides it in, fucking you in both holes now. You feel weak with overwhelming pleasure, limp against the tub.

"Lo-Loki!" you whimper, rocking against him helplessly. "I can't- This is too much!"

"Then tell me to stop," he demands harshly, slowing only slightly.

"Wha- What?" You're confused.

"Do it," he snaps, still fucking you with his fingers.

"S-stop?" you say uncertainly. Instantly, his hand stills, which shocks you. You didn't think he'd actually-

"What do you want?" he asks impatiently.

"I don't know!" Your voice is way louder than it should be. You're too frazzled. "Just fuck me, alright? Fuck me until I forget about everything you've ever done to me."

"So demanding," he notes, but pushes his stiff cock inside you regardless.

You groan at the pleasant feeling, closing your eyes. This feels right. Regardless of all the emotions now whirling around you, this always feels right. He fits so perfectly inside you, connecting to your soul.

He thrusts in slowly, and you feel two of his fingers at your other hole again. They're cool and slick, maybe through magic, and he slowly eases them in.

You whimper, overwhelmed with pleasure from his cock and his fingers.

"You like this, don't you?" he rasps, pumping in and out slowly. "You like getting fucked everywhere your body has to offer. You might even be able to take my cock there one day. I'll have you begging for mercy as I claim every last part of your body as mine."

You're so aroused at the thought. At the way he thrusts against your pleasure spot. At the way his fingers stretch your tight, inexperienced hole and draw forth new, intense sensations. If he keeps this up, you will truly fall to your ruin.

"Ngh, please," you groan, rocking back against him in hopes of getting him to pick up the pace. Water sloshes around you, and everything is making obscene noises.

"Please what, pet?" He jabs into you viciously.

"Please, I want to cum."

"Only good pets get to cum." His hand reaches around you, rubbing over your clit to torture you
further.

"Please, master?" you guess, hoping that's what he wants.

"No. I want you to say it." He stills inside you completely, causing you to cry out. Only his fingers tantalize your pulsing bundle of nerves.

"S-say what?" you stammer, burning up with need.

"That you love me."

You suck in a breath of air.

"L-Loki," you breathe.

"Yes?"

"I-" You take another shuddering breath. Tears prick at your eyes, and you suddenly feel overwhelmed again. "I would be lying...! You know that-

"Do you want to cum?" he growls, interrupting you.

"Y-yes…"

"Then say it!" He thrusts into you once, then pulls almost completely back out.

Your whole body is trembling. Tears are streaking down your face. "I... love... you."

Loki rocks back into you, very gently. Tenderly. "Good pet."

"No," you wail. "Fuck me hard. Hurt me. Please, I don't want to feel this anymore."

"I understand," he says, and you wonder if he really does.

He snaps his hip against you and picks up the pace. His fingers thrust into your ass, his other hand rubs over your clit. He fucks you brutally, making your whole body shake and the water splash up around you.

You cling to the tub and let him have his way with you. You're crying again. Sobbing, like a pathetic child. But it feels good when he's rough. Better than any sickening gentleness.

You let him bring you to orgasm, again and again. You let him make you scream, to plea and call out his name. Let him overpower the pain in your soul. Only when you're thoroughly sated does he let himself release, filling you with his warm essence.

You feel good. Warm. Safe. All cried out. You slump against the edge of the tub, exhausted, as he pulls out of you.

How did this happen? How did he manage to make you cry so much in just one morning, and how come you don't feel angry at him for it?

***

You're standing in front of a full length mirror, wrapped in a towel, your hair wet and dripping.
Loki comes up behind you and places his hands on your shoulders. "Are you ready to get dressed?"

You nod. Green light shimmers all over your form. Wherever it touches you, your skin dries instantly and you can feel clothes forming around you.

You drop the towel to get a full view of the transformation. Your feet get put into delicate high heeled shoes covered in black velvet. Black lace underwear appears on your skin, before a dress materializes over it. It's dark green, dropping down over your breasts, narrowing around your waist, then falling into a skirt that drapes just over your knees, exposing an underskirt of black fabric in places where the fabric curls in on itself. Two wide golden armbands appear on your wrists, looking all too much like shackles. Finally, a black ribbon ties itself around your neck, with golden stitching on it. Runes, spelling out L-O-K-I.

You stare at your reflection, your breath taken away by your new appearance. Loki releases your shoulders and gathers up your hair. It's dry, and now it turns smooth and shiny, tumbling down your shoulders. A light bit of color appears on your face, reddening your lips and darkening your lashes.

You look both like a noblewoman and like a slave. There is no doubt who you belong to, even without his name written on your collar.

Loki's own form shimmers behind you. His hair is now slicked back, spiking out at the bottom. His outfit is perfectly harmonized with yours. Dark green. Black. Gold. You notice there's more gold on it than usual, less practical and more shiny.

The horned helmet appears on his head. It, too, is smooth and shiny. One of his capes flutters down his back. In his hand, Gungnir.

You turn to him, and curtsy.

"My king."

"My loyal concubine." He mockingly bows his head at you. "Are you ready? Do you remember all the rules?"

Yes, you remember. Be a nice obedient slave and kneel at his feet while fluttering your eyelashes at him. Then somehow deliver your serious words to the crowd before literally kissing his feet.

"Yes, my one lord and master," you say monotonously and bat your lashes, demonstrating that you do indeed remember.

He gives you a look. "Leave the sarcasm behind, pet, and you'll do just fine. Now come."

He strides out of the room, cape swishing behind him, and you follow like the obedient lapdog that you are.

Chapter End Notes

I have to end the chapter here, because a lot is going to happen in the next one. The speech, and the answer to the question of what will happen to the reader after she has fulfilled her part of the deal, will be revealed next week!
Chapter 12

Chapter Notes

It's Wednesday and maybe you need something to get through the rest of the week--also I wrote a lot over the weekend, so here is the next chapter two days early!

PSA: If you need a shower after this filth, consider doing it in holy water! I sell it for 25 gold a bottle at my concession stand in Helheim

You hear the noise coming from the throne room long before the doors are opened. There must be massive amounts of people in attendance. Your stomach twists with anxiety at the thought.

You're walking a few paces behind Loki, and when the guards pull open the door to the side entrance, you are glad he is walking in first.

You hear the crowd hush as soon as he steps over the threshold. He strides with purpose, marching right over to his throne. You walk in behind him, sparing a glance to the crowd for just a moment.

The entire hall is filled, save for the space immediately around the throne. The large palace gates are open, and the mass of people stretch far beyond the confines of the hall. As far as you can tell from your brief look, the people in the front rows wear nervous expression, and one by one begin to genuflect.

Loki sits down on the golden throne, and there is complete silence around, save for the light shuffle as everyone bows.

You quickly walk up the dais, looking at no one but Loki now, and sink to your knees beside him. You remember that you should lean against his leg, but are far too nervous to actually do so.

Loki's eyes sweep over the crowd. His expression is regal, completely serious and imposing. His hand reaches down to you and he pushes your head against his leg. For good measure, you wrap your arms around it, breathing in the scent of the leather.

"People of Asgard," Loki begins, his voice booming unnaturally loudly through the hall. "My loyal subjects. I'm afraid, I have gathered you for less than fortunate news."

His hand strokes over your hair, and you wonder if he's nervous at all. Maybe you bring him a bit of comfort, just like he is bringing you.

"A handful of you have done something bad, but seeing as I am a merciful ruler, I will not punish the lot of you for the crimes of a few."

The tension in the room is palpable. It's as if everyone is holding their breath.

Loki stands up now, and you release his leg to let him pace about.

"I feel the need to inform you that there's been an attempt on my life." His voice takes a hint of melodrama to it. "A small group of traitors decided it was wise to attempt to kill me. They sent an
assassin to infiltrate the palace. Of course, seeing as I am still alive, you will all come to realize that they failed miserably."

It kind of hurts when you remember that this is you he's talking about. You spare another glance at the crowd. Almost all of them are watching Loki, a sense of unease on their faces.

"Now, I suppose you are all wondering why I felt the need to tell you this. And I am sure the brighter ones of you have come to the conclusion that I plan to make an example of said assassin. But where are the gallows? Where the guillotine?"

You're almost impressed at the amount of theatrics and condescension he can put in his words.

"Let me tell you, dearest subjects, what I've done with the assassin is far better than death. I have, in fact, obtained her undying fealty, by revealing my true greatness and turning her to my side."

You almost groan at those words, but you notice that some of the attention is shifting to you.

"Indeed, that is her, the assassin." Loki looks down at you, making a wide gesture with his arms as he presents you to the crowd. "You may wonder now, whether that is but a common whore, but I assure you, this is the very woman who attempted to kill me."

Discomfort doesn't begin to describe the atmosphere in the room. Your face is burning. You will never live this humiliation down.

"You see her here, kneeling at my feet, needing no chains to hold her there. She does as I command, and she does so because she saw what a terrible idea it was to attempt to kill me. She regrets that mistake very much, and is working hard to make it up to me."

He directs his next words at you. "Rise now, my pet. Come here and introduce yourself."

Slowly, you get to your feet. Your limbs are stiff, and this is probably the most nervous you have ever felt. You swallow. Your mouth feels dry.

"A... Asgard," you begin, your voice magically amplified like his. "I was indeed an assassin, sent to kill his Majesty."

There's a brief murmur in the crowd.

"And what are you now?" Loki prompts.


A soft smile forms on Loki's lips. "And why are you that?"

"Because I regret having tried to kill you." You take a deep breath, looking out into the crowd. "I have come to the realization that this man is our king by right, and that we should not be foolish enough to make an enemy of him. He is our ruler, and it will take a lot more than a few assassins to dethrone him. You may not agree with all of his choices, but please, do not make the same mistakes I did. Save any spirit of rebellion for something worthwhile. Think of your families. And to my accomplices: Forget about me. Live your lives. Do not try anything foolish, or you, too, will regret it."

You turn back to Loki, giving him a look as if to say: There, was that good?
He seems satisfied, but he's still waiting for your final act.

Taking another deep breath, you approach him and sink down onto your knees. "To show my loyalty, to show my regret, I now kiss your feet, my king." You bend down and briefly touch your lips to his boots, first one, then the other.

The room is dead silent. When you lift your head back up, you can see the shocked expressions almost everyone seems to be wearing. Most of them are looking at Loki, wondering what he'll do or say next.

Slowly, he steps forward. "You see, my subjects?" he concludes. "Any one of you will be far happier in my good graces. Let us not bring about unneeded conflict. If even an assassin can change her ways, so can you dispel any ill will you might have toward me."

The silence persists. You're still on your knees, just trying to catch your breath.

"This was supposed to be good news," Loki speaks again, the threat clear in his voice. "Should you not be cheering? Or would you have preferred an execution?"

Fearfully, the first few people begin to clap, until the whole hall is filled with muted applause.

You hear Loki sigh, then he turns and goes back to his throne, taking a seat. "You are dismissed."

As soon as he says this, it's like the crowd collectively breathes again. Slowly, they begin to shuffle back out of the throne room, trying not to seem like they're too eager to get out of here.

"Come here, pet," Loki says, his voice no longer amplified.

You crawl over to him and sit back down beside his leg, your heart still pounding with residual anxiety. He reaches down and gives you a soft pat on the head. "You did not disappoint me."

You watch the receding crowd. "So you'll let me go now, right?"

"Soon. Have patience, pet. In the meantime, would you like to sit on my lap?"

There is mischief in that question, which causes you to tense up. You feel like sitting on his lap is a slippery slope to somewhere you are not prepared to go with all those people around, now that they all know who you are.

"We must be chaste with all those people present, my king," you say, looking up at him with defiance.

A light smile curls around his lips. "You assume I was to do something unchaste with you? My, what a dirty mind you have, pet."

Your face heats up and you realize he has tricked you.

"I simply wished to have you closer, to relieve you from sitting on this cold floor," Loki continues with false, exaggerated innocence. "But it seems you had other things in mind, hm? Did you think I would touch you in front of all those people? ...Does the thought excite you?"

You hate how he mocks you so easily, and by twisting the truth only slightly.

"No, my king, it doesn't," you answer, turning to look back to the almost dispersed crowd.

"Our arrangement is not yet over," he warns. "Do not refuse my generosity. I assure you, I will do
nothing to give you discomfort."

Deciding to just give in, you get up and move onto his lap. His arm wraps around your waist immediately, pulling you backward against him. His other hand skims up your arm, then around the edge of your ribbon collar.

You relax against him, watching the last people leave and the guards closing the gates behind them.

Loki twirls a strand of your hair around his finger while his other hand lands on your bare knee. You can feel his breaths against your cheek, but so far, he doesn't do anything.

Feeling uneasy, you glance around at all the guards. There are far more here now than last time. You can only hope Loki's hand doesn't stray further up your leg.

"Step forth, my advisors, and present me your reports," Loki calls out into the hall.

From somewhere behind the throne come three people, walking around and then bowing to him. You recognize one of them, the woman Loki threatened to kill on multiple occasions. The others are a scrawny man and a big muscly one clad in flashy armor.

"Your majesty," the scrawny guy speaks. "We are missing important resources in several sectors of our economy, we must move some from the more funded areas, in order to sustain-"

You stop listening when Loki's hand inches higher and slips beneath the skirt of your dress. You try to inconspicuously grab his wrist and pull it away, but he doesn't budge, gently stroking your thigh.

"Mm, that's tragic, isn't it?" Loki answers his advisor, all the while rubbing heat into your flesh.
"Fund only the most pressing ones. Leave the rest how they are."

"A- alright your majesty." The man sounds like he was hoping for a different answer.

He steps away and the woman comes up the dais, holding out a scroll. "My king, here are the list of people requesting an audience. I have highlighted the most pressing ones, and arranged them into a schedule for you. Please tell me you approve."

Loki uses one hand to take the scroll and unroll it, but the other has now reached the apex of your thighs and his knuckles are brushing against you through your lacy underwear. You have to try your hardest not to noticeably squirm. You realize you can't even tell him to stop without alerting the advisors to what is going on.

"You marked these families seeking employment as important?" Loki questioned, looking back to the advisor. "We have enough servants as is! And how dare you not include my royal portrait in the schedule? It is customary for the king to be depicted in all new art!"

"I… I'm sorry, your majesty, I-" she flounders.

"Correct this at once," Loki cuts her off, handing the scroll back. At the same time his other hand slips beneath your panties, his fingers locating your clit immediately and beginning to rub over it. You can't even be upset with Loki for how he treats his advisors and his subjects, because all your concentration is required to keep from letting the pleasure show on your face.

"Yes, my king." The advisor looks defeated, going back down the steps while muttering to herself.

The last guy comes forward, and you have to turn your head to the side so he won't see your expression.
"Recruitment to replace the deserters has begun, sir," he reports. "More disloyal soldiers are being weeded out. We have doubled the guard in the city, but so far, no sign of suspicious activity."

"Good." For the first time, Loki seems to accept the report. "Double the recruitment efforts. We will need as many warriors as we can get."

"Yes, sir!" From the corner of your eye, you see the man clasp his fist over his heart in salute. Finally, he, too, retreats, and all of the advisors bow again and then disperse.

You let out the breath you had been holding. Your face is flushed and your hips are shamelessly grinding against his hand.

"Enjoying yourself?" Loki asks you, a touch of mockery to his tone. His hand slides lower, palm pressed against your clit and fingers stroking over your entrance.

"You said… you wouldn't… do this," you get out, still trying to suppress the sounds wanting to spill from your lips.

"I said I wouldn't cause you discomfort," he corrects. "Judging by how wet my fingers have become, this is doing quite the opposite."

You have to grit your teeth to not say something insulting. "Will you... let me go now?" you ask instead.

"You don't even want to cum?" he asks innocently, grinding his palm a little harder against your clit.

Your whole body trembles and you have to bite your tongue and clench your fists to remain passive. "Fine, I want to cum," you finally admit, your voice strained. "But after that, I'm leaving."

"That's what I thought." To your shock, Loki draws his hand away, wiping it on your leg. "Go to my chambers," he growls next to your ear. "Wait for me there. Do not touch yourself. If you can do that for me, I promise you the best orgasm you've ever had."

His low voice sends a shiver of desire across your skin and you are quick to do as he says.

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You don't need a guard accompanying you to find your way back, and no one questions it either. Brenna hardly spares you a glance when you enter.

You pace impatiently around the room, trying to distract yourself from the fire in your belly. You want to finally leave, but you also want what he promised. Was the promise of an amazing orgasm just to distract you from wanting to leave? Does he plan to delay your departure so he won't have to keep up his part of the deal? Maybe you should give yourself an orgasm so you can think clearly, at least. It's not like he would know…

You sit down on the sofa and pull back the skirt, reaching down to touch yourself. The waves of pleasure you manage to achieve are… meager. It's almost boring. Your mind keeps wandering to Loki's promise, but your fantasies stop there. Loki, I want Loki to touch me, your body seems to be saying—or rather, demanding. Frustrated, you stand up, looking around the room for anything to assist you.

Your eyes land on his closet, and you go there to pull it open.

You take in the scent of leather; A scent that you now associate with Loki. You rifle through his
garments like you did the other day, wondering if he has anything that might interest you.

You smile when you find a pair of black leather gauntlets used for sword fighting. This will do. Not only would they be immensely sexy on him, but you can also close your eyes you and pretend Loki is touching you with them as you try to get yourself off.

Slowly, you put on one of the gloves. The fingers are a bit too long for you, but it fits well enough. You skim it over your exposed skin. Your cleavage, your throat. You squeeze slightly, imagining it's his touch. Yes, this is wonderful.

You let your hand skim down, under your skirt, between your legs, rubbing yourself through your drenched panties. It's amazing.

Slowly, you sink to your knees, steadying yourself against the closet as you keep rubbing yourself. Then you push your gloved hand into your panties and rub the leather over your clt directly. It's an interesting feeling, smooth and foreign, and much better than touching yourself directly. Smiling to yourself at your naughty behavior, you push a finger inside yourself and see how it feels.

You groan and close your eyes. It's nice, so nice and smooth. With all the leathers Loki always wears, you must have developed a taste for it.

You go slow, teasing yourself, imagining it's Loki's hand in the glove.

You grind your hips against your palm, feeling so wonderful. Just a little further-

"I've never been disobeyed so licentiously."

His voice, oh ancients, his voice. You shudder, cumming all over the glove. A fraction of a second later, fear shoots through your veins and you jump up, hiding the gloves behind your back as you stumble away from the source of the voice.

Loki is standing by his bed like he's been there for a while, watching you commit your disobedient act. His eyes are almost black, pupils dilated with lust. His head is tilted to one side, arms crossed in front of him in a foreboding way. He looks neither angry, nor friendly. He looks like he expected obedience, and instead got the most lecherous display of his life.

"You- You're back soon, your majesty," you say, the most guilt ridden grin forming on your face. You can feel your nervous pulse in your throat.

"I was never gone." He removes his helmet and carelessly tosses it onto the bed. "I was here the entire time, pet, watching everything you did."

You tremble with nerves, but it makes sense. You can't hide from him. When you disobey, he will know.

You bring the gloves out from behind your back and sheepishly hold them out to him. "Sorry for what I did to them. I... I can buy you new ones, if you want."

The look he's giving you. Stars. Your entire body burns with heat.

His eyes move down to your offering, and in a three quick strides, he's in front of you, taking them from your hand. He lifts them up, scrutinizing the wetness on them with a displeased look.

"You've dirtied my property," he states, his voice level yet harsh. "And I don't think you could afford the replacement. You've disobeyed me. Is this your way of telling me my punishments have been too
soft for you? That you wish for a firmer hand to control you?"

You press your legs together, so very turned on by how serious and foreboding he is.

"I- I didn't mean to-" you struggle for an excuse.

Loki's leg sweeps out and kicks you at the back of your knees, causing them to buckle and you to fall down on your hands, right between his feet.

He clicks his tongue in a disappointed manner. "If I were you, pet, I would not lie to your master. You were deliberately looking for something to pleasure yourself with, and you've chosen my gauntlets. I know you were imagining me touching you with them, but why, pray tell, did you not simply wait for me to actually touch you?"

You breathe heavily, staring at the floor. You suddenly don't have a logical answer to that question.

You hear the rustling of leather, and then Loki crouches down in front of you. When you lift your head, your mouth hangs open and you almost drool. The elegant black fighting gloves combined with the rest of his outfit make him look so powerful, superior and dominating.

"The only thing I can think of," he says, "is that you wish to be punished. Presumably while I'm wearing these." He runs the glistening leather over your lips, smearing you with the evidence of your betrayal.

"How..." You're almost breathless. "How will you punish me, master?"

Smack. Without forewarning, he backhands you across the face.

"Don't speak, worm, I do not wish to hear your pathetic attempts at servility," he spits derisively.

You stare at him, stunned, but the prickling pain is shockingly pleasurable, as is the sting of his words.

"Your punishment is mine to choose," he continues. "You are not supposed to get excited thinking of it. I will hurt you until you learn your place. That's it."

"And where is my pla-" He slaps you again, shutting you up immediately. His gaze hardens and he stands up.

"Your place, my dearest whore, is beneath my heel."

He slowly walks around you, and then you are shoved flat against the ground, his boot pressing into your back, pinning you down.

"Fuck, Loki," you mutter under your breath. You are so turned on that it hurts. You're full of adrenaline and endorphins, and you know you've never felt like this in your life.

"You're enjoying this, whore?" he asks. "We'll have to change that."

His heel pushes harder against your back and you groan in pleasure.

"Hm, I knew you'd eventually reveal your true colors," he remarks. "You act so rebellious all the time, but now you are dripping and practically begging to be abased. Admit it, you love being completely in my control."

Well, in situations like this, of course you like it, but when it comes to the rest of your life, you'd
prefer to be free.

The pressure lifts off your back and he walks around you again. "Get up. Bend over the chair."

You clamber to your feet and steady your hands on the armchair, spreading your legs for him. This is just a game, after all, and your submission means nothing.

Loki comes to a stop behind you and lifts up your skirt, folding it out of the way. His leather covered hands slide beneath your panties and pull them down and away. You help him, kicking them off your legs.

"Who do you belong to?" he asks in a raspy voice that sends delicious shivers down your back.

"You, my king," you respond immediately.

He slaps you across your rear, hard enough that you lurch forward a bit.

"And do you know what that means?"

"Uh..."

Smack

"What does that make you?"

"Your slut?" you guess, your voice a little squeaky.

Smack

"More than that."

"Your... property?" You're panting heavily by now.

"Yes." Loki's voice is a hiss of heat, his hand now rubbing over your stinging skin, giving you some relief. "And what do you call someone who is someone else's property?"

You have to think for a moment. You feel like a student getting lectured by a teacher. The spanking sure fits to that image.

"A... slave...?"

"That's right, pet. You are my slave, and I am your master. You must obey my every will, and you may never leave me. But you don't want anything else, do you?"

You shake your head, and wonder for a moment if he really means that. But no, this is just part of the game. "No, master."

"Good. But you are still here to be punished."

He spanks you again, but this time, it's not with his hands. It feels like a broad leather strip from a whip of sorts, and it stings quite harshly.

You let out a pained groan.

Loki whips you across the back of your legs, moving on to new areas as not to damage your skin. You jerk forward at each impact.
Eventually, you can't take it anymore.

"Please, master," you wail. "I'm sorry! I- I'll repent for my wrongdoings!"

He pauses his flogging, but when he speaks, it's not a tone of gentleness. "You beg, slave? You refuse my punishment?"

You take a shuddering breath. "N-no, master. I just wish to please you instead."

"But pet." He leans over you, trailing the whip over your wet folds. "You should know by now, that nothing pleases me more than hurting you."

The ice of his words chills your bones, but it is no match for the heat at your core.

"...But alright, I will indulge you," he adds mercifully. "I don't want to break your pretty body yet, after all."

You let out a quiet sigh of relief. Your muscles are already aching from staying in this unflattering position for so long.

You feel his fingers slip under the ribbon around your neck, and he yanks on it hard, choking the breath out of your lungs. You are pulled upwards, until you're standing with your back leaned against his chest.

He releases you and you start coughing. Instantly, his gloved hand grips your chin, pressing your head back against him. It feels so impersonal now that you can't feel his direct skin contact.

Your heart almost jumps out of your chest when you feel the cold touch of a blade against your throat, right above the ribbon.

"You want to bargain?" he hisses in your ear. "I have many whores who wish to please me. What have you to offer me?"

Your mind is whirling at the intensity of the situation. You can't think of anything.

He tips your chin back further, pressing the knife harder against your skin.

"Nothing?" he taunts. "Nothing but your meager body? You're worthless, pet, and I should end you now that you've done what I wanted."

Your heart rate spikes. He wouldn't- No, this is all part of the game. You trust him, right?

"Please don't..." you whisper, hoping dearly he's just playing.

"Then you'll stay with me?" he questions. "You'll serve me every day for the rest of your life?"

"This... You don't really mean all this, right?" you question, taking deep breaths to keep calm.

A few seconds pass, and Loki does nothing. Then the knife is removed from your throat. "Of course not. You are safe in your surrender. Would you like a pause?"

You shake your head, managing to calm yourself. "I think I can handle it. I just... didn't know if I could trust you."

"Pet, I am a responsible master." His tone of voice suggests that you should have known that. "As long as you do not betray me, I would never truly hurt you. Now, I would really like to continue."
You feel him grind his erection against you.

"Would you let me pleasure you, master?" you ask, thinking that might get things going again.

He says nothing and simply steps around you. He sits down in the armchair, staring at you with raw need. His breaths are uneven, his hands are clutching at the armrests, and his erection is straining against his pants.

"You offer me your mouth for my pleasure?" he asks.

"Yes, master," you confirm, lowering yourself to your knees.

He leans forward a little, regarding you with blown pupils. "Is it because you adore me so much? Do you adore your master, little slave?"

You don't need to think to answer that one. "Yes, I adore you very much, master," you answer with a smile.

You can tell the admittance of affection has an effect on him, but he keep up his expression schooled.

"Prove it," he demands. "Prove how much you dote on me."

Still smiling, you shuffle forward, in between his legs. You eagerly reach out and palm his erection through his pants.

Loki hisses at the touch, barely able to restrain himself.

"I changed my mind," he grates out. "You don't deserve the reward of pleasuring me."

You still your hand. "So you'd rather deny yourself?" you ask innocently.

He pulls his gloves off and whacks you across the face with them. It almost makes you laugh. It's so obvious that literally anything you do will have him finished in a mere second.

"Of course not," he hisses. "Open your mouth. Stick out your tongue."

You obey, curious what he's about to do.

Never breaking eye contact, Loki frees his throbbing, weeping cock. A few strokes of his hand, and he groans, covering your face with ropes of sticky cum.

You just kind of sit there, surprised and strangely turned on, and let it happen. It runs down your cheeks, drizzles over your outstretched tongue, fills your mouth. It's a far bigger load than you expected.

Loki makes a pleased sound, satisfied, and leans back, admiring his work.

"Do you know how you look right now, pet?" he asks mockingly once he's caught his breath. "Your face drenched in my seed, kneeling at my feet so flushed with desire, a collar with my name on it around your neck?"

You draw your tongue back into your mouth, swallowing his bitter gift. Then you try to lick more of it from where it's running down your chin, but your tongue is too short to reach it all.

Loki laughs at the sight, genuine amusement in his eyes. "This is who you are reduced to. A whore, desperate for her master's cum. Not in the slightest the assassin she once made herself out to be."
"I don't see why I can't be both," you say, feeling that the mood has lightened significantly. You bring a hand up to your face, scooping his release onto your fingers and licking it off.

He watches you with interest, smiling all the while. "We both know what you'd rather be. I'm sure all this has aroused your dirty mind terribly, hm? Would you like release?"

"Yes," you admit bashfully.

Lounging on the armchair, sated and content, Loki looks every bit like a king on a throne, a generous master smiling down at you, his lowly subject.

"Your place is at my feet, pet, so I will allow you to rub yourself against my boot." He hold out one of his feet, shaking his boot at you.

You stare at it. "You… You want me to... hump myself against your leg, like a desperate bitch in heat?"

Judging by his smile, the answer is yes.

Your face heats up furiously. This is absolutely degrading!

"I won't do that!" you declare.

"Just try it, pet, I'm sure you'll enjoy it," Loki teases. "Otherwise, feel free to use your inferior fingers and grow frustrated without your release."

You grit your teeth. Damn him! Are you really cursed never to find pleasure from anything but him?

"Fine!" you snap. "But know that I hate your guts right now."

You're about to move over to his leg, when he stops you.

"Take your dress off, pet. I want to see you while you do this." His eyes are still sparkling with amusement, like he can't quite believe you're really planning on doing this.

With a glare in his direction, you quickly free yourself of the restricting dress, tearing the bra off with it. The only things on you now are the collar, the bracelets, and the heels.

Cautiously, you kneel down next to his leg, wrapping your arms around it and pressing your body flush against it. You feel him turn his toe, pressing it up against your aching mound.

It's so very shameful, but your hips seek out the friction on their own, rubbing against the leather of his boot.

Loki is watching you with keen amusement, but you ignore him. You let your body guide you, grinding against him, pushing your chest out so your nipples rub against the leather. With some effort, you finally manage to push yourself over the edge.

You shudder against him, letting the self-induced pleasure flow through you, before shamefully pulling away and sitting down on the floor. You cannot believe you just did that.

"What a dirty, filthy whore you are," Loki says, though he can't contain a laugh. "Look at the mess you've made on me."

You glance at his boot to see the glistening evidence of probably your lowest moment, but strangely, you don't regret doing it.
"I expect you to clean this off," he continues.

You look around for anything you can use to wipe it.

"...with your tongue, kitten."

Right. Of course that's what he wants.

You glare up at him. "I hate you, you know that, right?"

He just laughs and nudges his foot in your direction. "Hate is a strong emotion, pet. I'm flattered."

You take his boot in your hands and reluctantly drag your tongue over the top. You taste the tang of leather as well as your own arousal. It's not too unpleasant, but your face burns in humiliation by the end of it.

"Good pet," Loki praises you once you've licked it all away. He reaches out and musses over the top of your head. "How are you feeling?"

"Thoroughly humiliated," you grumble.

"But you enjoyed it, did you not?" He gives you a gentle smile.

"Yes, I suppose I did," you admit, standing up and sitting down on his lap. "But I also hate you."

He just nuzzles against your cheek, giving you a soft kiss. Then he scoops you in his arms and stands up, carrying you over to his bed. He lays you down gently, smiling down at you.

"You're staying, aren't you?" he asks, sounding uncertain.

"What?" Is he serious?

"With me," he clarifies unnecessarily. "Your affections for me will only grow the longer you stay, I promise. You won't even need to see my callousness unless you ask for it. I will only hurt you when you scream and beg me to do it. You'll have everything you need here. Or would you rather I toss you out into the street?"

"We... we agreed you'd let me go," you stammer, your head starting to spin. "I want to go back to my friends!"

"But do you know where they are?" he questions. "My guards searched for the camp you described, and as you assumed, it had been abandoned. Will you ever even find them again?"

"I... I don't."

"All of Asgard knows now what you did," he interrupts you. "Do you really think anyone would shelter you? To loyalists, you are a traitor, an assassin. To rebels, you are equally a traitor, a whore. Even your friends will think you have betrayed them."

You feel distressed at his words. Is that really the case?

"Come now, don't fret." Loki sits down on the bed and pulls you into his arms. "I'll take care of you. I'll grant you kindness and comfort, which the cold streets of Asgard cannot offer you. It won't be so bad with me. You feel something for me, no? If nothing else, you enjoy the pleasure I grant your body. A pleasure you've become addicted to. You know no one can ever replace me, least of all yourself, don't you? Perhaps you even feel sympathy for me. A sympathy which can soon blossom
into love. Wouldn't that be nice? To have someone to love?"

Despite his warm embrace, you feel ice cold. "I love my friends…" you mumble.

"But your friends are not here," he reminds you. "I am all you have right now. And I care for you, too. I can be an affectionate master."

"I don't want that," you say weakly. "I can't love someone who isn't my equal. Someone who doesn't love me back."

"You know I cannot make you that," he says softly. "I have no love to give, to you or anyone. But there is one thing I am particularly good at giving. Lies. Watch, I can make you believe it."

He leans in and touches his lips to yours, kissing you softly. Your breath stutters and you stare at him through a veil of tears.

He pulls away, his fingers caressing yours, his gaze so fond and tender.

"I love you," he says, and he sounds so very genuine. His lips form a soft, gentle smile, as he gazes into your eyes. "Pet. I care for you. We can make something together."

You continue to stare at him. You know he's lying, he just told you so, but you see no evidence of it on his face, hear nothing but sincerity in his words.

"Do you want to?" he asks softly. "Do you want to believe it? I can lie to you every day. I can lie to you until you forget completely that none of my words hold the truth."

Is this what loving the god of lies is like? Is that the only way he can ever show affection? You wonder what he sees in you that makes him want to do this. To lie to you every day so that you won't leave him.

"I don't-" you begin, but he interrupts you, leaning in and pulling you closer, his mouth next to your ear.

"Remember what you asked of me?" he murmurs. "'Kill me with the sweetest poison.' Do you know what that is, yet? It isn't love, my dear. It's lies. Lies that poison the water on your tongue and fill you up like the very air you breathe. Lies that kill you softly, laying you into a bed of down and closing your eyes with a feather light touch."

You shiver. His mere words are poison.

He pulls back and kisses you again, weaving his fingers in your hair, coaxing your mouth to open with his tongue.

You clutch at his shoulders, slowly parting your lips and letting him in. He's soft like lies. Intoxicating like poison. Sweet like death.

You can feel the puppet strings pull taught against you. You know you can't leave, he's made sure of it, but could you really learn to love him? He doesn't even know you.

You've given him so much, and yet you've kept from him just as much. You've given him your body, your pleasure, even your tears. And he managed to force a love confession from you. Whether that meant anything, you have yet to decide. After all, what is love? Is it any different from the passion you feel in his bed?
You've kept from him your mind, your truest self. He knows neither your name, nor what makes you tick.

He never knew you when you were sad or angry, when the rain ran through your clothes and you punched your pain away against the bark of a tree.

He never knew you when you sat around a fire with Frederikke, with Leander and Matej, when you cooked your food and laughed at Lee's dumb stories. How Rika would put her arm around you while you were sharpening your blades. How Mat would push you to train harder and harder until your muscles ached for days.

All he knows is the you who surrenders. The you who eats from his hand. Who calls him king and master because it pleases him. Who likes burning herself on the matches he lights for her.

You feel like crying again. You miss them. You miss them so much. All the sex in the world couldn't make that go away, but you don't know where they are. All you know is that Loki is here, kissing you, promising to numb your pain with his sweet lies.

Chapter End Notes

I feel the need to mention that, despite what Loki says, this was not safe bdsm. Oh, and he's also a manipulative little shit, I know. Moral of the story: Don't trust someone like Loki, but you can totally trust the real Loki!
Chapter Notes

I'm just about done with the first act of my story, so here is another chapter. It's short, but sweet. Let me know what you think!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

You sit in bed, staring out the window. You've given yourself to Loki, and you wonder whether that was the right decision.

He has you trapped in his web, and you don't see a way out, but does that mean you should stop fighting? Somehow, you just don't feel like struggling anymore.

A knock at the door startles you out of your thoughts. Right, a servant is supposed to come to measure you and give you a more permanent wardrobe.

"Come in," you call out without looking away from the window.

You hear the door open, and footsteps shuffle in.

"Oh, good, you're alone," a familiar voice says.

Your stomach sinks with dread and you slowly turn to see Eala, arms full of fabric and a measuring tape.

"I didn't know you were a seamstress," you say.

"Oh, I'm not," she says with a smile, coming over and dropping the fabric on the bed. "But I bribed the actual seamstress to let me talk to you. Don't worry, I'll still take your measurements, miss. Wouldn't want the king to get suspicious, now would we?"

She holds the measuring tape between her fingers like a whip, smiling an unnerving smile. You glance at it uncertainly. You realize you're dressed in only a short white nightgown and a pair of panties.

"Get up, miss," Eala instructs. "Just stand with your legs apart and your arms spread, and I'll do the rest. There's nothing to be afraid of."

You slowly rise, eyeing her suspiciously, but so far, she hasn't done anything to warrant that.

When you're in position, she kneels down and begins measuring you, jotting the numbers down on a little booklet she draws from her pocket.

She measures your feet and legs in silence, then stands up.

"You need to take your gown off for the rest, miss," she says, waiting expectantly.

Reluctantly, you pull it off over your head. You aren't intimidated by her, especially since she's shorter than you and you could easily overpower her frail form.
When she resumes measuring you, she finally asks what you were waiting for her to ask.

"Why didn't you kill him?"

"I... I couldn't." You begin to think of an excuse, which is a little difficult with her sliding the measuring tape all over your naked body. "He is too powerful."

Eala meets your gaze, still smiling, still putting the friendly servant act on. "Didn't you wait until he was sleeping, miss?"

She wraps the measuring tape around your throat and you wonder in a brief moment of panic if she means to strangle you. Then she removes it again, jotting down that measurement, too.

You don't feel like outright lying to her, so you just apologize. "I'm sorry."

"I can't trust you to do this, can I, miss?" she asks, finishing her measurements and tucking away the notebook. "I'll have to do it myself."

You watch her in silence, feeling neither this way nor that about her statement. She has every right to want him dead. It's not her who sold her soul to him, after all. You should just let her do this.

She brings over the individual fabrics and hands them to you.

"Tell me which ones feel nice, miss."

You let cotton and wool, satin and silk slide over your skin, but you aren't really paying attention. You absentmindedly select a few, then nod as Eala suggests colors that go with your complexion.

"You'll look so pretty for him," she says when she's finally done. "I hope you're happy."

She doesn't sound accusatory or condescending, which somehow makes it worse.

You quickly put your nightgown back on, and she's already turning to leave.

"Eala, wait!" you call after her. "You don't- I... I can..."

She turns back to you, still smiling sweetly. "You don't have to say anything, miss. I understand. By the way, the nine guards are all still rotting in the dungeons. No executions yet."

With that, she strides out of the room and leaves you alone.

You sit back down on the bed, head in your hands. You don't hate Loki. For some reason, you can't hate him after everything he's done. Is he right about you? Are there feelings on the other side of hate in your heart?

You let yourself fall back on the bed. How do you feel about Loki—truly, without lying to yourself?

You feel sympathy. You understand how difficult it is to rule. You know about his troubled past, the conflicts with his family. He isn't all bad, for someone who easily could be.

You feel passion. His body, his being. The danger, the thrill, the masterful way he overpowers you in more ways than one. He's a good bed partner, that's for sure.

He wants you to love him like a pet loves its master, and perhaps you do. Perhaps you will, soon enough. You love danger, and he is danger. He is high highs and low lows, the very definition of thrill. You love the unpredictable, and that is he.
The only thing that bothers you, is your place in all this. You don't feel like you entirely fit the mold of a loving, doting pet. You are danger just as much as him. In fact, the closer he lets you, the more power he is inadvertently giving you.

You roll off the bed and head for the door. Sven is outside, a generous gift from your king. He now takes half of Brenna's shifts.

"I'd like to go outside," you say. "Do you think the king would allow that if you came with me?"

Sven looks you over, a doubtful look appearing on his face at your skimpy nightgown. "I think that's something you'll have to discuss with him."

You pout, but realize he's right. "Do you know when he'll be back?"

Sven gives you an encouraging smile. "I think he just needs to finish giving audience to a few more people, then he can spend the entire rest of the day with you."

You return his smile as best you can. "Thanks. You're the best guard in this palace. It's kind of surprisingly, actually, that you weren't part of the deserters."

He lets off a halfhearted laugh. "I'm loyal to the crown, and I try to stay out of trouble. I've got a wife with a rebellious spirit enough for us both."

Your smile turns genuine now and you lean against the doorframe. "Really? What's her name?"

"Kiara." He looks a bit bashful now. "We have a home out in the center of Asgard. She works at a blacksmith's shop. That's how I met her, commissioning weapons for the guards. I came there often to pick up the finished orders and we would have a chat. Eventually, things sparked between us and we've been together ever since."

"That's wonderful!" You feel your heart warm at the story. Maybe life isn't so bad.

Boot steps echo through the hallway. You turn your head, and there he is, green cape swishing behind him.

His gaze takes in the scene before him, you, in a skimpy nightgown, talking to the guard you asked him to implement. You can tell he's not pleased.

"Your majesty." Sven bows and clasps his fist over his heart.

Loki gives him a sidelong glance, then puts his hand on your chest and pushes you backwards into the room, not breaking his stride.

You stumble to keep up with him, until the door closes behind him and he releases you.

"Are you enjoying his company, pet?" he asks, going—to no one's surprise—toward his collection of alcoholic drinks.

"I was just talking to him," you explain, following after him while keeping a safe distance. "Should you be drinking this early?"

"No," he answers gruffly, and pours himself a cup, which he then proceeds to empty.

You watch in mild concern.

"Perhaps I should keep the door locked," he contemplates after refilling it. "Or better yet, shackle
"I wasn't trying anything!" you insist, watching him sit down on the sofa. "He's married!"

Loki smirks into his goblet. "Naughty woman. You truly stop at nothing, do you?"

You sigh, walking around to stand in front of him. "I think we should go outside. Taking a walk, getting fresh air, is a much better way of dealing with stress than drinking."

He takes another sip. "And I suppose you'd want me to hold your hand and tuck a flower behind your ear while we're at it, would you?"

You decide to ignore his mocking remarks. "Do you never do anything fun, besides sex and drinking? Is there nothing else that makes you happy?"

"Oh, there are a few things," he informs you, though his foreboding smile tells you it'll be nothing good. "It makes me happy when people snivel and shake at something I've done. I enjoy seeing the fear in their eyes, the tears draggling their faces. Most of all, I enjoy fulfilling my revenge on people who have wronged me."

"Like your former advisor and the guards?" you guess, no longer fazed by his callous words.

"No. They were but minor inconveniences." He's staring at you with an intensity that makes you feel unnerved. "When I take revenge on someone, I ruin every aspect of their lives. I take away everything they hold dear, slowly, making them think they still have a chance to stop it. Then I destroy them, chip away piece by piece until every part of them is broken. I make them do things they would never have considered doing. I humiliate them, I hurt them, I twist the thoughts around in their mind."

You stare back at him. "Are you talking about me?"

All you get for an answer is a short laugh, then he stands up and puts his drink aside. "Come, we shall take that walk."

With a flourish of his hand, your nightgown grows longer until it turns into something of a sundress, then two flat shoes appear on your feet.

Loki waits at the door for you to make a move. You feel like he just stepped on you. You want to yell at him, or maybe to cry, but going outside into the sun seems like the better option, so you obediently follow after him.

***

The gardens are sunny and full of sweet smelling flowers. Loki leads you into a secluded section surrounded by tall hedges, where you spot a gazebo and a wooden garden swing. The flowers here are mainly roses, red and white.

Loki has stopped and is looking around.

"I used to put snakes between the roses for unsuspecting lovers to grab," he recounts, a fond look on his face.

You come to a halt beside him. "Poisonous ones?"

"No. They were venomous." He chuckles.
"Did anyone die?" You give him a worried glance.

"Sadly not. We have skilled healers—though their corpses would have made an excellent fertilizer for the roses."

Sick of the morbidity, you walk over to the swinging seat and sit down, letting it rock back and forth. You look at Loki, who looks strangely serene. The gold of his armor is glittering in the sun, the green harmonizing nicely with the hedges.

He meets your eyes, smiling, and comes over.

"For you, my love." A thorny red rose appears in his hand, which he holds out to you.

You stare at it, wondering if it will kill you if you touch it.

"Take it, dearest," he beguiles you, though there is an obvious sinister touch to his voice.

"No thank you," you hedge. "I'm not much of a flower person."

"Then take this instead." He shoves both hands against your shoulders, rose included, and leans forward to kiss you.

You can't say you expected this, so you just kind of freeze. The thorns of the rose poke through your dress, pricking into your skin and, you assume, Loki's hand by the force he's pinning you with. His tongue is in your mouth instantly, his teeth scraping against your lips.

Your eyes slide half shut and you move your mouth sloppily against his. He overwhelms your senses and you slowly move a hand up and push it into his hair, letting yourself melt.

When Loki pulls away, there are spots of blood on your dress, as well as on his hand. He pulls the thorns from his palm and tosses the rose away, then sits down beside you.

A few seconds pass, and both of you are just silently sitting there, not even looking at the other.

"Loki, can I ask you something?" you eventually break the silence.

He meets your gaze, waiting for you to go ahead.

"Why are you forcing me to stay with you?" you finally express that which you have been wondering about. "You know I won't be a threat to you if you let me go. Is it just because of my body? Will you keep me until you grow tired of-"

"Pet, I'm not forcing you to stay here," he interrupts you calmly.

You blink, completely thrown off your rhythm. "What…?"

"If you want to leave, you can." He sounds completely sincere. "You can go right now, if you wish. I'm sure you'll find some way to survive. Although, without the potions I provide, you might find yourself having to feed a couple more mouths than you bargained for. It will be harsh, in the winter. You know, summer is almost over. The rains are coming. Will the desperation of men be enough to keep you warm?"

Angrily, you jump up from the seat and take a few steps away. "I'm not helpless! I know how to hunt. I can just go back to our old camp."

"I think my guards were a bit rough when they searched it," he says, his voice perfectly soft and
controlled. "They might have destroyed it in the process. Of course, you can rebuild it. But if you sit there, all alone in the snow, and think to yourself how foolish you were to refuse me, don't you dare come back and beg me to take you back in."

You clench your fists and take a deep breath. No, you won't lose your temper, not when he is so calm.

"You're so beautiful, Loki," you say, turning back to face him. "And so cold, like the winter that awaits me. My fate is one and the same either way. If I always have the choice to leave, then I will stay until you become unbearable. If you want to be a good king, you need someone to ground you. Odin had Frigga, you need-"

"Do not mention them!" he snaps, his mood flipping like a leaf in a storm.

"Right, my apologies." You try your best to remain unfazed. "What I meant to say was, that you can't rule a kingdom with only coldness and war. You need kindness. Love. Charity. A woman, a queen, to soften your edges. Someone compassionate. Sensitive. Wise."

Loki is listening to our words with surprising attentiveness. "You do realize you are not describing yourself, right?"

You lose your train of thought for a moment, before irritation fills you. "Yes, of course not! I didn't mean myself! I didn't mean anyone in fact. I don't think anyone could love you. You ooze charm when you want to, but I don't think a woman could love you if you can't love her back."

"She wouldn't have to know I am incapable of love," Loki suggests. "I could lie to her. Tell her I love her every day."

You laugh drily. "That poor woman! You would lie to her so she falls in love with you, and then what? Give her a couple of your children and then toss her away? I wouldn't wish that on my worst enemy!"

"Do you even have a worst enemy?" Loki asks.

You realize you've been pacing around in front of Loki in your agitation. Now you stop to think. "I don't know… Brenna maybe. I absolutely hate her, but I still wouldn't want her to be your wife!"

"Why not?" Loki immediately questions. "She is loyal, strong-

"I said you need someone kind, not someone even more brutish!" you cut him off. "Where you're smart and cunning, she's dumb as a loaf of bread. All she cares about is violence. You seem more sophisticated than that, and-"

"Who else then, do you suggest?" Loki asks, suddenly standing right behind you, his hands on your shoulders.

You twist your head up to look at him. "A- anyone but me! I hate you!"

"I hate you, too," he says, and then he leans down and kisses you.

You are completely stunned for several seconds. As soon as you regain control over your body, you jump away from him.

"Shouldn't you be lying to me?" you snap. "Saying you care?"
"You're the sweetest woman I know, dear, and I wouldn't trade you for all of Asgard," he says without skipping a beat.

"Well, good thing you have both," you scoff, turning away from him. You kick at a daisy.

"You seem agitated, my love," Loki points out. "Would you like me to help you release your emotions in a way that doesn't involve hurting innocent flowers?"

You slowly turn to him, unable to grasp how he has the boldness to say things like that. To make a point, you stomp down on the daisy you just kicked. Loki raises a brow, but says nothing.

Weary from your fit of rage, you sink to the ground, picking aimlessly at the grass. Loki sits down beside you, and immediately his hands and lips are on you. In less than a second, your hands are buried in his hair, your lips slowly moving against his in an open-mouthed kiss. He supports his weight with one arm as he lowers both of you down with him on top of you, his other hand sliding under your dress.

You arch up against him when his hand pulls aside your panties and cups over your heat, pressing his palm against your clit. The kiss continues, slow, wet, sensual, while his hand teases heat into your belly. As soon as you begin to grow wet, Loki's fingers slip inside you, rubbing so deliciously against your sweet spot. You let your head fall back, Loki's lips landing on your neck. You hook one leg over his hip, then the other, pulling him in. His hand draws away and he unfastens the ties of his pants, pulling them down just enough. With his cool lips at the base of your neck, his teeth scraping sloppily against your heated skin, he pushes himself inside you and makes you complete.

You arch up again, mouth open in silent moans. Loki begins slowly thrusting into you, hitting you deep with each deliberate stroke. It's like he's savoring each push inside you, drawing out the sensation as long as he can. You don't think he's ever fucked you like this before—No, not fucked. He's not fucking you. He's making love to you.

"Loki…" you breathe.

His tongue is on your neck. His hips are slowly rolling into you. You can hear the soft grunts of pleasure. Your own body is moving, twisting in this slow dance of passion.

"What are you doing…?" you whisper. Your mind can't catch up, but your hands are in his raven locks. They're clutching to the leather armor and sliding down his back.

Loki's head lifts up, his hair dragging along your skin. Then his lips are on yours again. Slow. As slow as the pleasure washing through your body.

The sun glistens in his hair, making it take some of its heat. His eyes are the universe. An endless depth you could never hope to understand.

You've never been coaxed to the edge so softly before. It isn't like a fall into the wild waters. It's like a single step, and you're there, warm waves crashing down over your head.

Loki is still taking the breath from your lungs, his hands on either side of your head, his mouth sliding along yours. You can feel his own breath stutter. His eyes fall shut and the waves of his passion mix with yours. His hands curl into your hair and he spends himself inside you.

He has a halo of sunbeams around his head when he sits up. His hands slide down your arms and you grasp for them. He holds them in his, kneeling between your legs and looking down at you. His hair is tousled, his lips are parted as he breathes heavily.
You don't know what to say. Maybe you're not supposed to say anything.

Slowly, Loki pulls on your hands, bringing you up to sit. Your white dress is stained with dirt and grass. You feel like a former virgin who just discovered the passions of her body in a lovers' tryst.

The icy winter is beautiful. People perish in his cold every year, but you can't deny that he's beautiful.

Chapter End Notes

Don't worry guys, this story isn't going to devolve into a fluff fest. I don't want to reveal anything about where it's going, though, so you'll just have to wait and see when we get there.
Chapter 14

Chapter Notes

I absolutely love talking to you guys in the comments! You are all such cool people, every single one of you, and I love how everyone focuses on different elements of my story
Here is the next chapter. Enjoy~

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It takes only a couple of days for your wardrobe to arrive. You wonder if he had every tailor in the palace working on it.

Boxes of beautiful dresses in all sorts of colors and fabrics lay spread out on every surface of the king's bedchambers. Some include high heeled shoes, other flat ones. Some contain lacy lingerie, some modest lingerie, some see-through lingerie. There is jewelry, simple gold bands and necklaces, pins for your hair. There is only one box that stands out from the rest.

In it is a simple white shirt, a hunter's green doublet with gold embroidery, a pair of black breeches and two soft leather boots. You are more in awe at this box than any of the others.

"Do you like what I chose for you?" Loki asks, coming up behind you.

"Yes," you say immediately. "But why this one?"

You feel a gentle hand land on your shoulder. "It is an idea I had. I enjoy you as my bedmate, but I realized all your training would go to waste if that was all I used you for. I want to teach you a few things. How to fight properly. And, more importantly, how to kill."

You stare at the box. It's a single piece of your former life. Of your life training to fight, to kill the king. To kill, which you never managed to go through with.

"Why?" you ask quietly, not believing he could be so generous.

"I want you to serve me in more ways than one. You have power, little kitten. You have potential. I could make something of you. A king can use someone like you."

You pick up the doublet, imagining yourself in these clothes. These aren't the clothes of a concubine. These are practical, powerful.

"You want me to be your assassin?" you ask.

"Of sorts. Not quite. I wouldn't send you to faraway places to slay my enemies. You will have a place at my court."

Slowly, you lower the doublet and turn around to him. "I still don't understand why you're being so generous. Don't you like keeping me under your heel?"

He smiles slightly. "Of course. But I find it far more appealing if I could put a dagger in your hand and know you would not turn it against me. If I could bestow upon you important tasks that would
give you power and glory, then at night count on you to get on all fours and beg for me to fuck you. I want you to stand beside my throne one moment, and fall to the ground in front of me the next."

Your mouth hangs open slightly, your eyes are wide, and you just stare at him. Whatever he's saying, it sounds strangely appealing. It almost makes you feel all giddy with excitement. You knew you never fit the mold of the mindless little slave.

"Does that mean you trust me?" you ask.

His smile turns affectionate. "We will see. This is merely an idea. There is a lot that would need to happen beforehand. Getting blood on your hands, for one."

"You want me to kill someone for you?" you breathe. "Who?"

He shrugs lightly. "A prisoner. Anyone will do for now. Do you think you are up for it?"

"I... I think so," you decide. "I was prepared to kill you, after all. It's not like I'm an innocent soul."

"Good." He straightens up and steps away. "I must attend to work now, but if you'd like, I can assess your skill this afternoon. Feel free to get dressed. I will send a servant to stow away the rest of your clothes, and help you with anything you might need."

"Thank you, my king." You give him a soft smile.

The corner of his mouth turns up briefly before he leaves.

***

You stare at yourself in the mirror while two servants sort your clothes into an empty cabinet.

You look important. With the beautifully embroidered doublet, someone might even peg you as a young member of lower nobility. Not to mention, the fact that you're wearing pants speaks of your fighting skills. Only someone who could benefit from pants would wear them.

"Would you like me to braid your hair?" one of the servants asks, smiling at you in the mirror.

You turn to her. "Sure, why not?"

Her smile widens and she sits you down on a chair, taking a comb and a bit of hair grease, drawing all your hair back and then braiding it down your back. When she's done, you look even more like how you've always imagined you'd look like one day. Badass, cold, and not to be underestimated. All that's missing is a sword at your hip.

The servant smiles, looking proud at her work. You don't smile back, wanting to maintain your cool look, but thank her nonetheless.

As soon as the servants leave, you step out to talk to Sven, only to find Brenna standing there.

She sneers when she sees you. "Did you steal the clothes of a man, or did his majesty dress you like this to keep the other men away?"

"I don't see how you look any different," you retort, looking her up and down. Her own blonde hair is in a braid, and the royal armor hides all of her feminine figure.

She grins as if she was waiting for you to step out of line, and you notice she's missing a tooth. "I'm a royal guard, not some whore. My body is useful for protecting the king, unlike yours, which is just
there as a temporary distraction."

"Maybe soon, that will change," you say, crossing your arms confidently. "I'm more than you think I am."

She just laughs. "Oh, yes, you're the 'assassin!' A little brat who thought she could kill the big bad wolf and instead ended up between his teeth."

You scoff. "I could kill you. Take your armor off. Come on. You saw me put the king on his back."

"You tried this already," she reminds you, still smirking. "Just go back inside and wait for your master."

Your fists ball on their own and you don't know why. You have to take a deep breath to calm yourself.

"I don't understand why you seem to hate me," you say. "Are you just extremely loyal to the king, or are you jealous of me?"

She laughs and advances on you. "I dislike you because you're completely pathetic. What kind of assassin ends up with their victim's cock in their mouth?"

"Maybe I'm in it for the long game," you suggest, taking a step back out of her reach. "The king spends an awful lot of time with me, doesn't he? What if my powers in seduction are even greater than those in assassination? What if I'll do worse to him than just kill him?"

"Like what?" She doesn't seem deterred, still grinning maliciously. "Give him a bastard?" She takes a step toward you. "You know I'll tell him everything you just said, right?"

You quickly decide that this isn't worth it and flee back into the room to punch a pillow. You hate this. Why can't the people around you approve of you decisions for once?

***

Loki finds you wrapped in a blanket, moping on his bed.

"Are you not feeling well?" he asks, smiling slightly at the sight.

"I hate being cooped up here," you complain. "Your guards are the only ones to talk to, and Brenna hates my guts."

"Yes, she told me what you said." He looks mildly amused. "You'll do something worse than killing me? Might I ask what?"

"Haven't decided yet," you grumble.

"Perhaps your end goal is distracting me with your tantalizing body while a group of bandits raid the kitchens, leaving me to eat nothing but stale bread for a week," he jokes.

You give him a blank stare.

"Come now, get up," he brings the topic back to more relevant matters. "We will go outside to assess your skill."

Happy to get out of here, you jump out of bed. Loki's face brightens when he sees your whole outfit.
"Do you like this look on me?" you ask, thinking of Brenna's insulting words.

"Very much," he answers with a smile. "I might even prefer it."

Now your mood picks up, too. "Really? Does that mean you'll let me wear pants more often?"

He chuckles. "We'll see. Now come."

You follow him out the door, giving Brenna a triumphant smirk as you pass her. She just gives you an annoyed look.

You expect to be led into the courtyard, but instead are brought to a grassy lawn. There is a row of trees along one side, and a few benches on the other. It connects to the rest of the gardens, but is somewhat secluded against the edge of the palace walls.

"Here." Loki hands you two blunt wooden practice daggers, then summons two of his own.

You look at them skeptically. "I'm not a child, you know. Don't you trust me with the real ones?"

"These are for your safety more than mine," he explains with a smirk. "I wouldn't want to cut you by accident."

"You seem awfully sure of yourself," you remark, weighing them in your hands. "Do you want to make this interesting?"

"Interesting? How?" He regards you curiously, smiling playfully.

"How about whenever I get a hit on you, you have to do one thing I want, and vice versa," you suggest.

"You already do everything I want," he points out, taking a few steps away from you and getting into position. "I have nothing to gain from that wager."

"Is there nothing in that dark mind of yours you would normally be hesitant to ask of me?" you taunt, eyeing him carefully as you also get into stance.

"It's your loss, kitten," he gives in with a confident smile. "Have at me."

You run at him, bringing forth the countless hours you've spent sparring with Mat and Rika. Swipe, block, parry, dodge, twist, stab, kick, duck, punch.

Loki is just as fast as you, if not faster. It's fairly straightforward for you to block his rapid strikes, but you get the feeling he isn't going at it with full force. This is much different than the sparring match without the daggers.

You begin to realize that your smaller, leaner figure both gives you more mobility and less reach. You have to press close to make valid strikes against him, but that gives you less room to dodge. You also realize his stamina will be greater than yours, so you'll have to end this quickly.

It's mostly reflexes at this point, a high-speed battle of who loses concentration first. As soon as you see an opening, you move to stab him against the ribs, but only your empty fist collides with him. In the next second, one of his own daggers is held to the center of your chest.

"Hey!" you protest. "You made my dagger disappear! That's not fair!"

Loki laughs triumphantly. "It is not my fault if you lost it, pet."
He draws his dagger away and steps back, making your own reappear on the ground in front of you. You stoop down to pick it up, glaring at him. He's just standing there, smirking at you.

Without warning, you lunge at him, determined to get at least one successful strike, even if it means him getting another one at you. Instead of colliding with him, you fall right through him in a shimmer of green light and fall into the grass.

You're shocked for a brief moment, then quickly move to stand up. You freeze when the tip of a wooden dagger presses into your back.

"Two for me," Loki purrs, the smugness audible in his voice.

You roll away from him, jumping to your feet and feeling rather angry.

"This isn't fun!" you declare. "Stop cheating!"

"Isn't it?" he asks, gloating at your anger. "Then why am I so amused?"

"You're a coward," you say through gritted teeth. "You think you can't beat me without magic."

"Oh?" He comes a little closer, the smile fading. "If you want me to play fair, then make it worth my while. Offer me something."

He wants something concrete. Something sick and twisted that you have to come up with.

"I... I'll let you..." An idea begins to form in your mind, but you don't quite want to say it.

You take a step back, finding his intense gaze to be rather unnerving. "...Let you f-"

You falter when the predatory smirk returns and he closes the distance again.

You take two steps back this time. "I'll let you fuck me-"

He crosses the distance in only one stride, looking far too triumphant.

"Let me fuck you where?" he prompts.

You turn your face away, not wanting to look at him while you say it, continuing to back away.

"Fine," you get out through gritted teeth. "I'll let you fuck me in the ass."

The sheer delight in Loki's eyes has you flustered beyond belief.

He klicks his tongue, mocking smile stretching over his lips. "Such a crude offering. My, my, what a filthy little wench you are indeed. Well, alright. I accept. Try to attack me—if you still feel up to it."

Your shame quickly turns into fury, at you, and at him. With an angry shout you run at him.

You hack and slash at him wildly, forcing him back a few steps before he manages to take control. You cannot let him land a hit on you. You refuse to make true on your offer.

Loki is quick. He's blocking all your strikes, and you feel like you'll lose out to his stamina soon. You'll have to distract him somehow. Thinking quickly, you jump backwards and fling one of your daggers at his face from about a foot away. He barely has time to deflect it with his hand, and that's when you jut your other one against his ribcage, right where his heart is underneath the leather.
He freezes, looking both taken off guard and somewhat impressed. Then, with a theatrical exaggeration, he jerks backwards, dropping his daggers and clutching at his heart.

"You have killed me," he says dramatically, staggering backwards.

You're breathing heavily, first surprised, then triumphant. You grin, feeling far too powerful for your own good.

"One point for me," you say breathlessly.

Loki's eyes glint mischievously. "Not bad. I was wondering how you'd deliver the killing blow."

He looks like he barely broke a sweat.

You narrow your eyes. "Don't say you let me win, because I know that's a lie."

He smiles innocently. "I was never implying such a thing. All I will say is I have taken an accurate assessment of your technique. It is decent, but you lack in strength and stamina. When was the last time you exercised outside of sparring?"

*Decent.* You scoff. You clearly won, and you didn't need to cheat with magic.

Suddenly there's a hint of danger in his gaze. "Answer me, pet."

Right. Exercise. You think back to your little camp in the woods. You'd done a lot of sparring, weapon handling, even manual labor, but you'd never just exercised for the *sake* of exercising. You don't want to admit that, though.

"I think sleeping with you counts as exercise," you say, and then immediately feel your head snap to the side and a stinging on your cheek.

When you look back, Loki is holding a short wooden staff, or a cane of sorts, with which he must have whacked you.

"Discipline, pet," he says, "is the key to excellence. You will start with fifty pushups. Do them. Now."

You stare at him. You aren't sure if you like him playing the role of your personal trainer. He has enough power as is.

"Fifty?!" you repeat. "*Now*?!

His eyes narrow and he swings his cane, hitting you in the back of the knees so that you fall to the ground. "Yes, pet. *Now.*"

This is different. Being ordered around in a non-sexual way. You guess you should do as he says, since you really want an occupation outside of his bed.

You place your palms on the ground and stretch out your legs, knees off the ground. You think you can do fifty pushups. Maybe. Surely.

You sink down until your elbows are at a right angle, then lift back up.

"Count," Loki instructs, circling around you to check your form.

"One," you say, and do another one. "Two."
You fall into a rhythm, letting your mind go blank. "Nineteen... Twenty..."

Your muscles ache a little.

"Thirty... Thirty-one..."

Your arms are trembling and your breaths are falling short.

"Thirty-five..." You groan, barely keeping the willpower to push back up.

"Keep going, kitten," Loki orders, a warning note to his voice.

"Thirty... Seven..." You're wringing for air, arms shaking. You don't think you can do one more. It hurts too much. You freeze, breathing heavily.

"Giving up?" he asks, walking around you again.

"I... I can't-," you gasp.

You feel the end of the cane press against your back and your arms buckle. Falling flat against the ground, you can finally relax and catch your breath.

"I'm disappointed," Loki says, his voice lacking any sympathy. "Now I want to test your core strength. Lift back up on your elbows, legs outstretched like before. Hold that until I tell you to stop."

"My arms hurt," you groan. "I can't do this."

"You can, and you will." Loki prods you in the side with his stick, causing you to squeak. "Up."

Making a pained sound, you lift up on your elbows. There is less strain on your arms now, but you know your abdominal muscles will be burning in about a minute or so. They aren't nearly as trained as your arms.

Roughly a minute passes. And another. Your muscles are practically screaming.

"Loki!" you wail. "Please! How much longer?"

"Until I say so," comes the curt answer. You wonder if he's enjoying this.

You hold out a little longer. The seconds seem to pass so unbearably slow.

You let out a drawn out yell of frustration, trying to bite through the pain.

Loki still doesn't react.

"I can't anymore," you concede, and drop yourself to the ground, gasping for air.

"Again, you disappoint me."

You're covered in sweat, caring only about breathing right now. With the sun shining overhead, your throat feels very parched.

"Water," you mumble. "I need water."

"There's a pump over there," Loki says, pointing with his stick.
You lift your head, seeing a pump and a basin at the edge of the gardens. Quickly, you stand up, stumbling over.

You pull on the handle a couple times, watching a light drizzle turn into a gush of water. You forgo cupping water into your hands and just hold your head under the stream, dozing your entire face with cool, refreshing water and taking big gulps.

Once you've had your fill, you return to your king, who is still standing there with disappointment on his face.

"You understand I will punish failure," he says, leaning on the stick.

You know that all too well, but you have never experienced it in a non-sexual way.

"How... will you punish me?" you ask.

"Oh, no, that comes later," he says, his gaze sharpening dangerously. "We are far from done. How is your stamina? I want you to run along this row of trees. Twenty times. No, thirty."

You gape at him. "I'm already exhausted! I'll barely make ten."

He saunters over to you, then raises his stick and whacks you across your rear. Hard.

"Run. Now."

You're not used to his cruelty being non sexual. Is it really your fault, then, that you're beginning to feel just a hint of arousal?

You start running, knowing you will fail and knowing he will punish you for it. But that's what this is all about. Pushing you to your limits in ways you aren't used to, then making sure you understand your place in all this. Whether it will be painful or pleasurable punishment, you don't know yet.

You run, back and forth, until sweat is beading on your forehead and your lungs burn. You feel your footfall begin to falter, stumbling more than running as exhaustion overtakes you.

"You're not running, pet," Loki remarks.

"I- I can't," you gasp, wheezing as your legs carry you past him at a sluggish pace.

Your world is pain and you're at your limits, but despite knowing you failed the task, you also know that deep down you did exactly what he wanted, and that feels good.

"Come then, lest you keel over," Loki offers, tapping the cane on the ground beside him.

You stumble over and collapse onto the ground, taking big, gulping breaths.

He turns so his shadow is over you, whether to give you relief of the sun, or to remind you of your place, you don't know.

"May... May I drink more water?" you pant as soon as your breathing has steadied enough.

"Go," he permits.

You hurry back over to the pump, pulling the handle and dousing your entire sweaty body in it. You hope you're not ruining the doublet, but your main thought is gulping down the soothing liquid.
You stroll back over to Loki, feeling strangely calm and happy now that you've seen to your needs. You wonder if you can make the punishment less severe if you apologize.

"I'm sorry for falling short of expectations, my king," you say, still slightly breathless, and drop to your knees in front of him.

Loki looks down at you, not with surprise exactly, but with interest that this was how you decided to return.

"You're drenched, kitten," he states, his tone not giving any further hint at what he's thinking.

You nod. Indeed you are.

"Have you had enough?" he asks.

You wonder if that's a trap, if you're supposed to say no, but you can't bring yourself to do any more of this.

"Yes," you admit.

"Then I will end this here. You've done all you can, and I've made my assessment."

Slowly, you rise. Loki turns back to the palace, and together, you walk back inside.

"Have I failed you?" you ask eventually, the question burning in your mind. "Am I not suitable for the position you offered?"

"I will let you know soon enough," is all he answers, leading you back to his bedchambers.

Brenna raises a brow when she sees you in your soaking state, but you ignore her, following the king into his chambers.

He takes a seat in an armchair and beckons you closer. You come over to him, and with a wave of his hand, your clothes and body dry. He probably learned that spell after the pond incident, and that makes you smile a little.

"Sit on my lap," he instructs, already reaching out to turn you around and pull you backwards onto him.

You lean back against him, liking the safety of his arms around you. He begins to nuzzle against your cheek, and you relax with a content sigh.

"Tell me at least what my punishment will be," you ask, then add his title for good measure. "Your majesty."

"You did well, my pet," he says to your surprise. "The only punishment you will receive is what is already beholden to me."

"Really?" you ask in disbelief. "But I failed!"

"You showed me your limits. They are lower than ideal, but this was merely an assessment. So long as you push to exceed those limits every time I ask you to, you will do just fine." He kisses you gently on your cheek.

You can't help but smile. You did well. "And what are your requests of me? I'll ignore that you cheated to get them, just this once."
Loki makes a disapproving sound. "You dare accuse me of cheating again? I already told you, magic was never discussed to be out of the rules. I do have my rightful spoils in mind, but I would like to hear yours first."

Right, you managed to get a hit on him, too. You get to ask him to do anything.

Feeling mischievous, you begin to think. A lot of exciting ideas run through your head. You could take revenge on him for anything he's done.

"What if..." you begin. "What if I ask you to sit me on your throne, place your golden helmet upon my head, and pleasure me with your mouth for all to see?"

You feel Loki's muscles tense around you.

"Someone's getting power hungry," he growls, nipping at your ear.

"But would you do it?" you insist. You both know he has no solid obligation to you other than the honor of the deal.

"With a few alterations," he decides. "Is that what you wish?"

"Hmm, no, let me think of more things," you decline. "Would you let me put you in shackles?"

"Such a naughty girl," is his only answer, as he continues to nibble on your earlobe.

You are bright with idea after idea. "What about if we simply switched roles for an hour? That would be fun!"

"You want me to be your pet?" he murmurs, his low voice tickling your ear so delightfully. "I think you're not nearly capable of being a king's mistress."

"Oh yeah?" you challenge. "Well, we've never tried, have we? How would you know?"

He just laughs. "Your natural instinct is to submit to me. I would have to take back the reigns soon enough. What I will let you do is shackle me. That is all. Is that your wish?"

"Shackle you..." You think it over. "...and pleasure you?"

"Yes." He rubs his hip up at you, and you feel the beginnings of his arousal through his pants.

"...and deny you?" you add more, strangely thrilled at the idea.

He goes tense around you again, but to your very big triumph, you feel his cock swell even more beneath you.

"I still don't think you're up for the task," he dodges your question.

You ignore him, completely caught up in fantasy. "You'd look so beautiful... Would you beg me?"

He growls and shoves you off his lap onto the floor.

You laugh, now being able to see his straining erection.

He clenches his jaw, glaring down at you, but the lust is visible in his crackling gaze.

"You cannot bring a king to his knees," he rasps.
"I'm not trying to," you breathe, eyes full of admiration. "I just wish to worship your body, your majesty. To deny your pleasure just to make it greater when it comes. To let you relax and give me the burden of control."

You can see your words have an immediate effect.

"You have a clever tongue, pet," he admits. "Alright. I will indulge you. But I will not make this easy for you. And know that no matter what you may do to me, it will all be if or because I permitted it."

"Yes, I understand," you tell him. "If his majesty would undress..."

You wait expectantly, but all he does is smirk.

"Fine. I'll do it myself." You get up off the floor and he rises with you.

You reach up and slide the long coat off his shoulders, catching it before it falls to the floor and tossing it onto the armchair.

Loki's gaze still holds superiority, but also sensual desire.

You reach below his leather tunic and slowly push it up his chiseled stomach. Your breath catches when your palms skim over his exposed skin.

He takes the hem from you and pulls it over his head. His muscles stretch as he removes it from his arms, and tosses it with the coat.

Mesmerized, your hands land on his chest, then your mouth. You slide them lower, peppering kisses along the way as you sink to your knees.

Loki lifts one of his feet and you grasp his boot, slowly pulling it off. Your heart jitters in your chest. Before Loki can place his foot back down, you take it in your hand and place a kiss upon it.

You hear him inhale sharply above you, a shiver running through his body.

You release his foot and he lifts his other one. You pull the boot off and do the same on that side, too.

When you look back up at him, hooking your fingers under the waistband of his pants, his eyes are heavy lidded and clouded with want.

Slowly, you drag your hands down, exposing his erection, then the rest of his legs. He steps out of his pants, and for the first time, you are clothed while he is naked.

You stand up, reaching out to touch him again. The delicate balance of power is shifting and dancing over your skin like electricity.

Loki grasps one of your hands, entwining your fingers with his, while your other hand strokes over his chest.

"On the bed, your majesty," you breathe.

He's still confident as ever, striding over to his bed and sinking down onto the pillows, sprawling out his body.

"My king, you are the most beautiful man I know," you say truthfully and walk over to the
nightstand where you know the shackles to be.

"Oh? And how many other men have had the pleasure of knowing you?" he asks, but you see a light smile on his lips that reflects in his eyes.

"Intimately?" You pull open the drawer and take out the iron shackles. "One. As close brotherly friends? Two."

"And I am the best of them all?" he confirms.

"By far."

You crawl onto the bed and gently take one of his wrists, locking one shackle around it. He doesn't resist, letting you guide his hand to the bars of the headboard and locking it in place.

"If you want to be let out, just say 'daisy,'" you tell him.

He smirks. "Pet, if I want to be let out, I will simply let myself out."

You shoot him an unamused look. Leave it up to him to ruin your fun by being able to break iron shackles.

You bring his other hand to the headboard as well and lock it in place. He jiggles the chains.

"Is this fun for you?" he mocks.

"It will be." You lick over your hand and grab his engorged cock.

His muscles tense briefly and you feel him throb in your hand.

Slowly, you stroke him, watching intently for his reactions.

He lets out a labored breath, his eyes following the torturously slow movements of your hands. You know he has great self-control and far too much pride, but you don't even care about getting him to break.

You lean down, licking along the very tip where a bead of pre-cum has formed.

Loki groans softly, his cock twitching in your grasp.

"I love your cock, Loki," you say, briefly wrapping your lips around the head and sucking while making eye contact. You are almost completely certain that Loki has a thing for praise.

He's staring back at you, eyes blown wide with lust. His chest heaves with each breath.

You lift your mouth away and still your hand, only rubbing your thumb against the ridge of his head.

Loki's hands clench in their restraints and he releases a long hissing breath. More pre-cum is leaking from the tip.

"I care for you," you say, slowly leaning down again and licking the pearly white essence away.

You stroke back down to his base and squeeze lightly. A choking gasp escapes him.

"Pet..." he rasps, eyes wild with need.
"Yes?" You bring your other hand over to play with his balls.

He shudders. "You aren't lying. How... How much do you care for me?"

You dip back down to suck on the very tip of him, still keeping your hand squeezed around the base.

He groans again, letting his head drop back and closing his eyes briefly. He has remarkable self-discipline not to buck his hips up, you've really got to admit that.

"I care for you very much," you say, giving him another stroke. Your other hand is still gently fondling his balls.

"In what way?" he gets out between grated breaths.

Both of your hands still. Then you remove them from him completely.

His eyes snap wide open and he growls in frustration.

You crawl over him, making sure not to accidentally brush against his cock. He is glowering at you.

Slowly, you lean down and touch your lips to his. He reluctantly kisses you, tasting his musk on you.

"I love you," you breathe against his lips, so quietly that his face scrunches up trying to decipher what you just said.

He's staring at you, partly confused, partly beginning to realize what you really just said. It's adorable that he doesn't seem to remember that you're lying.

"Only like this?" he breathes back.

"Always, my king." You lower your lips to his neck and kiss him there.

He groans again and his whole body trembles.

"I'm going to destroy you for this, pet," he threatens. "You will suffer for a very long time after this is done."

You move back off of him so that you can freely kiss, nibble, and lick over his chest without accidentally bumping against his desperate cock.

"You're amazing," you hum, dragging your lips over his chiseled abs. You can feel them flex beneath you as he tries not to writhe about.

"I love everything you do to me." You graze your teeth over his flesh, and he drags in a shuttering breath.

"I love kissing you. I love touching you. I love having you inside me." You lick back up to his chest, sliding your tongue over his nipples.

He jerks in his restraints, so completely mad with need that he's forgotten every snarky comment in his repertoire.

You're just as aroused as him. The smell of him, his skin, the feel—it's intoxicating. You crave him so much. You could just kiss and lick him like this for hours. You love the way he reacts when
you're giving him compliments. He's more of a wolf puppy now, desperate for affection.

"I love it when you're kind, Loki." You drag your tongue up the length of his cock once. He sucks in a breath and trembles briefly. Even more pre-cum is drizzling from his tip.

"I love every bit of you. I cherish you. You're cold and cruel, but I know there's love inside you. Look at you now." You meet his gaze, and to your surprise, it's a soft pleading one. "I'm being nice to you, and you like it. You crave it. When was the last time someone told you they loved you, and truly meant it?"

Loki's eyes widen, and they are wet with tears. Then the shackles disappear from his hands and he sits up suddenly, shoving you down against the bed with a hand around your throat.

You stare at him on shock, clawing desperately at his hand as you feel the breath being choked from your lungs.

"You think you can make me soft, kitten?" he asks, his voice quiet and yet so very full of emotion. "You think you can break my barriers and find a raw, vulnerable heart to dig your claws into?"

You retch, trying to get oxygen back into your lungs, but failing miserably. Your eyes begin to bulge out of your head as the blood builds up there.

"You think I would feel even a shred of remorse, were I to end your life right here?" His voice is shaking, cheeks glistening with tears.

You feel the edges of your vision go black and you stop struggling, seeing that it has no point.

"If you truly love me, then you will love me even as I kill you." He leans down low over your face, his breaths caressing your skin.

You stare helplessly up at him, feeling your consciousness slipping. His eyes roam over your face, a gentle affection in them.

"Hm?" he whispers, softly smiling. "Do you love me?"

With your last bit of willpower, you nod your head, feeling your senses shut down.

In the last moment, Loki draws his hand away, letting air return to your lungs.

You gasp, clutching at your pained throat, coughing and dragging in huge gulps of air.

Loki watches you, and you know from his lingering smile that he was never planning to kill you at all. The tears on his skin seem real, however.

"You do," he coos, the gentle smile turning wicked and triumphant. "You love me enough to die for me. What a beautiful thing. And now, I will fuck your snug little virgin ass and truly, truly show you what it means to be owned by me."

You stare at him in betrayal, still gasping in air. Did he orchestrate this entire thing, make himself vulnerable to you, just to dig his fingers into your chest and rip your heart out? And now, as he holds the still beating organ in his hand, he will fuck the last part of your body that his cock hasn't been, and put a seal on your ruin.

Chapter End Notes
Yeppp, next chapter we shall all sin again
The reader accidentally hit a nerve and now Loki is going to make her pay
Chapter 15

Chapter Notes

Oof I've been busy, but I didn't want to make you guys wait too long. Here is the awaited smut!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

"You do," he coos, the gentle smile turning wicked and triumphant. "You love me enough to die for me. What a beautiful thing. And now, I will fuck your snug little virgin ass and truly, truly show you what it means to be owned by me."

You are limp when Loki flips you over and positions you so that your own hands are shackled to the headboard. His hands slide over your back and you feel the clothes disappear from your body.

"Oh, my love, my dear," he croons, continuing to stroke over your naked skin. "I'm so happy that you finally confessed to this. And with such a spectacle, too. A dying woman doesn't lie, you know. You should have seen the look in your eyes. You looked so scared, so betrayed, but there was no hatred in them. Only love."

His hands slide to your hips and you grit your teeth, tears welling in your eyes. Why is it that he can never be kind for long without also being cruel? You think back to what Sven said.

It sounds like the king does not wish you to know how much he truly cares for you. You have him weak, and he hates you for it.

"Do you hate me?" you whisper, feeling Loki prop your legs up, spreading them apart for him so your rear is sticking up.

"No," he hums. "Not at all. What gave you that idea?"

"Why are you so cruel, when I just said that I love you?" you get out, putting more force behind your words than you intended.

His hands still on your upper legs.

"Pet!" He sounds offended. "I did not mean to come across as gloating or unaffected. I cherish you dearly. Worry not, I would never take your life unless it is absolutely necessary. You should have learned that you can trust me, by now. Have I not taken good care of you? My sweet, this is only meant for your pleasure."

"You're lying!" you want to yell, but it comes out in a pathetic sob. Even as he fakes his sincerity, you can hear the smugness of his tone. His words are silvered and nothing more than illusion.

"Shhh," he croons, stroking over your back. "Don't cry, pet. We've been through this. I'm not a
monster. I will treat you with due respect. Always. There is no need to be upset."

"How do I know you truly mean this?" you ask, shivering when his cool fingers land on your aching heat. "That you won't change your mind on a whim?"

"You know how," he says, his voice soft and lulling. He leans over you, his breath hitting your ear as his fingers stroke through your soaking folds. "Just tell me to stop and I will."

"And what if you're angry?" you ask, your chest shaking with silent sobs. "What if I do something that really make you want to kill me?"

"But you won't," he says, drawing his hand up to spread your slick up over your other hole. You shudder, remembering what awaits you.

"Sh, sh," he soothes, pulling his hand away and sitting back. "You'll do just fine. I'll make sure to prepare you until you're good and ready. Your submission will come easily, you'll see, and you'll enjoy this."

You're still upset, but you decide to resign yourself to your fate. You know he'll make you feel good, somehow. He always does.

"I want you to love me, pet, you see," he says, reaching around you and clamping metal pieces around your nipples, making you moan involuntarily. "I want you to love me not only when I'm nice to you. I want you to love all of me. I think you can do that, don't you?"

You nod. Your tears are still wetting your eyes, but you feel renewed arousal mixing with your nervousness. You think you can love him as he does this to you.

"Good girl," he purrs. "Now, I'm going to give you a gag, something to bite down on."

You feel all too vulnerable like this. Your heart, your body, your will, all exposed, all at his mercy. You're trembling slightly with fear at what's to come, but when Loki reaches for your mouth, you open it without hesitation.

He pushes something inside, a sort of rubbery bar that slides between your teeth and pulls back the corners of your mouth the further he pushes it. As soon as your mouth is stretched back fully, he moves your hair out of the way and secures it behind your head. You feel like a horse in a bridle.

"There, don't you look pretty, pet?" Loki hums approvingly, and you lower your head in shame.

Your tongue is held down by this obtrusively large thing in your mouth, but it is pliable enough to bite down on, which might be helpful soon. Then you remember that you can't tell him to stop like this.

You try to say his name, but it's an indiscernible sound and drool begins to leak from your open mouth.

"Yes, pet?" Loki asks.

You make an urgent noise, tugging on your restraints.

"Ah, don't worry, pet. You're safe," he assures you. "I won't let you back out of this, seeing as we made a wager and I am redeeming one of my victories against you, but if I notice that you are in discomfort, I will pause and make sure you're enjoying it."
You calm a little, praying that this isn't just a trick to give you false hope.

"There, now relax," he soothes, smoothing his hands over the curve of your rear. "You are in capable hands. I'll stretch you first."

You flinch when cold, slick liquid drizzles onto your puckered hole. Then two of Loki's fingers slowly push inside you.

You whimper behind your gag at the intrusion, trying to fight your instincts to clench around him.

"There, there," he coos, stroking over your back as his fingers push in to the hilt.

Your body jerks a bit in discomfort, but it feels strangely good, and they're slick enough not to cause any pain.

"Is this good?" Loki asks, slowly drawing them back just to push them in again.

You nod and let your head slump down on the pillow beneath you, sticking your rear up even further.

Loki's other hand snakes around to rub over your clit, making real pleasure shoot through you. Your treacherous body clenches down around his fingers and rocks back against them.

"There you are, pet," he purrs. "Show me what a whore you are."

You whimper again. You shouldn't be enjoying this, not when you know how huge his cock is and that it will definitely not fit there.

Loki keeps sliding his fingers in and out of you, then begins to stretch them apart.

You groan, feeling the tug at your muscles. A third finger enters you, and your hands clench down on the pillow beneath you.

"That's a good slut," Loki coos, comforting you in his own twisted way. "So good, so needy. Your every hole wants me. Just relax. You don't need to do anything. Let me make you feel good."

You relax, head resting on the pillow, allowing him to thrust better into you. The stretch around his fingers feels so strange, so wrong, and so good.

"Do you want to try and take me now, pet?" he asks, unable to hide the eagerness in his voice. "I'll go slowly. It will be uncomfortable, and if you don't relax enough, it will hurt, but I promise I will make you enjoy it once you get used to it."

You're scared, and you don't think you're ready at all, but you are forced to trust him. You make a sound of acceptance from behind the gag, causing a bit of drool to soak into the pillow.

Slowly, Loki draws his fingers out of you, seemingly cleaning them with magic, because when he grasps your hips, there is no residual moisture.

You feel his slick cock push at your virgin hole, the head just barely pushing in.

"Relax now," he instructs, speaking in a soft and lulling voice. "All will be well. Bite down on your gag."

Then, you feel a massive stretch as he pushes the head inside of you.
Your fingers clench, so does your jaw, and your legs twitch. Your natural instinct is to push him back out, but you know you have to relax. It's extremely uncomfortable, though, which makes that difficult.

You make a pained sound, tears pricking at your eyes.

"Deep breaths, dear," Loki soothes. "You can do this." He flicks against your clit and your toes curl in pleasure.

"Stop clenching pet. Just relax. Can you do that?" He releases your clit and smooths over your leg instead.

You take a deep breath, then another, and feel Loki push deeper inside you.

You groan again, your rings of muscle forced open to him, an intrusion you have no power to stop. It's an extremely tight fit, any movement of yours causing pain.

"Shhh." Loki's thumb is still rubbing comforting circles over your thigh, while is other hand is holding your hips still so you can't squirm away from him. "You're doing so well, pet. Just relax as best you can. You're taking my cock like my perfect little slut. You can be proud of yourself."

Finally, after even more agonizing seconds, he bottoms out. You can feel him throbbing inside your heat, his breaths unsteady as he tries to keep himself from groaning out. You are so completely stretched, like a lamb on a skewer, and you feel violated. Like he took over a part of you no one was ever supposed to have. This feels so wrong.

"By the ancients, pet, you're so very tight," he groans, sounding completely lost in pleasure. "I can barely pull my cock back out, that's how strong your hold is. Does it hurt?"

You nod your head, still clenching your jaw and your fingers. A puddle of drool is beneath you.

"Keep trying to relax," he reminds you. "Take a breath. After the way you teased me, you should be lucky I took the time to prepare you at all. I was barely able to contain myself."

Slowly, he drags his cock halfway out, then shoves back in. You let out a muffled scream into the pillow. His hand lands back on your clit and your mind goes blank.

Nothing exists anymore besides his hand and his cock. Indescribable pleasure bursts forth from his fingertips, brought to new height by the painful sensation in your ass. His cock is spearing into you again and again, first slowly, then more frantically. The slickness he coated it with helps him slide easily in and out, making an obscene squelching noise.

"Yes, that's a good whore," he breathes, snapping his hips deep inside you repeatedly. "Cry for me. Scream for me. I know you love this. It feels good, doesn't it? You like my cock laying claim to your last untouched hole, don't you? This is mine now. It will stretch for me and welcome me whenever I wish. Your body is an object for me to take pleasure from, a repository for my cum. I will fill your every hole with it. Just accept it. You already said you love me. You love being my slave."

You aren't sure if you're cumming, or if the pleasure is just that intense. Maybe you are, maybe his fingers and his cock have short circuited your body and you are cumming again and again, second after second. All you can feel is your cheek sliding over the pillow, your clamped nipples aching and chafing against the mattress with each rocking of your body, your slick gushing down your legs, wet walls clenching around nothing, while your other walls grip tightly around the one cock who will ever be able to sate you. Each swipe of his fingers over your clit has you going blind and numb with pleasure, clenching down again and again, sending even more slick down your
thighs.

Loki is groaning and panting, making the most lecherous noises you have ever heard, mixed with curses and praises at how well your slutty body is taking him.

Your eyes have rolled back in your head, drool running freely from around the gag, and you're completely limp and mindless.

Loki's pace has become vicious, sliding in and out of you with ease now.

"Fuck, I'm going to fill your ass with my cum," he rasps breathlessly. "I'm going to pump you full of it until it streams from your tight little hole. You want that, don't you, slut? It's what you've secretly been craving all this time."

When his fingers shove into your cunt and hook against your g-spot, you cum so hard around him that your legs lock in place, cramping painfully, and you feel like you've burst several blood vessels in your face.

Loki's hand grabs your hip so tightly that you're sure it will leave a bruise, his seed pumping into your asshole until it begins to leak out around his cock. He snarls like an animal as he comes, until he has emptied himself completely inside you. Slowly, he pull out, then collapses on top of you.

You can feel his cum seep out of you, running down your leg and mixing with your own essence. Your mind is still blank, your cunt is empty but your ass feels so full of his warm seed.

Loki is breathing heavily, his sweaty body pressed against yours, lying on top of you.

"You're mine," he rasps. "You'll never leave me. I need you too much."

You're too dazed to register the confession in those words.

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It takes a while for either of you to recover. Eventually, Loki rolls off you, and the shackles, clamps, and gag disappear with a wave of his hand.

You're still lying motionlessly on the pillow, eyes shut, trying to recover from the complete domination of your body. You feel one of Loki's hands touch your back, tracing down your spine and back up.

"How are you feeling?" he asks into the silence.

You mumble something, not even sure what.

"Pet?" He sounds slightly concerned, lifting up on an elbow to gaze over you.

You crack open your eyes and blink at him. "Am I really an object?" you slur. "A fucktoy?"

"I..." His pupils have dilated as soon as you said this, and you can tell the lust and the concern are battling inside him. Finally, he sighs, and his features soften. "No, of course not. But when I call you that, I mean it as praise. You should not take it as an insult. Are you hurt?"

You look at him with wonder. "A little, but I forgive you. Next time, though, please don't try to kill me when say that I love you. It's difficult for me to keep up with you when you play with my emotions and my body."
Loki gets a sympathetic look on his face and reaches out to brush your mussed up hair out of your face. "Pet, most of what I do to you is all in well-meaning play. Don't take it to heart—you do love me though, right? That was not simply something you said because you thought it would please me, was it?"

You grimace. This is all getting too complicated. "I don't know," you admit. "It depends on what love is to you."

"Devotion," he says immediately, still caressing your cheek, but his gaze is demanding. "That is what I want most from you. Any other feelings I will give time to fully blossom."

"Devotion?" you repeat, moving a hand up to place over his. "From a subject to a king? From a pet to a master? Is this all about control?"

"Of course it is," he says bluntly. "We both know you can't really leave me, even if you want to. We both know I've ruined your pretty body for all others. And we both know the life at the court is far better than what you had before. I promise, I will make you stronger. I will bring you to your fullest potential, both in bed and on the battlefield. I am offering you a purpose, the grandeur of which you would never have dreamed of. All I ask in return is that you love me, unconditionally, with the purest part of your heart."

"Silver tongue," you mutter, turning your gaze away in thought. You feel his hand turn, his fingers entwining with yours. "You already know I want what you have to offer. Everyone dreams of greatness. But what value does my love have?"

"To you, it is free to give. But to me, it has value which you cannot understand. I know I am difficult to love, but I will try my best to sweeten my bitterness for you. With my lies, and with my actions."

"This sounds to me like you're waiting to steal my soul. That this is a deal which will end in my death."

"Of course it will." Loki reaches out with his hand and strokes over your forehead. "We all cease one day. Until then, I just need you to love me. Can you do that?"

"Yes," you whisper, and nod, reaching out with your own hand to touch his face. "Lie to me."

"I love you, too." He pulls your head to him and kisses you.

Chapter End Notes

It's hilarious to me how many of you said you wanted to make Loki upset more so he would punish you more. All I say to that is be really careful what you wish for, because I might take you up on that in the future ☆`.·:*°*°(⊙﹏⊙)
Chapter 16

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

The next day is busier than ever.

You are woken by Loki before the sun has even risen.

"Come, pet, you must rise early if you wish to learn self-discipline," he tells you, gently shaking you.

You yawn and rub at your eyes. "Must I?"

"Yes. This is order comes from me as your king, not your lover." Loki gently pulls you out of bed.

You almost stumble. You are sore. Groaning in pain, you use the bathroom and go to the cabinet with your clothes. You see that you've received several more pants and tunics, a pair of which you now get dressed in. Loki is also dressed, and now you follow him outside onto the lawn. It's dark and chilly out, and the grass is wet with dewdrops.

"Warm up your muscles," the king instructs. "Stretch them. Run a lap around the lawn."

You nod, quickly working heat into your frozen muscles, glad to generate a bit of warmth. After completing your lap, you feel more awake and warmed up.

"We will do a repeat of yesterday," Loki informs you. "Fifty pushups. For each you fail to complete, you will be disciplined." He makes the walking stick appear in his hand, leaning on it. "Go. Do it."

You feel a sense of determination and lower yourself onto the wet ground. You begin your pushups, counting quietly. By the time you reach thirty, your arms burn, just like yesterday. But this time, there's a punishment waiting for you, so you push forward. You barely make forty before you collapse.

"I'm sorry, my king," you pant, slowly getting up. Your hands are muddy and you wipe them on your breeches.

"That's alright." Loki doesn't look mad at all. "You've done more than yesterday. The number hardly matters. What matters is that you improve. The punishment is merely incentive. Would you like to receive the first one now, or would you like to wait until we're done here and receive them all at once?"

You contemplate for a moment, and then decide that you'll probably do better when your backside isn't sorer than it already is. "I'll wait."

"Go on to the next exercise, then. I'll tell you when to stop."

You get back on the ground, a little unhappy that you're getting mud on your tunic, but start the planking exercise nonetheless. Once again, your abdominal muscles are burning long before you assume Loki wants you to stop. You hold on until the pain is unbearable, and even then you simply bite your lip until it bleeds to distract you. Your arms are shaking, and you have to force yourself to breathe. Still, Loki doesn't relieve you. You're forced to give up.

"Don't worry yourself about it," Loki assures you kindly. "I saw your determination. Catch your breath now. Next, you will run more laps. Do as many as you can. I want you to push yourself."

You nod and quickly take a few more breaths until your heart rate has somewhat calmed. Without waiting for a further command, you get up and start running around the perimeter of the field. You make a few laps, but your stamina is the worst. Your lungs start hurting pretty quickly in the chilly air. You run until your legs quite literally refuse to cooperate and you fall face first into the wet grass. You just remain there, dragging in huge gulps of air.

You hear Loki come closer. To your surprise, he crouches down beside you and helps you back to your feet. "You did well," he coos, smiling affectionately.

You cling to him, feeling like a muddy, sweaty mess. "Are we done?" you breathe, resting your head on his chest.

"Drink some water and take a rest." Loki pats you on the back. "I want you to do these exercises every morning. I will not be there to watch over you, but I will know if you skip a day. I have assigned you a teacher. She will teach you the art of the blade when I have not the time, which will be most days. When I do have the time, we will spar and I expect to see improvement. Does that sound good to you?"

You pull back and look at him with awe. "I still don't know what you have planned for me, but this sounds amazing! Thank you so much!" You'll actually learn real fighting! You can't believe this generosity.

Loki simply smiles softly. "Get a drink now. I still need to discipline you."

Right. You had forgotten about your impending punishment. You quickly go over to the pump and drink your fill. When you look back, Loki has taken a seat on one of the benches. You go over to him, already knowing what's about to happen.

When Loki gestures to his lap, you obediently bend over it.

"Ten lashes for ten failed pushups," he says, one hand smoothing over your rear while the other lifts up the cane. "Count them."

You jerk at the first impact. "One," you breathe. It's thankfully only a light sting.

Another hit. "Two." Still endurable. By ten, your flesh is a little raw, but you know he's only giving you the minimal amount of pain.

"Two more for giving up a minute too soon," he continues, spanking you again.

You gasp and squirm at each impact, but count those, too. Of course, the heat prickling on your skin is strangely pleasurable, but you know this is supposed to be a punishment, so you suppress your moans.

"And three more for one and a half laps too few," he concludes, and delivers those, too.

When you slide off his lap, the sun is already glinting in the gold of the top stories of the palace. You have the feeling this stinging pain will take a while to recede, but decide not to complain, since you're also pleasantly aroused.

Loki brings you back into the palace, where you bathe, replace your muddy clothes with a dress, and then join him for breakfast. After eating, he informs you to go to the courtyard at noon for your first
lesson, and disappears with his royal advisors to rule the kingdom.

You found it a little difficult to sit on a chair, so you're glad when he leaves, because that means you can roam the halls and find some place to cozy up. You go to the library, pick a book, and lie down on your stomach to read it. That's how you spend most of your time, before quickly going to the bedroom, changing back into pants, and heading down toward the courtyard.

***

You're full of childish excitement as you take the last steps toward the courtyard. You're going to get fighting lessons by a real professional! No longer will you have to rely on the improvised techniques you and your three friends came up with! You pull open the door and step outside, only to see Brenna standing there, sans helmet, plus short sword, still with her trademark sneer.

"You're late, you little weasel," she scolds you.

No. No this can't be it. This can't be who Loki chose for you.

"Get over here or I will make you get over," she snaps when you remain unmoving in the doorway.

You feel your blood pressure rise. Loki knows exactly what you think of her, so why did he choose her to teach you? The answer can only be one thing. He wants you to suffer. Gritting your teeth, you step out into the courtyard, slowly approaching this wretched woman.

"Look, I know you don't want to teach me," you begin, "and I don't want to be taught by you, so-"

"Who says I don't want to teach you?" Brenna interrupts, sneering gleefully. "I'll quite enjoy humiliating you and bossing you around."

You just stare at her for a second, then your face scrunches up into a hateful look. "I'm not doing what you say," you declare.

"Oh, but then your precious sweetie will be so disappointed in you," she taunts.

Again, you are momentarily shocked into silence. Is she talking about Loki?! "He's-! He's not my-!"

"Yeah, whatever you say." She waves her hand dismissively. "Now, I want you to try and lift one of those crates over there." She points with her sword.

You look over, seeing a pile of generic wooden crates. "Why would I-?"

"I want to see how strong you are," she cuts you off, barely suppressing a mocking laugh. "You need a certain arm strength to wield a sword, which I doubt a weasel like you possesses."

Fueled by the need to prove her wrong, you stomp over to the crates and take ahold of the topmost one, trying to lift it up. It doesn't budge even a little. You grunt, trying desperately to lift it and save face, but it doesn't move.

Brenna, of course, is greatly entertained. Shooting her a hateful glare, you finally give up.

"What's even in that crate?" you ask, mainly to interrupt her taunting laughter.

"Boulders," she answers bluntly, laughing again when she sees your expression. "I couldn't make it easy, now could I?"

"Yeah, so instead you made it impossible," you scoff.
"Impossible?" she repeats. "Maybe for you." Without hesitation, she walks over, puts the sword down and deadlifts the crate of boulders. Her muscles pop out from under the plating of her armor and even her face is strained, but she manages to hold it in front of her. You are *almost* impressed. When she puts it back down, you quickly put on a glare again, hiding your awe.

"Now then, you wimpy little weasel-" With a malicious grin, she picks up the sword again and turns to you. "-the king tells me you only have experience with a dagger, but he wants to introduce you to the short sword—obviously, a long sword would be too difficult for you."

You just narrow your eyes further in response. A short sword. You wonder why he wants that.

"Over by the training dummies is a practice sword," Brenna informs you. "That's for you. Today, I will show you some basic moves. I expect you to memorize them. You can keep the practice sword if you want to practice by yourself later on."

Begrudgingly, you retrieve the wooden sword and return to Brenna. You *do* want to learn. You'll just have to give Loki a piece of your mind about his choice of teacher later on.

Brenna begins by showing you the correct way to hold the sword and the stance you should be in when holding it. She's impatient, gruff, and generally unpleasant, but at least she seems to know her stuff and is intent on teaching it to you. She guides you through the very basic attack and defense moves. It's not all too difficult, since you *are* somewhat familiar with close combat, but of course Brenna complains about every tiny detail, like the angle of the blade being one degree off of what it's supposed to be. After about ninety minutes of this, you're extremely frustrated, sweaty, and hungry. Thankfully, that's when she decides to release you.

"Remember, I expect you to still know all this tomorrow," she reminds you as she sends you off. "Tomorrow?" you grumble. "Will I ever get a break from you?"

"Not until you stop being such a loser," she says with a final sneer. "Now leave. You reek of sweat."

You have half a mind to go straight to the throne room and yell at Loki, but your sticky skin and growling stomach send you back to his bedroom instead. You settle for a quick wash, then think to ask a servant for some food. You don't have to, however, because there is already a tray on the table with a silver cloche covering something you hope is food.

You approach it, and see that there is a note resting on the platter.

In elegant, slanted cursive, it reads:

*For you, kitten. Join me in the throne room once you're done.*

-*your loving Master*

You raise an eyebrow. What is this supposed to be?

You lift the cover, half expecting to find maybe a single apple underneath, but are instantly overwhelmed with the delicious scent of a warm meal.

It's a bowl of hot soup, some bread buns, and a tiny little cake.

Your jaw hangs open. Surely there must be a special occasion for this. You haven't had anything remotely close to cake in many, many years.
You sit down and eagerly begin to eat. You force yourself to eat all of the soup first, before reaching for the cake.

You shamelessly moan when you bite into it. It's soft, and warm, and buttery. The sweetness makes your mouth water for more as soon as you've finished it. All your frustration is gone. In fact, you head for the throne room immediately to thank him.

***

The king stands near his throne, talking to someone, but he turns when you enter.

He dismisses who you assume is some sort of official, and watches as you approach, a neutral look on his face.

"My king," you say, giving him a smile. "Thank you so much for the food. Although, we do have to talk about your choice of teacher."

Loki reaches out and brushes some of your hair behind your ear. "I know you do not like her, but she is the surest and quickest way to make you stronger. I hope you come to understand that soon. For now, though, I will teach you something far more important. How to kill."

"I know how to kill," you say, following after the king, who has begun walking out of the throne room.

"I do not intend to teach you the mere techniques," he says, striding along at a quick pace. "What you are to learn is far more important. Someone who has never killed will hesitate when it comes down to it. Why do you think it was so easy for me to overpower you?"

You realize that there might be truth to this.

"Where are we going?" you ask when Loki takes a turn down a long flight of stairs.

"The dungeons. You are to execute a prisoner for me."

Two guards stand before a heavy door. One of them turns and begins unlocking it as soon as the king approaches. The door swings open and you are brought into a grid of corridors, cells to the left and right of each.

They're surprisingly bright—white boxes sealed with magical auras. There are people in the cells, even otherworldly creatures. Most are sulking in the furthest corners away from the barrier, but some throw the king murderous looks or bang their fists against the walls.

Loki ignores them all, striding past them. You recognize the faces of the nine deserter guards, now dressed in simple prisoner clothes with bags under their eyes.

You reach a cell near the end and Loki comes to a halt. Inside, is a scrawny, disheveled man with unruly salt and pepper hair and a scraggly beard. He's sitting cross legged on the ground, hunched over, but his eyes flit nervously between you and Loki immediately.

"Prisoner Thomason," Loki addresses him, hardness and regality in his voice. "You are hereby sentenced to death on crimes of murder, theft, arson, and impudence."

The man flinches, his eyes going wide with fear. "Please, your majes-"

Loki turns to you, completely ignoring him. "Executioner. This is for you."
He holds out his hands and in them appears a short sword and a pair of black leather gloves.

Cautiously, you take them from him, weighing the blade in your hands. It’s heavier than the practice sword you had earlier, but at least you know how to hold it. You put the gloves on and wrap a hand around the hilt.

"Come. I will guide you," Loki says, turning back toward the prisoner. With a wave of his hand, the golden barrier disappears. He summons a pair of his own gauntlets and strides into the cell.

The prisoner tries to scramble away, but Loki snaps his fingers and chains appear around his wrists and ankles, causing him to fall onto his face. Loki grabs him by his matted hair and yanks him into a kneeling position, holding him still for you.

"Come, pet," he beckons. "You may kill him however you wish. Sever his head, slit his throat, pierce his heart. It matters not."

Slowly, you approach, looking down at the fearful man.

"Please, I have a family!" he suddenly wails. "I did nothing wrong! I was drunk and had a bit of harmless fun. I don't deserve death!"

You glance at Loki and can see the tenseness in his face.

"Get it done with, pet," he orders impatiently, tightening his grip on the man.

You are hesitant. What if this is just a drunkard from the streets?

"Please, beautiful lady," the man keeps pleading, sensing your hesitation. "I have a wife and a son-"

"You had a son," Loki snarls, bashing the man's head against the nearest solid object, which happens to be a chair. "You murdered him. Murdered your infant son while your wife was out, because you were drunk, you were bored, and there is not a thread of good in you. Someone who sets their home on fire for his wife to find the remains of her child is not someone who deserves to live. My father was weak, keeping you alive simply because he couldn’t be bothered. I spoke to Helena. She wants you dead like the rat you are. No glory, no publicity. Dead, in this rotting hole."

You stare wide eyed at Loki, not expecting this much anger and passion from him. The prisoner is wailing pitifully, his nose spurting blood.

Loki takes a deep breath and looks back to you. "Put him out of his misery."

You come over, lift the blade above the disgusting man's heart, close your eyes, and slam it down. You feel it sink into his body, hear a horrid gurgling sound, then a slump as Loki releases him.

Slowly, you open your eyes, and see the blood stained corpse at your feet.

"How did that feel?" Loki asks, a grim satisfaction to his voice.

"Did he really kill his son?" you ask, staring at all the blood flowing from his chest.

"Unfortunately, but that was decades ago," he confirms. "Helena is safe, healthy and as happy as she can be now. She's found a wife and adopted two children."

You stare back at him. You had thought there was barely any good in him, but this... This has you thoroughly in awe.
"Thank you," you whisper.

He gives you a strange look, then steps over the corpse and pushes you against the cell wall.

"It felt good killing him, didn't it?" he rasps, a hunger flickering in his eyes.

You feel a bit dazed, but you are definitely glad that this man met his end.

"Yeah," you say breathlessly.

"It's because of you he's gone now," Loki murmurs. "Your action will let Helena rest easier at night. The first blood on your hands is something to be proud of. Did it not feel powerful, to end him?"

You take a shaky breath. "I... I guess." Why is Loki so close and why does he have you pinned against the wall?

"I noticed you had your eyes closed," he continues. "Next time, we'll have to fix that. It is a spectacle to look your victim in the eyes as you kill them, and it shows respect. Not that this man deserved any. But when you do, you will see a crescendo of life and emotion in your victim's eyes. So much fear, so much regret, so much doubt. And then, it will all leave them, and they will feel only peace and clarity. That is what power is."

A chill runs down your spine at the lust in his voice.

"Murder," he whispers against your lips, "is almost more intimate than sex. For truly, what contains greater passion than snuffing out someone's life? Everything they ever did, everything they ever wanted to do, it is now ripped away at your hand. In a way, you give them mercy. Mercy, from the cruelty that is life."

Loki's lips brush over yours while his hand takes hold of the sword and pulls it from your grasp. He tosses it aside, then pulls your gloves off. His own quickly join them on the floor of the cell.

"What... What are you doing?" you breathe nervously, even though it's obvious.

Loki just lets out a hungry growl and captures your lips, biting at them until he's drawn blood.

You gasp at the sharp pain and your knees begin to feel weak. Loki shoves his tongue in your mouth, and you let him. His hands open the front of your tunic, exposing your breasts to him.

"Loki, please!" you protest, glancing at the cells across from this one. Every inmate you can see is at the very front of their cell, watching you and the king intently.

Loki captures your lips again, turning your attention back to him. You feel his hips grind against you, his hands palming and playing with your breasts.

You turn your head away from the other inmates shamefully.

"Please! They're watching!" you urge in a whisper.

"Let them watch," Loki growls, biting against your neck with the intent of bruising you. "They haven't had a show like this in centuries."

Your eyes land on the dead body of the man you just killed. This is so wrong, but of course your body betrays you to Loki, as always.

He tugs and pinches at your nipples, sucking on the skin above your collarbone. You can't help but
moan, can't keep yourself from grinding against his growing erection.


Loki draws back from your neck and grasps your chin firmly so you look at him. "You know, you still owe me one thing that I can make you do. I could take you right here, and you would have to let me. But, I will not waste it on this, for I have something far better planned. Let's go back to my bedchambers and celebrate there."

You give a nod of agreement, and Loki releases you. Quickly, you tie the tunic back up and cover yourself. That's when you hear jeering and booing from the other prisoners.

"Take your clothes off!" someone shouts.

"I want the king to take his clothes off!" another pipes up.

"Just fuck her, you wandought!"

You find a sense of satisfaction in Loki's expression, now that he's been insulted.

"Silence, or I shall have you all executed!" he shouts at them.

For a moment, they all shrink back, then the shouting begins anew.

"I'll let her execute me if she fucks me first!"

"I want the king to fuck me!"

Loki grabs your hand and yanks you with him, out of the cell and out of the dungeons.

"I'll execute anyone who saw, if you wish," he offers angrily once you've reached his bedchambers. "Or you can do it yourself. But first-" He grabs you by the shoulders and pushes you toward his bed. "-I'm going to fuck you properly."

You stumble backwards until you fall onto the bed.

"Did... Did seeing me kill that guy turn you on?" you ask, genuinely wondering.

Loki's wolfish grin returns. "I think you know the answer."

His hand moves to palm at still present erection, proving his point.

You feel mildly concerned for him, but decide not to dwell on it.

"So, if we ever were in battle together, you'd pounce on me as soon as I got a little blood on me?"

"Oh, yes," Loki agrees a little too enthusiastically. "I can imagine it already. Both of us covered in dirt, sweat, and blood. I'd have you right then and there on the battlefield, surrounded by corpses. I'd lick at your wounds, or dig my fingers into them, depending how I feel. Then I'd make you scream and writhe and moan."

You shudder, feeling a dark sort of thrill at the idea.

"You're..." you can barely speak with the lust burning through your body. "You're really depraved, my king."
"Mm, yes, but you love it." He reaches down and yanks your pants down, then his own. In one fluid motion, he's inside of you, hissing pleasurably.

You gasp at the sudden intrusion, but you can't say you weren't ready for him.

After a moment simply composing himself, Loki quickly sets to a mind numbing rhythm.

You jolt back and forth on the mattress until Loki grasps your wrists and holds you still.

You feel like nothing short of a sex crazed animal getting fucked by an even more sex crazed animal.

"Ah-... Lo-Loki!" you pant. "You're... you're so rough!"

Loki simply growls and snarls. When he leans down and bites, genuinely bites into your throat, you question for a moment if he's turned into a werewolf.

You scream out from the pain of Loki's teeth, feeling a trickle of hot blood, but that only spurs him on. He laps at your wound, snapping his hips so ferociously into you that you feel like you might black out.

You're basically only screaming and writhing about, up until the point where you shudder around him and crash into orgasm hard. Another scream rips from your throat, this time of his name.

That's enough to send Loki over the edge, too. His face twisting in pure bliss, he releases inside you with another animalistic snarl. Once he's fully spent, he collapses on top of you, pinning you down in a gasping heap.

As soon as you come down from your high, you notice that your bite wound hurts quite a bit.

"You bit me!" you complain.

His tongue drags over the spot where blood is still pooling. "And I don't regret it. You're mine."

"I wish all these clothes weren't still in the way," you remark, fully intent on taking revenge.

They all disappear in a shimmer of magic, and you immediately drag your nails down his back.

Loki hisses in pain, lifting off you slightly.

"Are you looking for trouble?" he asks in a low, threatening voice.

"Me? Never." You hold his gaze defiantly.

He smiles a mocking smile. "Oh, dear. Have I turned you into a bratty little pain-addicted slut?"

Each word sends a delightful shiver down your spine. Maybe Loki's wild, uninhibited depravity is truly rubbing off on you.

Loki seems to take joy in your reaction. "Would you like me to lash you until you can no longer sit down? Or would you like to be bound to my bed, unable to cum for hours?"

"No, no thank you," you quickly decline. You've had enough for one day. "You know, my king, I was wondering whether you plan to visit Helena and tell her the news, and if I might be able to come with you." You hope by changing the topic that he forgets about punishing you.

He sighs and rolls off you, laying beside you instead. "Yes, I plan on riding to her tomorrow, if I
"Because I'm the one who killed him," you say, finding it pretty obvious. "Don't worry, I won't take the glory away from you. I'm just your executioner, and might I add, a very cool looking one."

Loki snorts. "'Cool' is not the word I would use to refer to you, pet."

You pout. "Then what is, my king?"

"You are no more ferocious than a kitten," he answers immediately. "Why else would I be calling you that? I accept that you have claws, but overall, I'd say you lean more toward... cute."

You prop yourself up on an elbow and beam at him, fully intent on dismantling his mockery. "You just gave me a compliment!"

He furrows his brow. "No, I did not, I said-"

"You called me cute," you interrupt.

"In a mocking, condescending way," Loki adds, frowning slightly.

"What other words would you use to describe me?" you tease, still grinning. "Sexy, surely, since you can't keep your hands off of me."

"Obnoxious," Loki groans, covering his face with one hand.

"Hey, that's not a compliment," you scold playfully.

"Neither was calling you cute."

"I'll give you compliments, then, my king."

He groans again, but is seemingly too lazy to stop you.

You think for a moment. "You're... Clever. You always know what to do and say. Even when things don't go your way, you somehow twist them in your favor. And you always manage to make some sort of joke, or find some way to amuse yourself. You're always teasing and mocking me, and although I don't enjoy it, I admire that you don't let anything crush your spirit."

"You're a fool, pet," he mumbles, but when he pulls his hand away, he looks more relaxed. "Admiration is the last thing you should be feeling toward me."

You eagerly lean closer.

"And what should I feel for you?" you ask in what you hope is a seductive purr.

He turns his head to you. "Fear. Desire. The urge to submit and obey my will. Hatred, that I can make your body betray you. Hatred, because I'm cruel to you. Lust-

"Don't worry, I feel all that and more," you assure him with a hollow laugh. "Whatever happened to wanting me to love you?"

"As wonderful as that would be, I'm beginning to feel like that was a mistake."

"How? What-?"
"Because I didn't think you'd actually fall in love with me."

Your heart lurches in your chest so hard that you feel like it stopped completely.

"I... I'm not in love with you," you correct. "I love you, as in, I adore you, I like what we have going, I-"

Loki sighs and sits up. "Pet. I'm sorry, but I feel like you're lying. I think your feelings for me have reached a dangerous depth, and that is a problem."

"Why?" you challenge, instantly defensive for some reason.

He turns his head away so you can't see his face. "I don't owe you any answers."

"Yes, you do!" you argue. "Tell me what the matter is, Loki- uh, my king!"

"That, right there, is the problem." He looks back at you, and there's almost a bit of anger on his face. "You want more of me than I can give you. I will never be able to love you back, have I not made that clear? I'd be perfectly willing to kill you at any point."

You almost flinch at his harsh words, but you know he doesn't mean them. You know, deep down, he cares for you, and that his past issues are preventing him from expressing his feelings.

You give him a sympathetic smile and wrap your arms around him, leaning again his chest.

Loki goes stiff. When you don't release him, he just sort of gives in and puts one arm around you, too.

"That is not the way you were supposed to react," he mumbles, kissing the top of your head.

"I don't think you'll kill me," you hum happily against him. "Not the way things are going."

"Of course, pet," he agrees, sounding woeful. "If everything were to remain perfect, I would never hurt you in a way you wouldn't want. But things are never perfect. The more happiness I experience now, the worse of a tragedy will strike tomorrow. You will, one day, make a mistake that I will find unforgivable. And then, I will kill you. This is not merely a threat, pet, I have had this happen many time before."

"What... What kind of mistakes are unforgivable?" you breathe, remembering the night you tried to kill him when he was drunk. When he had left you unguarded. When he had made himself vulnerable.

"Anything meant purposefully to cause me harm," he says calmly, though there is tension to his voice. "I can handle getting slapped. I can handle someone making a mistake, someone who is merely misguided and who will gladly accept my disciplinary actions. But I would never forgive someone I trust going against me."

You swallow. "And... And do you trust me?"

Of course he doesn't, that would be ridicu-

"Pet, if I didn't trust you, would I have let you wield a sword today, while I was unarmed?"

Oh no.
I feel like my uploads are kind of sporadic. Does anyone want me to dedicate one day per week to uploading (Friday, for example) or do you prefer it to be more frequent and irregular like I'm doing right now, about every 4-6 days?
Chapter 17

Chapter Notes

The general consensus is that I'll keep the sporadic uploads, which is also what I prefer :P
It's been a week, so I feel obligated to upload. We're getting close to the end of the first act of my story now!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

There is a soft, misty rain sweeping through the gardens. Droplets cling to your hair and soak into your clothes. You woke up around sunrise and, as instructed, got dressed and went outside to exercise. You took the wooden sword with you, and after training your arm muscles, your core, and your stamina, you're now repeating all the moves Brenna showed you.

You're all alone outside. Loki said he trusts you. You could run if you wanted to, but you won't. Not when you have such a good life here. Not when Loki seems to need you. It seems that he's somehow more relaxed and happy the more the days go on. Maybe the sex is helping him stay relaxed. Or maybe Loki is actually starting to care for you. Maybe training you gives him a purpose he actually enjoys, unlike ruling the realm, which seems to be the cause for most of his stress. If Frederikke were here, she would tell you a story about a king falling into ruin by the weight of his crown and losing those he cares for in the process. You'll have to leave Loki eventually to go find her and the others. But not now. Not when he needs you by his side.

With that thought in mind and the chill of the rain on your skin, you decide to head back inside.

You pass by the busy kitchens, the guards' rooms, and then the servants' quarters. You're about to take a turn up the stairs, when someone grabs your arm and pulls you into an empty room.

Your first instinct is to fight, but when you see who it is, you just freeze and stare at the face in front of you.

Freckles, stormy eyes, a few strands of red hair falling from beneath her maid's cap.

"Rika?!" you exclaim in utter disbelief.

Frederikke clamps a hand over your mouth, nervously glancing back into the hallway to see if anyone heard.

"Yes, it's me," she says. "But lower your voice. We don't have a lot of time to talk. I'm supposed to be fetching more potatoes, and you look like you were headed somewhere."

You pull her hand from your mouth.

"How...? Why...? How did you get here?!"

"It's a long story. But I can try to tell it, if you want."

You nod. "Of course! Rika, I-"
"Hush." She takes a breath. "Okay. After you didn't return, we all knew you failed. We thought you were dead or in the dungeons. We knew you would have been tortured, so after giving you twenty four hours, we abandoned camp. Mat wanted to leave sooner, but we convinced him to wait. Then we started to get restless. We didn't talk much, and ended up blaming ourselves for everything. Mat especially. He wanted to go out there and kill the king himself. Lee barely convinced him to wait until we had a plan.

"So we started planning. Nothing we came up with was as good as the original plan, but we eventually settled on something. The day we were going to do it, Lee came running from the marketplace saying the king had held a speech and that you had been there, alive. He told us you had been forced to publicly capitulate, and that he had done his best to humiliate you.

"Knowing you were alive changed everything! Our plans changed to a rescue mission. We needed more info on your condition, though, so I decided to infiltrate the palace.

"I incapacitated a servant and offered myself as replacement. In my haste, however, I didn't replace a chambermaid, but rather a kitchen maid. I thought I'd never get close to you, but here you are! Oh, I'm so glad you're still alive!"

She pulls you into a passionate hug.

You awkwardly hug her back. Despite being glad to see her, Rika being here... is kind of bad. Thank the ancients she didn't become a chambermaid. What if she walked in while you were naked on the king's bed?

"It was stupid of you to come," you scold her. "The king is not to be trifled with!"

She pulls away, but doesn't look very regretful. "Yeah, I know. I didn't give them my real name or anything, and I keep my hair hidden, knowing I'm probably on every wanted poster in the kingdom."

You're a bit confused for a second, but then you realize where the misconception is. "Oh, no, Rika no one knows your name or face. I didn't tell him anything that could have been dangerous."

She stares at you. "What? How? Weren't you tortured?"

You laugh nervously. "Well, yeah, but I just lied."

Her eyes move to your neck. "Darling, you're bruised..."

You feel the blood rush to your face. "Uh... yeah. I got hurt, you know..."

"Oh, you poor thing!" Her eyes show nothing but concern. "What has he done to you?"

Your mind replays everything he's ever done to you, and you become a little flustered. "N-nothing, Rika. Believe me, I'm totally in control."

"Yes? Really?" Her eyes narrow. "And why would he give his prisoner even a bit of control? Why are you walking free around the palace in fancy new clothes?"

You sigh, seeing no point in lying anymore. "Alright. I may or may not have slept with him in order to stay alive."

Rika gasps, then pulls you into another hug. "Oh no, that's horrible! You... You haven't like... You're not pregnant, are you?"
You pat her gently on the back. "No! No, he would never allow that. Look, I was selected for this mission to seduce him, and that's what I did. He's totally wrapped around my finger. I can handle sucking a dick to save my life, okay?"

She pulls away, looking worried. "Hmm, this won't end well. We're gonna get you out of here soon. I'll tell the others you are safe and capable of helping. We'll make a plan. Come by the kitchens tomorrow, if you can. We'll talk again."

"Okay. Love you, Rika." You give her yet another hug.

"Love you, too."

She says your name, and you almost get teary eyed. No one has said that name in what feels like ages.

She pulls away, giving you one last look, before hurrying away to do her tasks.

***

The king is sitting in an armchair by the fireplace, reading a book. He barely gives you a glance when you enter.

"Ah, there you are. I was becoming concerned you'd catch a sickness."

"I don't mind the rain," you say, coming up to him. You're hoping he might join you for breakfast, though he's probably already eaten.

"Dry yourself off anyway," he instructs, not looking up again.

You sigh and head for the bathroom, peeling off your wet clothes and toweling yourself dry. Naked, you walk back into the main room, to the cabinet with your clothes. You select a bottle green dress and put it on.

"Are you alright?" you ask him, realizing his eyes were glued to the book the entire time you were naked. "You didn't sleep much, did you?"

His jaw tightens and he turns another page. "Of course I didn't."

"Loki, please," you sigh. "Talk to me. Let me make it better somehow."

He glances at you with a raised brow. "Are you offering me your body for my pleasure?"

"No," you say firmly. "I want to talk to you. Maybe have a cup of tea. I could give you a massage."

"I don't," he says curtly. "Though, you may kneel down and massage my feet, if that is what you wish."

You sigh, and turn to the table, where your usual food is waiting for you. Maybe you were wrong. Maybe he doesn't need your support. Maybe he doesn't even want you as a friend. Sex and sword fighting. That's all he's wants with you.

You eat your food, and Loki reads his book, and there is silence.

"So, when are you going to Helena?" you ask eventually, almost finished with your meal.

He looks up, but doesn't say anything for a while. "In the afternoon, I suppose," he says.
unemotionally, then looks back to his book.

You feel a little helpless. "Do you want me to leave you alone?"

Now you don't get an answer, though his silence makes it pretty clear to you. You exit the room and go back to the library to stare out at the rainy scenery. The sound of the raindrops is soothing, and eventually, you curl up on an armchair and drift off into a light sleep.

Loki doesn't leave your mind. You see him in detached images in your dreams, not really following a coherent story.

Loki in his armchair, reading. Loki wandering the halls of the palace. Loki sitting atop his throne. Loki hunched over, sitting on some marble steps, his face buried in his hands.

You wake up with a start. Quickly sitting up, you look around the room, but you're alone. The rain has stopped, but the sun is hidden behind clouds. It's probably sometime in the afternoon. Shit. You need to get to your fighting lesson.

You jump up and start running, not wasting time to change out of your dress. You skid to a halt in the middle of the courtyard, and realize you forgot your practice sword.

"You're very late," Brenna growls. "You're also wearing a dress, and I don't see your sword."

"Sorry," you wheeze. "I fell asleep."

"I can't teach you like this," she states, gesturing at you with her sword.

"We can make do!" you argue. "Just let me have a real sword! The king let me have one!"

"Oh, I bet he did," she sneers.

"What is that supposed to mean?!"

"And that doesn't change the fact that you're wearing a dress."

You look down at your long skirt. She has a point. "Give me the sword. I'll fix this."

You hold your hand out expectantly. Almost curious, Brenna hands you the sword.

Stretching the fabric taut, you cut a slit down the side of the skirt. "There, now I have mobility!"

"You just tore up really expensive fabric," Brenna comments. "I'm impressed."

"Grab a sword," you tell her with a cocky smirk. "Let's train."

She actually goes to the armory and grabs a second sword. Maybe she likes that you're taking a bit of charge, because she seems to be in quite a good mood when she has you repeat the drills from yesterday. She even forgets to call you a wimpy weasel like she usually does.

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You end up having quite a lot of fun. With the real sword, there is an extra level of thrill, which you quite enjoy. You train until a servant comes and tells you the king demands your presence.

Sweaty and out of breath, you give the sword to Brenna and follow after the servant, feeling rather happy. They lead you to a place you've never been before, the royal stables.
Your mouth drops open when you see Loki standing next to a beautiful black horse. He's wearing black riding gloves and holding a riding crop, his long green cape draping behind him. One hand is holding the horse's reigns, the other is petting it across its snout. The horse seems to be enjoying his attention, because it bumps its nose against his hand whenever he tried to draw it away.

"Your majesty, I've brought you your lady pet," the servant announces with a bow.

Loki's gaze lands on you, and he smiles. "Pet, meet Myrkr. I raised him from a foal."

You grin and approach the horse. "Hi, Myrkr!" you coo, reaching out to pet him. He shies away, eyeing you warily. You pout.

Loki pulls him back toward you, giving him a comforting pat on the neck. "Myrkr, it's alright. She won't hurt you."

The horse slowly lowers his head and breathes a puff of air at you. Cautiously, you lift your hand back up, letting him smell it. After a moment, he bumps his snout against your palm, and you slowly stroke down the bridge of his nose.

"I think Myrr likes me!" you exclaim, and Loki immediately scowls at you.

"Don't call him that!" he scolds.

"Where is Sleipnir?" you ask to change the topic, drawing away from Myrkr and looking around for the eight legged horse. "You're the king now, shouldn't you be riding him?"

"I do not plan on imitating the former Allfather," Loki replies stiffly. Myrkr swings his head around and bumps it against Loki's shoulder, urging him to continue petting him. He obliges.

"Can I ride Sleipnir?" you ask eagerly. "I bet he doesn't get to go out very often."

"You wish to ride the eight legged steed that belonged to the former king?" Loki asks sardonically. "Do you even know how to ride one with four legs?"

"No, I could never afford a horse," you answer with a dry laugh. "But I'm sure I can handle it! How hard can it be? You just squeeze with your legs to go faster, and tug on the reigns to steer!"

"By all means, go ahead." With a derisive smirk, Loki steps away from Myrkr and gestures for you to try.

Cautiously, you approach the jet black stallion. He skitters back, out of your reach.

"He can sense your nervousness," Loki informs you. "He will not let you ride him."

You furrow your brow in determination. "Come here, Myrkr, dearest," you coax in a sweet voice. "I just want to sit on your back to show your master that he's wrong for once."

Myrkr eyes you with what you think is extreme suspicion. You take another step toward him, and that causes him to hastily maneuver around you and trot to Loki's side.

"Why is your horse so scared of me?" you ask disappointedly, turning to Loki again.

He has one arm on Myrkr's neck, lovingly stroking him. The horse, in turn, tries to lean down and nibble on Loki's leather coat.

"He's wary of strangers," Loki explains. "He got injured as a foal and I nursed him back to health.
He turned out to be quite a mischievous horse, but he's delicate and gentle at heart."

"Wow, you must really have rubbed off on him," you say with full on sarcasm. "So, how am I going to ride, then?"

"I could offer you a gentle mare, but I do believe it will be faster if you simply ride with me. I will scoot back and you may sit sidesaddle across my legs."

"Sidesaddle?" you repeat with a frown, then realize why he's offering that, "Oh, don't worry! I cut a slit in my dress, so I can ride normally." Gleefully, you stretch your leg out from under the skirt.

Now Loki is the one frowning. "You cut a slit into the dress I provided for you?" he repeats, a tense edge to his voice. "Just so you could ride a horse like a warrior?"

"No, I cut it to have mobility while training," you assure him. "Now hop up, I can get up behind you and wrap my arms around you."

Loki's eyes darken and he leaves Myrkr, approaching you menacingly. You realize he's still holding a riding crop, and you nervously back away until you hit a stall door.

"Apologize for your insolence or I will ride out alone," he commands. "You best learn to control your emotions, lest I take away whatever has you this giddy."

Your good mood is immediately crushed. Looks like Loki woke up on the wrong foot today. He's been nothing but unpleasant. "I'm sorry, I was just joking around," you mumble, lowering your head. "I didn't mean to insult you, my king."

Loki eyes you for a moment, then turns away with a scoff. "Apologize to Myrkr, too."

You give his back a bewildered look. "Alright, fine, Myrkr, I'm sorry!" you call out to the horse. He just blinks at you.

Loki, however, turns back to you with a sour look on his face. He doesn't say anything, however, and simply reaches for Myrkr's saddle to mount him. He sits on his horse regally, his cape draping over Myrkr's backside, his hands loosely holding the reigns. He walks Myrkr over to you, then holds out his hand for you to take.

You look down at the stirrup, and Loki removes his foot from it so you can step in. First, you push his cape out of the way. Then, you step into the stirrup, take hold of Loki's hand, and swing yourself up behind him. You feel the sleek, warm fur against your bare legs, the shifting of strong muscles. It feels kind of great.

Loki looks over his shoulder at you, and you relinquish the stirrup back to him and lean forward, curling your legs up. You wrap your arms around his torso and rest your head against the soft cape at his back, sighing contently. It's probably quite improper that one of your legs is completely exposed, but you don't care.

Loki doesn't seem to, either, because Myrkr begins to walk out the stables.

***

For the first time in so long, you're out of the palace gates. There are people bustling about in the city, giving Loki a wide berth to let him pass through unhindered. Myrkr falls into a trot, jostling you quite a bit against Loki. It doesn't help that you're still a little sore.
You notice a lot of people giving you looks, wondering no doubt who you are. You wonder if some of them recognize you from the speech, and bury your face in Loki’s cape in shame.

Finally, near the edge of the inner city, Myrkr slows down and turns into a side street, then comes to a halt in front of a standard one story home.

Loki slides off the horse and offers you his hand again. You bring your leg around and hop off. After all that jostling, it feels weird to be back on solid ground, and you have to stretch out your legs.

Loki leads Myrkr to the side of the house and ties him to a post near a water trough. Then he comes back to you and gives you a stern glance.

"Behave," he warns, and knocks twice on the door.

It doesn't take long before you hear hurried footsteps and a turn of a latch, then the door swings open.

"Oh, my king, we've been eagerly awaiting your arrival!"

In the doorway is a brightly smiling woman. She's quite beautiful, you note, tan skin and long, shining hair. She's wearing a simple linen dress, but it's well tailored to her form. She takes the edges of her skirt now and dips into a curtsy, the smile never leaving her face.

"Helena." Loki dips his head in greeting.

"Oh, I'm so glad you're here," she babbles, spreading her arms as if to hug him, but then she quickly steps aside to give him room to enter. "Come on in, please! Oh, and who's this?"

Her eyes land on you. You, all disheveled and sweaty from sword fighting and now the ride. You feel like you shouldn't be here all of a sudden.

"She is the one who exterminated our little problem," Loki says, already taking a step inside.

"Hi," you greet, also dipping your head at her. "I'm, uh, the king's right hand woman."

You're glad Loki has gone inside, because he probably wouldn't like you taking up that title.

"Come in, come in," she beckons with another smile just for you. "Any friend of Loki's is a friend of mine."

Friend. Yeah right. You go in nonetheless, and are greeted with a sight that has you stop dead in your tracks.

The house is small, but cozy. Very tidy, as if it's been cleaned especially well for the king's visit. There is another woman sitting at a table under a window, her skin a few shades lighter than Helena's, her hair a wavy chestnut. Beside her, standing on a chair, is a little girl, almost school aged, you estimate. She has big brown eyes, two braids in her hair, and is fiddling with the hem of her dress.

The real thing that makes your jaw drop, however, is an even younger girl, held in Loki's arms. She's still pretty much a baby, and her tiny fist is clenched around a strand of Loki's jet black hair, tugging on it. Loki is playfully scowling at her, tickling her side and making her squeak and giggle.

Now, you aren't stupid. You know that Loki doesn't eat kittens for breakfast. You know he doesn't torture people for fun—well, not much at least. But you do know that he is capable of quite a few
devious tricks. Never in your life would you have thought you'd see him with a baby in his arms, and not threaten to drop it in a pit of lava.

"Oh, Helga, this is King Loki's right hand woman," Helena tells the woman at the table. "Uh, I don't think I caught your name."

You tear your eyes away from Loki and force an easygoing smile. "Hi, I'm Katharina, nice to meet you!" You feel bad for lying about your name again, but you're sure as Hel not revealing your real name with Loki present.

"Hello," Helga says. "These two rascals here are our children, Lotte, the eldest, and Lea, the little one."

She throws a fond look over to little Lea in Loki's arms, who now has both fists in Loki's hair and is tugging fervently, much to his discomfort.

Helena lets out a crystal clear laugh and strides over, freeing Loki from the baby's grasp and taking her into her own arms.

You turn and look back at the door, wanting to leave. You're clearly out of place here.

Before you can make two steps, someone's hand lands on your shoulder and holds you back.

"I'm sure this comes to a shock to you," Loki says in a low voice, "but I'm not the evil maniac you think I am. My treatment of you only reflects how well I take to being almost assassinated."

A cold chill runs down your back, and you really, really want to leave.

"Hey, you two!" Helena calls out cheerfully. "Come, the roast is ready! Let us celebrate."

Loki's hand slips away and he walks back over to them, taking a seat at the head of the table. Lotte immediately walks over to him and hides under his cape, while Lea sits on Helga's lap.

Slowly, you also join them, sitting down next to the window, across from Helga and as far away from Loki as this tiny table allows.

While Helena starts putting dish after dish onto the table, Lotte peeks out from under Loki's cape and gives you a curious look.

"Who is she?" she asks.

Loki gently smiles down at her. "She's a great big nuisance, that's who she is. Do you want to sit on my lap?"

Lotte nods and he hoists her up, sitting her sideways on his lap. She sticks her tongue out at you, then immediately takes an interest in the shiny gold of his armor, running her little fingers over it and ignoring you.

You feel like your entire world is collapsing around you, and all you can do is stare.

Helena has finished loading up the table, and is now serving the food. First, a portion of finely mashed potatoes for Lea, who is still on Helga's lap, then a generous serving of everything for Loki.

You watch Lea as she slams her fist into the mashed potatoes, sending them splattering everywhere. You fail at suppressing a smile. Helga scolds her, and begins scooping it up on a spoon for her.
Loki has received his food, and now Helena comes to you, asking how much you want from this and that. You give random answers and watch from the corner of your eye as Loki cuts the best pieces of the roast away and hands them to Lotte. She eagerly stuffs them into her mouth using her bare hands, ignoring the warning look of her mother.

Her other mother has finished giving you your food and now leans over Lotte.

"Will you sit down and eat from your own plate, or are you going to continue stealing from the king the entire time?" she asks half friendly, half scoldingly.

Lotte grins. "Steal!"

Helena pulls her off of Loki's lap and sits her down in the chair next to you. She pouts and crosses her arms.

"Really, it's alright," Loki assures them. "She can sit on my lap and eat from my plate all she likes."

"Yes!" Lotte jumps up.

"No!" Helena pushes her back down. Helga just chuckles while trying to prevent Lea from grabbing a bunch of vegetables out of a bowl and flinging them at you.

Watching all this causes your heart to ache. Will you ever have a daughter? These two are so precious, and now you want one of your own... Maybe not yet, but maybe someday... You could teach her how to fight. She wouldn't get teased at school like you were. You could watch her grow up, and turn into a warrior, or a scholar. You'd give her all the love she deserves. All you need someone to start a family with.

Slowly, you look back to Loki.


Sighing woefully, you stick your spoon into your mashed potatoes and swirl it around.

Finally, everyone has food on their plate and everyone is seated.

"To justice!" Helena says, raising her goblet.

"To justice," you mumble along with everyone else. Lotte not only raises her cup of berry juice, but she also jumps up from her chair and manages to spill half its contents. Loki just smiles gently and makes the spill disappear, her cup refilling itself.

Lotte grins from ear to ear and sits back down, ignoring the displeased looks of her mothers. "Magic is so cool! Can you do that bird trick Loki? Please!"

Loki snaps his fingers and a little sparrow flutters from his hand and begins flying around Lotte's head. She jumps up, trying to catch it, but her hand passes right through the illusion. That doesn't deter her, however, and she lunges forward, elbowing her cutlery off the table.

"My apologies," Loki says calmly, making the bird disappear and the cutlery reappear clean and neat on the table.

Lotte pouts and the two women assure him that no harm was done.

You realize you have unchewed food in your mouth that's just been sitting there the entire time you were watching them. Quickly, you turn back to your plate and resume eating, trying not to think
about the things your stupid brain was imagining the entire time. Like, oh, what if Helga and Helena weren't even there and what if Lotte had black hair and your eyes and what if she were your child and what if Loki just so happened to be the father-


The two mothers laugh politely, then turn the conversation back to Loki. You just want to disappear like the little sparrow.

You notice Lea is staring at you, so you make a face at her, causing her to giggle.

"Loki, Loki, please I want to show you something!" Lotte suddenly calls out. "I drew a picture for you! Come on!"

She tugs incessantly at his sleeve.

"May I indulge the young lady?" Loki asks the two mothers, ever the charming gentleman.

"Of course," Helga consents with a smile.

Lotte practically drags Loki into the back room. He doesn't meet your gaze as he passes you.

"Hey," you whisper, trying to get Lea's attention again. She has such cute pudgy cheeks, you just want to squish them.

You realize both women are looking at you.

"You have really cute children," you tell them, waving at Lea. She slowly waves back.

Helga smiles. "Do you want to hold her?"

"Yes, please," you breathe. "I'm thinking I want a daughter of my own now."

"Oh?" Helga comes around the table and places the little girl on your lap. "Do you have a special someone you'd want a daughter with?"

Lea fists her hands into your dress and pulls on the fabric. You are utterly transfixed, and ignore the question. Her eyes are blue, but in your mind, they are green. In your mind, she has features of your face, and maybe a few of Loki's here and there.

"Hi, Lea," you coo. "You're so cute and sweet!"

Lea just kind of stares at you, then smiles and makes a few incoherent noises. Helga chuckles, and informs you that she is commenting on the color of your hair.

"We've been teaching her a few words. Colors, animals, food, that sort of thing. She also knows that I'm mommy and Helena is mama."

"Ma-ma," Lea repeats, looking around for Helena.

You almost cry. Whoa there, hormones, calm down, please.

"Mom!" Lotte suddenly yells. "Look, I braided Loki's hair!"
Now, you do feel your eyes water. He's standing coolly in the door frame, a strand of his hair clumsily braided and tied up in a blue ribbon. Lotte is beaming and pointing at him, very proud of her work. Loki is also smiling, but in a calmer fashion. He meets your gaze, and seeing that you're tearing up, his expression shifts to light concern.

"...he said I did such a good job that he'll let me ride his horse!" Lotte continues her waterfall of words. "But only if you allow it, mama, please! Mom? Mama? Please, please, can I ride the pony?!"

"I will merely lead it around the house," Loki assures them, turning his attention away from you. "You can join us, if you wish."

The two mothers exchange a look, then come to a silent agreement.

"I think that's a great idea!" Helena says. "Let's all go. Katharina, do you want to carry Lea? I think she'd also want to see the horse."

"Hoss," Lea repeats, looking around between all the people.

"Yes," you whisper, and lift Lea up into a firm hold.

"Yayyy!" Lotte squeals, running out of the front door. Loki follows, and then the rest of you.

You hold Lea tight, delighting in her awe at the big horse. Myrkr seems quite nervous around all the people, but Loki calms him by keeping a reassuring hand on his neck. He hoists Lotte up onto the saddle and leads Myrkr at a walking pace all the way around the house.

"Again, again!" she demands as soon as the round is finished.

Loki obliges a couple more times, and both girls seem to be having a lot of fun, until Loki seems to have had enough.

"I'm regretful to tell you this, young lady, but a king must return to his duties," he says, and lifts Lotte down. "I thank you all for your hospitality, and if you ever need something more of me, feel free to write."

"Thank you again, my king," Helena says, taking Lotte by the hand. "You, too, are welcome here, should you need anything."

Loki gives her a gentle smile and mounts Myrkr, looking at you now, the smile immediately fading. Helga takes Lea from you and you reluctantly approach him. He helps you up again and you wrap your arms around him.

"Say bye-bye, Lea!"

"Bah-bah!"

"Have a good night, my king!"

"I wish you all the best," Loki says, steering Myrkr out into the street. "Until we see each other next."

He presses his heels into Myrkr's sides and clicks his tongue, causing the horse to pick up speed until he's galloping down the street.

"I'm sorry," you mumble, thinking he might not hear it.
"For what?" he asks nonetheless.
"For thinking you deserved to die."

***
You haven't touched your food. Maybe you're not hungry after the meal at Helena's house. Maybe you're thinking about the potion mixed in this food. The one that both frees and restricts you. Why should he get to control your body?

You put your fork down and stand up.
"I know what you're thinking," he says. "And I will not allow it. Eat."
"I refuse."
"Then I will not touch you until you do."

His green eyes are sharp as a knife-edge, and equally cold.
"Fine by me." You turn, and head for the door.

"You don't want my children. It may seem appealing to you now, but it won't when you've reached the point of no return."

Your fingers linger on the brass doorknob, caressing the cool metal.
"You don't even love me," he adds, his words careful and confidently placed.
"Neither do you." You take a long breath.
"You also don't know me," he says. Your skin prickles at the touch of his soft words.
"Neither do you." You turn around, and he's standing right in front of you.

"We know the landscape of each other's bodies." His lips are twisted, leaking sinister. "And I the sweet taste of my revenge."

"I don't care what you say. You hate me more than you'd like to admit." You press your back against the wood of the door, feeling the elaborate carvings dig into your skin.

"Ooh-" He purses his lips, then the wicked smile returns. "I despise you."

He pulls the blue ribbon from his hair, setting it aflame and letting the ashes rain down between you.

"I hate you so much, pet."

The word sends electricity down your spine. "Do you want to kill me?" you ask.

His hand is around your throat before you can draw your next breath.

You grab at it, pulling it away just enough so you can breathe again. Your head is tilted back, leaning against the door, and you look at him through half lidded eyes.

"I don't want to kill you," you say. "You're not evil. You just pretend to be. You say you want us to
fear you, but in the end, you long to be our savior."

"Am I not yours?" Perfectly confident and mockingly smiling, he leans closer and breathes against your ear. "Have I not saved you from yourself so many times?"

"You've saved me from you."

You squirm in his grip, bracing one leg up against the door. His free hand slides up that leg, hooking it over his hip.

"Thou walkst with grace, as if thou meanst to float

Thy precious voice, thy gentle curve of hips

Would that I could pour poison down thy throat

And lick the taste of death off thy sweet lips."

His tongue drags over your mouth, then slips inside it. You're completely still, head tipped back, back arched against the wood, leg hooked over his hip.

"I wish to feel the softness of thy breast."

He releases his grip and lowers his head down to your décolleté.

"Thy perky buds, shall by my mouth be kissed."

He drags down the fabric of your dress, placing his lips softly against your flesh. You arch further against him, a hand landing in his hair.

"I long to rip thy heart out of thy chest."

He reaches up and grabs your left breast, squeezing it roughly.

"And watch it beat, then crush it in my fist."

He bites you and his teeth cut easily into your flesh. Your mouth falls open in a silent scream.

"I need to taste the nectar of thy love."

Mouth stained crimson, he sinks to his knees, moving your leg from his hip to his shoulder.

"Steal cries of holy paradise set free."

He lifts your skirts, slowly skimming his hands up your legs.

"I need to send thee up to stars above."

He presses his face between your thighs, pulling your panties away with his teeth.

"And silence thy sweet screams eternally."

You still don't move, and now you don't breathe. His tongue is on you, pressing into your heat. As he works you to the edge, he looks up at you with farewell.

"My dear love, naught will ever be so sweet-"

There is blood gushing down your chest, and now you really do see stars.
"As thy pure heart, when it ceases to beat."

You can feel it stop beating right when he says this. There's a squeezing pain in your chest and you're falling, slipping down the door.

For a moment, there is nothing.

Then you wake up, body hot and sweaty, in Loki's bed. He's asleep beside you, and you realize you've wrenched the covers off of you during your heated dream.

Lying in the dark, you think back to Lea and Lotte. Would you really want to stop eating the food Loki gives you, exchange it for scraps you steal from the kitchens? The kitchens...

Rika is awaiting you tomorrow. She wants to get you out of here. Maybe now is as good a time as any to leave. Now that you're having such insane thoughts about Loki, the man you tried to murder not two weeks ago. How did it go so fast? Did he put a love spell on you?

You turn, looking over at Loki's sleeping form. He always looks so innocent asleep. You suppose everyone does...

But after today, your heart seems to want to leap out of your chest and cuddle up next to his.

Slowly, you reach out and unravel the braid in his hair. He removed the ribbon as soon as he got back to the stables, but he didn't bother at that time to undo the braid.

You sit up and hug your knees to your chest, staring at Loki. He deserves a family of his own. You think it should be you, because you feel like you know him far more intimately than anyone else around. Maybe you just need to woo him. Train hard to master the blade, show him your dedication. Try harder to please his body, get him addicted. Slowly get to know him. Dive into his heart.

You reach out again and brush his hair out of his face. He said making you fall in love with him was a mistake. But you don't regret it. You'll just make sure he falls for you, too.

Chapter End Notes

Oh wow, what a fluffy chapter :D
Nothing bad can happen now, right guys? :)))

Btw, for those who don't speak Old Norse, Myrkr means "darkness" and Myrr means "swamp." That's why Loki insisted you apologize to his horse after calling it that. ;P
You wake a second time with Loki already gone. Taking your time, you dress, grab a quick bite, and head outside to do your exercises.

You notice slight improvements from when you started, and also that your mood picks up afterward. You don't go back immediately, but instead wander further into the gardens. You contemplate briefly if you should take a rose and give it to Loki, but realize that that isn't exactly your style. Instead, you pick a handful of daises, tuck them in your shirt's buttonholes, and cheerfully head back inside.

You stop by the kitchens to meet up with Rika. It's busy there as always, rations being prepared and pots being scrubbed. Besides a few brief glances, no one pays you any mind.

You spot Rika sitting on a stool in the corner, a pile of potatoes in front of her that she's in the process of peeling.

You grab a second stool and a knife off the counter and sit down next to her, grabbing a potato of your own.

She looks up immediately and seems relieved. "Oh, I'm so happy you came. I need something besides potatoes to look at."

"So, how goes my rescue mission?" you ask casually, starting to peel the potato.

"Pretty good!" she answers excitedly. "I need to ask you a few questions, though. You say you have the king wrapped around your finger. Could you possibly get him to do something for you? Show up at a certain location, at a certain time, under the premise of a romantic tryst?"

"Why does he have to be involved...?" you ask slowly, keeping your eyes on the potatoes so she can't read your face. "I thought you were just getting me away?"

"Well, yeah, but we're also trying to kill him, remember?" Rika reminds you cautiously. You can hear the touch of concern in her voice, feel her gaze on you.

"Maybe we shouldn't..." you say, equally cautious of your words. "I don't know how much Lee told you about the speech, but I thought I made it pretty clear that it would be a bad idea."

"You said that under duress." Rika reminds you. "Don't tell me he's... you know, gotten to you."

You look up now. "What do you mean?"

Her pale blue eyes are boring into you, and you don't like it. "You know. Manipulation. Making you feel sympathy for him."

"Manipulation..." you repeat, and you don't like at all how that word fits so well.
"You know, there must be a reason he lets you walk around freely," Rika continues. "Either he has the perimeters guarded and you can't escape, or he knows you don't want to."

"I mean, of course I didn't want to," you say defensively. "There was no place to go, and I didn't know where you guys were. I would have had to live on the street!"

"Your words... or his?" Rika has her eyes sharply narrowed.

You feel the breath briefly leave your lungs. "H-his..."

Rika sighs deeply and places a hand on your arm. "I should have gone instead of you. I may not have seduced him as you managed to, but at least I can sense manipulation from a league away. I wouldn't have fallen for his charm. I'm sorry. I feel that this is my fault."

You pull your arm away. "Don't pretend to be better than me! It's not just charm, he's genuinely kind sometimes. He gives me food and clothes and fighting lessons."

And sex and affection, you think.

Rika's voice is as sharp as her gaze. "He fulfills your basic biological needs and you are ready to roll over for him? Are you serious? That's the most basic manipulation in the book, mús."

Mús. Mouse. An ironic nickname for you that kind of stuck. She only uses it when she goes full protective sister mode. You really don't want to listen to her anymore.

"You're a prisoner, mús," Rika reminds you firmly. "He takes your freedom, puts himself in charge of your life, and pretends it's a great kindness that he's giving you food, clothes, and the ability to move around. And you just drink it all up and think you should get on your knees and worship him for his 'kindness.'"

Your hand is clenched around the potato so tightly that it snaps in half. "What's your problem, Rika? He's kind to me, unlike to all his other prisoners. It isn't just food, it's the nicest food I've ever had. Same goes for my clothes. And I can leave at any time! I just don't want to!"

"Oh really?" Rika repeats, her voice quiet but tense. "You can leave at any time? I dare you to go, then. Walk out of the palace without the king's accompaniment. See what happens."

"I have nothing to prove to you," you decide, turning and picking up another potato.

"Okay, then just listen." Rika also picks up a potato, resuming her peeling. "I don't know how far your feelings for him go, and I sure as Hel hope they're no more than sympathy, but I will tell you this just to be safe. This man is known for his manipulative tongue, after all.

"Number one, if he holds even a little power over you, anything you feel for him is what he wants you to feel, not what you actually feel."

You suddenly get a flash of a memory.

All I ask in return is that you love me, unconditionally, with the purest part of your heart.

Yeah, you know he wants you to love him—but does that mean that your feelings aren't real?

"Number two," she continues. "If he isolates you from people you trust, he is forcing your mind into trusting him, no matter if you have reason to or not."

Your guards are the only ones to talk to, and Brenna hates my guts, you had said once, not realizing that in comparison to solitude and talking to Brenna, Loki had seemed like a friend. When had you
started to trust him so easily?

"Number three. If he humiliates and belittles you, he's making you feel powerless, even if you aren't. He makes you feel worthless, and uses that to make you feel like you owe him for putting up with you."

*Your body is an object for me to take pleasure from, a repository for my cum. I will fill your every hole with it. Just accept it. You already said you love me. You love being my slave. You shudder thinking of those words, of that moment. How can you love someone who had said that to you? How can you have accepted it back then? He had violated you!

"Number four. If he makes you dance around him, one moment showing kindness, the other lashing out or ignoring you, he's pushing you into a mold. He's taking away what he doesn't like and forcing out what he does, even if you have to go against your very nature to fit his expectations."

*You think I would feel even a shred of remorse, were I to end your life right here? He had wanted to kill you. But then… Worry not, I would never take your life unless it is absolutely necessary. …he had promised not to. And then… You will, one day, make a mistake that I will find unforgivable. And then, I will kill you. …he had prophesized that he would.

"Number five. Does he insult you? Lie to you? Blame you for everything? Yeah, he doesn't care for you. At all, and he never has. He's doing this to destroy you."

*Apologize for your insolence or I will ride out alone. Insolence. All your insolence had been was suggesting you ride astride his horse instead of sidesaddle! You think even further back, when he had promised your freedom… Show me true submission, and I will release you after. …and then completely gone back on his word. You may never leave me.*

Your hand is clenched around the potato knife. Your shoulders are heaving and hot tears are running down your cheeks. By the way she choked out her last words, you know Rika is barely containing her emotions as well.

"I'll kill him. Right now," you get out through clenched teeth.

Rika puts a hand on your shoulder, holding you back. "No. He's dangerous. Wait until tomorrow. I'll tell you what exactly to do in the morning, and come midnight, he'll be dead."

You nod, slowly wiping your tears and standing up, your hand still gripping the knife. You hear Rika say your name, but you don't look at her. Instead, you take the daisies from your shirt, throw them to the ground, and step on them. Then you stride out of the kitchens, ignoring the warnings Rika calls after you.

You walk blindly through the halls, searching for him. He's not in the throne room, not in the bedroom. You finally find him, sitting at a desk in his study. He stands up immediately when you enter, his eyes wide.

He doesn't say anything, and neither do you, and you stride up to him and swing the knife at his throat. He grabs it in his bare hand and holds it there, a hair's width from his neck.

You tug and pull it away, slicing through his palm. His blood trickles out, but he doesn't even flinch. You swing at him again, and he catches the blade in his other hand, this time tugging it from your grasp. Both his hands are bleeding, and still, he's not doing anything to attack you.

"You disgusting monster," you scream, slamming a fist into his chest. He jerks back a step, but doesn't show any indication that it hurt.
"I hate you!" Your voice is shrill and you try to punch him in the face now. He grabs your wrist before you can, smearing you with his blood. His eyes are wild and he's breathing through his teeth, but he doesn't say anything.

"Why did you do this to me?!" you sob, falling to your knees. He goes down with you, still gripping your wrist.

"Because I love you," he whispers, his voice dark. "You don't-"

"Lies!" you shout, slamming your free fist into the ground. "I know you promised to lie to me, but you hate me! You want me dead!"

"No, I don't." His voice is calm and steady. "I love you, and I want you to suffer for it."

"Huh...?" you look up at him, momentarily confused.

"I love you, didn't you hear me?" he repeats louder, his eyes blazing with anger. "I've not loved anyone since the death of my mother, and now it's you. My little kitten, whom I've locked in a cage. If I gave you even a bit more control, you'd have me on my knees."

He looks at his hands and curses, standing up and rifling through his desk for something to bind them up with.

"What...?" you're still on the floor, feeling dazed.

"There is a reason you came here trying to stab me, no?" he asks, looking at you over his shoulder. He's found a handkerchief and is pressing it against the deeper if the two wounds.

"Yes... You manipulated me," you say quietly, but your voice shakes with anger and emotion. "I mean, of course you did, but I didn't think everything was orchestrated! That's why you said it was a mistake to make me fall in love with you! Because you didn't think it'd be so easy. And you know what? I don't love you! I never did! I love the version of you I created in my head, but that isn't real, is it?"

He turns now, sitting on the desk, his long legs stretching out, seeming completely unaffected again. "I did not think you were intelligent enough to figure that out, congratulations. Tell me, what made you come to that realization? Did you try to leave?"

Your eyes widen. Had Rika been correct about that, too?

"What... What happens if I try to leave?" you ask.

"You can't, of course," he states simply, still pressing the bloody handkerchief to his wound. "I only told you you could so you would not feel trapped. My guards are instructed to stop you immediately."

You can't believe this. If Rika had never shown up, would you have ever even found this out?

"And why, again, are you doing all this?" you question, trying to wrap your mind around this insanity.

"At first, it was out of revenge," he explains calmly. "Then it was because I wanted you to fall in love with me. To prove that I could make you. And you did; you were completely and utterly mine, to do with as I pleased. Only, what I pleased to do, was make you smile. I gave you freedom, and purpose. I wanted to make you whole again, after I'd brutally broken you apart. I wanted you to live.
And then... Well, I suppose isolating you to fall in love with me goes both ways. I've been alone for a very, very long time. So long, that I had forgotten how alone I truly was, until you started saying 'I love you' and looking at me with adoration instead of fear. I suppose it was bound to happen. My ugly, withered little heart fell in love with you, and I want you to suffer for that."

He laughs then, as if this were all a big, fucked-up joke. You just kind of stare at him, slowly picking yourself off the ground.

"You don't even know what love is," you scoff.

"Perhaps not." He's still wearing an easy smile. "Perhaps all sense of love died along with my mother. And then Odin. And Thor. They're probably dead by now, I'd think."

"You think?" you spit. "What did you do with them?"

"I told you, their disappearance was an unfortunate accident," he says and grins. "Odin, the poor old man, got stranded on Midgard and has no way of coming back, and Thor, ever so clumsy, fell off the bifrost and landed who knows where. Really not my fault."

You glance at the knife Loki dropped on the table. Before you can make a dash for it, he picks it up and holds it out to you.

"Here. Maybe if you stab me a few more times, I'll come to my senses and finally gather the nerve to kill you."

You snatch the knife from his hand and take a few steps back. "So let me get this straight, you say slowly. "We're both in love with each other, completely unintentionally and unwillingly?"

"It would seem so." He smirks as if this is all too funny.

You continue backing away, holding the knife out in front of you. "If you love me, does that mean you want to wed me and have children with me?"

Now he laughs, heartily, for quite a while, his whole body shaking. "No. It means I should want to kill you, but instead I want to rile you up, tease you endlessly, make you laugh and cry, bring you onto my bed and shove you off it, bring you to heel and onto my throne. I want to rest my head in your lap and have you caress me with a dagger. I want to put a leash around your neck and a sword into your hand. I want to cut into your skin, lick up your blood and kiss it all better."

You don't know what's worse, Loki making you love him while he cares nothing for you at all, or Loki making you hate him while he claims to love you. Worst of all, you believe him completely. You don't want his love, but here it is, powerful and deadly, just like in your dream.

"I'm leaving," you decide, looking back for the door.

"That is entirely fair," Loki agrees. "I will tell the guards to let you pass."

"I don't mean entirely," you clarify. "I mean, I want to be alone for a while. I'll stay in the palace, at least for another day, but not in your bed."

"Would you like me to prepare you a guest room?" he offers.

"No, thanks. I'm sure I'll find some place far away from you to sleep."

With that, you leave the room, taking the knife with you. You've made up your mind. By midnight
tomorrow, Loki will be dead.

Chapter End Notes

This chapter was short, but the next one will be up before the end of the week. It will be the last one in the first act of my story.
Chapter 19

Chapter Notes

To commemorate this chapter, I'm sharing the playlist I started with songs fitting to this story! A lot of the songs are very cliché, and you have probably seen them in similar contexts before, but sometimes you just need a bit of cheesiness! The others are pretty diverse, so I hope there is something for everyone on there.

Some of these songs fit very well to this particular chapter, others more to future chapters, so there's some foreshadowing. You can also decide for yourself whether a song is more reflective of Loki's feelings or those of the reader. (Of course, you are under no obligation to actually listen to this playlist in order to experience the story.) Enjoy!

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLYUBBrAqwQcQYk7Qn8JeTxMtGWsw97vEs

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

You actually go to your sword fighting lesson. One, because you like Brenna far more than you like Loki at the moment, and two, because learning to fight is always a good idea in this kind of situation. She actually compliments you on your ferocity. You don't tell her it's because you're an emotional wreck on the inside.

You don't go to Loki's bedroom for a shower or a change of clothes, fearing you'll cross paths with him again. Instead, you head for the kitchens again, hoping to find food and Rika there to comfort you.

You find one of the two and one thing you didn't expect.

"The king told me to wait here until you showed up," Sven says almost apologetically. "He said to give you this."

You skeptically look down at the tray of food presented to you.

"This isn't poisoned, is it?" you question, hesitantly taking it when your stomach growls.

"He didn't touch it," Sven assures you. "I watched the kitchen staff make it right here, and it didn't seem that they added any unusual ingredients."

Deciding that's enough for you, you grab a piece of bread and take a bite. "Let's go somewhere else," you say through your half chewed bite. "I was thinking of setting up camp in the library."

"Alright." A bit confused, Sven follows you out of the kitchens and to the cozy library.

"Remember when the whole 'Loki carrying me in his arms and warming me up by the fire' thing happened?" you ask bitterly, putting the tray on a side table and sitting down in an armchair. "Well, turns out that was all part of a big master plan to destroy me."

Sven, of course, remains standing. His dark face is cast in shadows, and he's giving you a sorrowful
"You know, he did so many nice things for me." You laugh dryly and pick up more food. "Even now, sending me you, giving me food. But it doesn't mean anything. You know why? Because he knows I'm still completely at his mercy. If he wanted, he could shut the kitchens off and order you to arrest me."

"He really hurt you, didn't he?" Sven asks carefully.

"You can say that again!" You give off another mirthless laugh, angry tears wetting your cheeks. Stupid heart, why are you hurting so much? "Ancients, he even said he loved me! Can you believe it? After all this, that was his first reply? After I'd tried to stab him and he was bleeding all over his desk? And he was laughing, as if him loving me was somehow the most pitiful and funny thing he could think of."

"You tried to stab him, made him bleed, and he's still making sure you get your food?" Sven repeats with disbelief. "He must have fallen for you quite a bit. Not saying you should go back to him, but I doubt he was lying about it. He's a vain man who takes attacks against him very seriously."

"Oh, I know.‖ You slouch down in your armchair. "I don't think he was lying either. I think he really does care for me, and boy does it delight me to think of how much he hates himself for it. Do you think I should taunt him a little?"

"I think you should calm down," Sven advises, sounding a tad worried. "He's far too dangerous in a state like this."

"You're right, I should let him stew," you agree, deliberately misinterpreting his words. "Then tomorrow, I can rub it in his face all the better!"

"Please, Katharina, lie down. Cry it out, sleep it off, whatever. I can bring you mead if you like, but don't leave this room."

"Fine," you grumble, trotting over to the sofa in front of the fireplace and throwing yourself down on it. "Bring me something to knock me straight out."

"I think you should calm down," Sven advises, sounding a tad worried. "He's far too dangerous in a state like this."

"You've done enough," you assure him, taking a small sip of the mead. It's sweet, but it also burns your throat. "I'm sure you have other responsibilities."

"Actually, no," Sven corrects. "His majesty ordered me to take care of you in any way I saw fit. Said you need someone you trust to tell you to take care of yourself."

You take a big gulp, shuddering, and put the mug aside. "Why would he do all that? To reel me back in?"
Sven slowly shakes his head. "I don't think so. He also said to escort to out of the palace, should you so wish to leave. I think he's making sure you're alright after what he did to you. Which does not excuse it, I know."

"He's so... fragile," you say, placing the pillow down and covering yourself in the blanket. "I'm sure in a few days, he'll be aggressively trying to lock me up again."

...if he isn't dead, by then, you add in your mind.

"Perhaps," Sven agrees. "I'll exit the room now, but I'll be right outside. Do try to cry it out, it really helps."

You nod absentmindedly and turn to lie on your side. You really should try to rest and recover so that you can play your part of the plan well tomorrow.

You don't get yourself to cry, always feeling like Loki, wherever he is, might pass by at that exact moment and delight in hearing your weakness. Instead, you alternate between sipping mead, lying dazed on the sofa while staring into empty space, and going to the washroom to relieve yourself of the mead again.

A few times, you drift off to sleep, but the dreams you have are so disturbing you always wake up again quickly.

Most of them replay your memories, but alter and twist them to a nightmarish state.

You see Loki, dressed in an unusual, all black outfit. He's wearing a high collared silken doublet, a ruffled cravat, a long coat, and a cape. In his arms is a child, a baby. Its eyes are closed, its little fists clutching at nothing. It's in a white gown, and Loki is rocking it, cooing softly at it.

You are instantly drawn to the baby, rushing forward and reaching out for it. Loki's head turns to you, but he holds the baby higher, out of your reach, preventing you from taking it.

You feel a sense of desperation, reaching up and trying to pull his arms away. He smiles as you struggle against his iron grip.

You are voiceless, and so you start giving him pleading, desperate looks. You just need to hold the baby. Need to keep it from him.

Loki just keeps smiling at you, enjoying your struggles, and then the dream fades and you wake with a start.

The sun has set by then, and you need a while to calm down. When you fall asleep again, it's probably near midnight.

This time, you see Loki sitting in an armchair in a room you don't recognize, hunched over and staring at his bleeding hands. A dagger sticks out of the upholstery of the armrest, smeared with his blood.

You walk around him, and suddenly his face is different. It's lost some of the roughness; it seems... younger. His hair is quite a bit shorter, and it's not just his hands that are bleeding. There are cuts along his lower arms, gushing worrying amounts of blood.

He's just staring at them, unmoving, his eyes wide and full of pain.

"Loki!" you call out, but he doesn't move, doesn't react. "Loki!"
You reach out to shake him, but your hand passes right through him. All you can do is watch as a ghost.

Finally, he takes a deep, shuddering breath and sits up straight. He closes his eyes, his face strained in concentration, and the wounds on his arms begin to close up ever so slowly. When Loki opens his eyes again, he looks utterly exhausted. He swipes his hand through the air and makes the blood disappear, then collapses in the chair, his eyes closed again.

This time, you wake more slowly, a gripping pain around your heart. You stare at the dark ceiling until you drift off again.

Loki is sitting on the garden swing, a sad smile on his lips.

"Hello, pet," he says.

"Hello." You slowly approach him, his eyes on you with such clearness as if he could really see you, as if this dream wasn't just orchestrated by your own mind.

Yes, you're dreaming with clarity. A lucid dream, you think they are called.

You sit down beside him, staring up at the stars. His hand lands on yours, wrapping around it slowly and holding it. You don't stop him.

"It's beautiful out here at night, isn't it?" he says, sounding wistful.

"Yes." You nod slowly, then turn to him to find his gaze on you.

He looks at you for a moment, then leans down and softly touches his lips to yours. You don't pull away, but you don't move either.

"You know, I've been thinking of Frigga a lot lately," he says quietly, and looks back up to the stars. "I wonder if she's watching over me, from Valhalla. If she's sad. Disappointed. I wanted to be king. To prove myself, but all I've made are mistakes. You, my kitten, are the biggest one."

You also look up to where he's looking, the constellation of the former Allmother. He's silent for a while, and you look back at his face, seeing his eyes glisten in the starlight. You squeeze his hand reassuringly, causing him to turn to you.

"Do you think... Do you think she would want me to join her?" he asks, a desperate smile on his lips.

"Yes." You squeeze his hand again.

"Yes?" he repeats, as if he was expecting a different answer, but he's still smiling. "Yes, you think I should? Would you come with me?"

You say nothing, and he slowly shakes his head.

"No, of course not." He looks away again. "I'll go alone, as I always have been."

"How will you go?" you ask.

"I'll find a way," he says decidedly. "Valhalla accepts all who die in battle with a weapon in their hand, protecting someone or something selflessly."

You would be worried, but you're not. You just can't imagine Loki protecting someone with his life.
You sit on the swing in silence until Loki gets up.

"I must go," he says, putting his other hand over yours, too. "But you should stay. It's nice here."

He smiles softly and releases you, walking away into a fog that's settled over the gardens. When he disappears, you lose the clarity of the dream, and slip back into unconscious sleep.

You wake to a familiar cool touch caressing your face. At first, it doesn't alarm you, and you simply lean closer to it. Then you slowly remember everything that happened, where you are, and who it is that's touching you.

You jerk up, eyes wide, heart pounding, looking fearfully up into Loki's face.

"Ah, you're awake," he says with a smile and steps away a bit. You see that a fire has been lit in the fireplace and that a tray of food is resting on a side table near you. Sven is also there, standing near the door, giving you an apologetic look.

"I'll leave you," Loki says, turning to him. "Make sure she eats."

With that, he strides from the room.

You're still sitting on the sofa, drenched in cold sweat, your heart pounding away in your ribs, your hands clenched around the blanket.

"I'm sorry," Sven says. "He wanted to deliver the food himself, and then he stayed and lit the fire, standing over you and just watching you for a few minutes. I was keeping a close eyes on him, and would have immediately intervened, had he tried anything. When he touched you, I thought he meant to strangle you, but he only stroked your face until you woke up."

You don't know what to think about that. He's still dangerous, you remind yourself.

You eye the food suspiciously, then take a tiny bite off a piece of bread, seeing if you taste anything strange. You don't, and decide if he really wanted to kill you, he'd probably do it far more personally.

You tell Sven you want some privacy, eat your food, and head outside to exercise. You want to prove to yourself that Loki hasn't wounded you enough for you to drop your exercise routine just to flee from bad memories, and you need a way to releasepent up emotions.

Afterward, you head to the kitchens, ready to receive the final instructions from Rika.

She's sweeping the floors, and when she spots you, she holds up a finger, gesturing for you to wait. You stand in the door frame, waiting until she joins you in the hallway.

"Let's go somewhere private," she instructs, grabbing your arm and dragging you into the nearest supply closet, where she leans her broom against the wall, before finally turning to you. There's a serious look on her face, illuminated only by the crack of light the door lets in.

"Everything is set up," she begins. "After sundown, the boys and I will be in the forest bordering the gardens, loaded up on weapons. You'll bring the king there. Tell him you want to take a romantic walk, something like that, and subtly lead him deeper into the forest, pretty much in a straight line away from the palace. As soon as you've gone far enough, you'll know. If all goes to plan, we'll have him dead within a minute. Then we can flee to the hideout we've been occupying for the past two weeks and wait there until everything blows over."
You nod. "Okay. I think I can do it. And if I don't manage to get him to take a walk with me at all? Like, if he's busy or something?"

You don't want to tell her that you already messed up by shouting at him and trying to stab him.

"Then we'll try again tomorrow," she explains. "If you're not there by midnight, we'll disperse. But if you think there's a good chance this won't work, you should tell me now."

She reaches out and squeezes your arm.

"No, I'm ready," you say firmly. "I'll get him there. I don't care how."

"Good. But remember, subtlety is always key. Don't make it too obvious you have a specific destination in mind. Anything else we should talk about?"

You shake your head. "No, I'm good. I've got everything I need."

"Okay. Good luck, mús." She leans in and presses a kiss to your cheek, before opening the door and slipping out.

You're a bit dazed, wondering what that kiss was for, but decide she's just really worried for you. After a moment, you also head out. Next step, getting Loki to a point where he'll want to take a "romantic" walk with you.

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"Is the king inside?" you ask the guards at the throne room.

One of them simply nods and opens the door for you.

You stride inside, spotting Loki on his throne, head resting against his fist, golden horns glinting on his head. His eyes land on you almost immediately, tracking your movement toward him.

"We should talk," you say bluntly, looking impatiently up at him.

"Talk?" he repeats, slowly shifting so he's leaning forward, gazing down at you. "I'm surprised you want to, after everything."

"And I'm surprised you're still feeding me," you retort, crossing your arms. "Now come down and talk to me on eye level."

He laughs at your boldness and stands up, unhurriedly descending the steps. You have to fight the urge to take a step back when he reaches the bottom step and steps off it, still towering over you, especially with those horns.

"You love me, yes?" you cut straight to the chase.

He laughs again. "It's a little complicated, but let's go with yes for now."

"Then, do you want me to stay with you?" you press on.

He gives you a curious look. "I didn't think you wanted that."

"I haven't left yet, have I?" you challenge.

He smiles. "No..."
"Yes, well, I'm staying for a little longer. Maybe just for today. It all depends on you."

"Just for today..." He repeats, and you can see the calculations being run in his head. "And it's up to me whether you stay longer?"

"Yes." You have no trouble holding his gaze with your assertive one.

"Then perhaps this isn't the best place to discuss all this," he decides, placing a hand on your shoulder and turning you around, steering you to the exit.

"You aren't taking me to your bedroom, I hope," you say, unable to hide the slight nervousness from your voice.

"No," he eases your nerves instantly. "Merely somewhere we can be alone."

He brings you to his study, the blood from yesterday still speckled on his desk.

"Take a seat," he offers.

"No, thanks. I'll stand."

"Alright." He goes to his desk and leans against it again, taking his helmet off and placing it beside him. "Then let me give you the rundown of your choices."

You look at him expectantly. You aren't scared. He doesn't look intimidating either, mainly tired.

"You can stay, of course," he begins calmly. "You can stay and live with me as you have before. As my pet. I can promise, as before, you will have your needs met, but that's about it. I realize it was unfair toward you to give you the illusion that I cared for you. I warned you that my love was a lie, but I did not warn you that my affection was equally such. If this had gone on for longer, you would have ended up as my puppet, entirely wrapped in a cocoon of lies, one which you could never have escaped from. You may think I am exaggerating, but you would have lost all inhibitions and become mine to control completely. You would have, if I had wanted it, slit your wrists and poured out every last drop of your blood with no hesitation in mind."

Your eyes are wide and you take a step back toward the door, just in case. You are pretty sure he isn't exaggerating even a little.

Loki assesses your reaction, then sighs. "Yes, I am aware that is quite a cruel punishment, but you did try to kill me. Thrice."

"Four times," you correct. "That time when you were drunk. It wasn't a dream."

Now his eyes go wide. "Oh." He seems to forget what he was going to say momentarily. "Then, I stand corrected. You were not completely in my control. Well done."

He gives you a praising smile, which quickly fades upon you narrowing your eyes.

"Alright, well, your next option is to leave," he continues. "I would highly recommend it. I will not send my guards to track you down, and I hope soon you will forget about me. You mustn't worry about the kingdom, either, because I'm sure I'll cause enough destruction to take myself down along with it. It is my destiny, so to say."

He smiles then, as if he is waiting for you to laugh at his cynicism. When you don't, he simply continues speaking.
"The third and final option, would be that I kill you." He pauses, again looking for your reaction. You give him a look of disbelief. "You are still up for execution, my little assassin. I don't know how much I've broken you, but perhaps it will be a mercy, hm? Do you want me to take the pain away? I promise to be very gentle."

"You seem to be awfully acceptant of your fate," you remark doubtfully. "What about you? What are your options?"

"Oh, mine would be quite similar." He gives you an encouraging smile. "If I get to keep you, I'll probably be quite happy, and perhaps rule the kingdom far more kindly. If you leave, I suppose I would drink excessively and meet my end in a wine cellar of a brothel. If I kill you, I'd be a bit more satisfied, but I don't doubt I'd shed a few tears over your grave every once in a while."

"You'd cry for me?" you question, raising a brow in doubt.

"Yes," he confirms, still smiling.

"Those options sound stupid. I can think of better ones," you grumble.

"Oh?"

"Yeah, you could apologize to me, fix everything you've ever broken, and beg me to take you back. You'd present me with gifts, and I'd coldly reject you. You'd buy me a nice house and sit on my porch in the rain. Maybe I'd hand you a cup of tea and then send you away. You can't be king anymore, of course. I want you to lose everything you hold dear, and I want you to suffer."

Loki leans his head back and laughs so hard his whole body shakes, until he slides off his desk and collapses on the floor. "Oh, oh pet, that was wonderful," he wheezes. "Thank you. Thank you for confirming how much you still love me."

You practically get whiplash from that statement. "What...?"

"Mm, pet, come here." He holds his hand out to you.

You hesitate, but then realize it's good if he still thinks you love him, because then he'll probably gladly take that romantic walk with you. You lower yourself to the ground and let him pull you in his arms.

"You love me, and I love you, and it's all so wonderfully chaotic and painful," he hums, rocking you gently back and forth and cradling your head against his chest. "I never thought I'd fall in love, but this seems so appropriate. I must confess, I had begun to loathe the drudgery of being king. I despised waking every morning to pay heed to sniveling fools, tawdry officials, and meddling aides. I detested my subjects for fearing me like I am some sort of monster, and longed at the same time to give them truer reasons to fear me.

"I wish they could all be like you, coming to me with their anger and falling to their knees once they conceive my true greatness. You made me happier than any of them. Your body is so hot and welcoming to me. It made me feel at home."

He pulls your head back so he can look at you. You just stare blankly at him. One of his fingers gently traces down your cheek, his eyes following its path.

"Look at you," he whispers now. "You don't even flinch when I touch you. My fingers are daggers and each my touches leave scars. I am your ruin."
His eyes meet yours again, and they are full of sadness. "You and I should never have met. You were a tiny little candle dying in a storm. Oh, but you came to me, not realizing I was a bomb with force enough to level all of Asgard."

"Shhh." You place a finger to his lips, silencing him. You think about your most recent dream. "What of Frigga? Don't you think she is watching over you from Valhalla?"

His eyes widen slightly.

"Don't you think she wants better for you? That she wants you to fix this?"

He pulls your finger from his mouth. "Of course she does. She's always been one to cling to sentiment. But I am well aware I can't escape Ragnarok."

"The end of everything?" you ask in a hushed voice.

"Precisely. Through Frigga's gift of foresight, she determined that I would be the one to start it. I always thought that would be impossible, but right now, I very much believe that I will tear down all of Asgard if it means drawing out the dagger you left sticking in my heart."

He grabs both of your wrists and brings your hands over the spot above his heart.

Your head slumps forward, forehead resting against his shoulder. "I'm sorry, Loki."

"For what?"

"I'll fix this. Don't you worry." By midnight tonight, he will be dead.

"Fix this how?" he asks.

You look up again, your eyes veiled with tears. "Do you trust me?" you whisper.

He smiles softly. "Always."

"Then don't worry about it." You reach up and stroke his cheek.

"Alright." His smile widens and he shifts, leaning a little closer. "I'll put myself completely in your hands, my dear."

He looks so relieved, then, you have to force back a sob. No, you have to remain strong. Loki cannot be allowed to live. ...But that doesn't mean you can't sweeten his last few hours.

Not stopping to think, you lean in and kiss him.

It reminds you of when he was drunk, when you held a knife to his throat and decided to sweeten his death with a kiss then, too. He kisses you back with an equal tenderness, with a vulnerability, as if he's pouring his heart into your mouth and not his lust. You hesitated back then, but this time, you're not his executioner. You'll just have to take him by the hand and lead him to his death.

Your heart feels like it's being ripped apart, but you just clench your fists and push it all down. When you pull away, Loki seems to have cheered up significantly. His hand is cupping the back of your head, stroking through your hair.

"Will you have me?" he asks. "One more time?"

You nod, still battling with your emotions. His smile widens. Gently, he lays you on your back and
crawls over you. His lips begin devouring you. You try to reach up to pull him closer, but he pins your hands back to the ground, entwining his fingers with yours.

His eyes are closed and his tongue seems to savor the taste of you. It takes a while before he's had enough, and even then his lips only travel to a different part of your body. They go down your neck, sucking and biting you roughly, until familiar heat pools at your core. Your clothes vanish and he moves lower, keeping his hold on your hands and dragging them with him.

His eyes are still closed as he blindly navigates your body. He leaves a path of love bites to your breasts, which he savors especially. He spends quite a long time with each your nipples, licking, sucking, and biting them, until you're writhing and arching beneath him, completely filled with lust.

His lips skim over your stomach, and he pulls your hands down to your hips. He kisses above where your curly hair begins and you open your legs for him. You feel his breath on your wet skin.

He leans in, his cheek brushing against your inner thigh. You angle one leg up, giving him better access. You feel him press his nose against you, simply inhaling your scent.

He releases one of your hands to move one leg further apart and over his shoulder, bracing himself against the floor. The other remains entwined with yours. He holds your hand and presses his tongue against you, feeling you squeeze it in response.

He licks you slowly, deliberately, savoring this, too. One thumb rubs into your thigh, the other over the back of his hand, relishing each time your fingers clench around his when he sends a jolt of pleasure through you.

You gasp and mewl softly, keeping your sounds subdued. He knows anyway how you're feeling, by the quiver of your thighs, the buck of your hips. He pursues each your reactions, building you up very slowly, but steadily nonetheless.

His devilish tongue licks expertly over and around your clit, and sometimes you feel the graze of his teeth or the suction of his lips.

It doesn't take long for you to cum, despite Loki drawing it out as much as possible. You buck against his face, drenching his tongue in your nectar. He works you all the way through it, never relenting. Your fingers are clenched around his, the heel of your foot pressing into his back, holding him close.

When you go still, he slowly unhooks your leg from his shoulder and releases your hand, then slowly lifts his head.

You meet his eyes. The lower half of his face is glistening, and his expression is completely unguarded.

"Thank you," he says, and licks over his shining lips. Next to you, a stack of clean and neatly folded clothes appears.

You grasp helplessly at the air and he helps you sit up. "Was that it?" you ask, almost disappointed.

That causes him to smile. "Will you have me again?"

You pretend to contemplate for a moment. "Is this a strategy to make me soft for you again?"

He just smiles wider and licks his lips again, still waiting for your answer.
"You know what, I don't care. You're so agreeable between my legs."

This causes him to chuckle and reach for his desk chair, spinning it around for you. "Come, sit down. It's more comfortable up there than on the floor."

You gladly stand up and take a seat, already opening your legs resting them on Loki's shoulders. He scoots closer, positioning your thighs on either side of his face, and delves back in to pleasuring you. This time, he uses his fingers to push inside you as his tongue works your sensitive clit.

From the corner of your eye, you spot the helmet that is still sitting on the desk. You reach over and grab it, placing it on your head. It's quite heavy, and slides down over your brow at first, covering your eyes. You tip it back up and see that Loki's eyes are on you. He lifts his head and smirks, his fingers still pumping into you.

"You look... beautiful."

There is appreciation in his eyes and you almost turn your head away and blush like a schoolgirl. Instead, you weave a hand into his hair and push him back down.

He gives you a look as if to say I could easily resist you right now if I wanted to, but obliges anyway.

You keep the hand in his hair, absentmindedly stroking through it while his tongue and his fingers fill you with heat and pleasure. You cum even quicker than the first time, your thighs locking around his head and your hips rocking against his face until the orgasm subsides.

Loki draws his head away with a gasp, but he grins like the cat that got the cream.

"You almost smothered me, pet," he says with a laugh. "Not that I would have minded. You taste divine."

To prove his point, he licks his lips clean again, but his chin and nose are still glistening wet.

He slowly stands up and now you can see the erection straining against in his pants. Without thinking, you reach out and gingerly touch it. He immediately grabs your wrist and grinds himself against your palm.

"Do you want this?" he asks huskily.

"Yes- Fuck, I mean no." The confirmation came out automatically before you could stop yourself.

"'Fuck, you mean no?'" Loki repeats, and it sounds like he's trying hard not to laugh. He's no longer grinding against you, but he's still gripping your wrist.

You grit your teeth. "It slipped out."

"Are you having trouble maintaining control?" he taunts. "And I've been making it so easy for you. Would you like to get on your knees and suck your master's cock?"

A surge of arousal flashes through you. "Fuck," you say again, this time quieter.

"I think you do." His hips push against you again and your hand wraps around him through his pants. "I think you want to feel my thick, swollen cock sliding over your tongue. To feel my hands gripping your hair and pushing you down on it. To feel so nice and helpless. To feel it throbbing in your throat, and-"

"Alright, stop!" You yank your hand away and try to hide your flustered expression by letting the
helmet slide over your eyes again. "You really are manipulative."

"I would call it... enticing," he retorts, the amusement clear in his voice. "So, how do you want me?"

"On your knees," you growl.

Now he does chuckle, and kneels back down. "Alright, pet."

You lift the helmet off your eyes. "Don't call me that."

"Then what should I call you? Little slu-?"

You interrupt him by telling him your name. If he's going to die today, he might as well know.

His smile grows bigger. "Oh? Is that your true name?"

You nod.

"I like it." He repeats it, tasting it on his tongue. Somehow, his buttery voice makes it sound like a dirty word, and you shiver. Then he says it again, this time sounding commanding. "Are you going to help me, or will I have to deal with this myself?"

He gestures to his crotch.

You look down, contemplating. "I don't feel like it. Do it yourself."

"You are insufferable." Giving in, he stands up and opens his pants, pulling them down so his erection springs free in front of your face.

You flinch back. "What are you-"

"I'm giving you a show. Now spit on my hand." He holds his hand out to you.

You give it a doubtful look, then decide to go along and spit on it.

"That'll do," he decides, and wraps his hand around his cock, slowly beginning to stroke it. "You can help anytime you feel like it."

"Nope." You lean back in the chair and just watch. The helmet has become a little annoying by now, so you take it off and put it back on the desk. Your eyes wander between Loki's hand, which has picked up in speed, and his face, which accurately reflects both the pleasure and the lack thereof he's experiencing from his own hand.

"Do you want to know what I'm thinking at this moment?" he asks.

"No, but tell me anyway," you say, unable to hide your curiosity, but knowing you'll probably regret it.

"I'm thinking how nice it would feel for you to simply wrap your lips around the tip and let it rest on your tongue. I'd push my other hand into your hair and give you a nice massage. You would close your eyes and relax and let me worry about everything else. I'd comb through your hair and rub over your scalp, easing all your stress away with my hands."

His voice is so damn soft and lulling that you're leaning forward subconsciously, your eyes fluttering halfway closed, until your lips literally make contact with the tip of his cock. Immediately his hand weaves into your hair and begins rubbing over your scalp until your resistance just crumbles. Your
jaw goes slack and you let him push his cock inside your mouth.

Instinctively you reach up wrap your hand around the shaft, feeling his own hand leave it. You begin to bob up and down, letting it slide over your tongue and enjoying the head massage he's giving you with both hands now.

It feels so damn good for some reason. You pick up the pace, humming in relaxation and causing him moan and buck into your mouth. He doesn't push you, simply sliding over your tongue and letting you decide the rest. You stroke him with your hand and suck around the tip, pushing your tongue against the slit and swirling it around, causing him to make delicious noises.

When the heat at your core overpowers your relaxed mindset, you pull off of him with a wet pop and look up into his eyes.

"I want you inside me."

His gaze is heavy with need and he pulls you off the chair to sit down himself. You straddle his legs and he pulls you closer, but you only grind yourself against him, teasing him until he makes a desperate noise. You push your hands into his hair and lean down to whisper in his ear.

"Take your clothes off."

They disappear from under you and you press yourself against his bare chest. His hands are sliding up and down your back, trying to entice you to give him what he wants.

You position yourself over him and slide down, but you only let the very tip of him enter you. He practically quakes with the need to buck up into you, but he masterfully restrains himself. Slowly, you slide down about half way, and equally slowly, you slide back up.

"Please-" he chokes out, his head landing on your shoulder.

You were not expecting that, and a delicious thrill runs through you.

"Say that again," you breathe, easing yourself down again, but only halfway.

"Please," he repeats, his voice equal parts desperate and annoyed. "Is this how you will punish me for my wrongdoings? Are you truly so cruel as to use my love for you against me?"

You laugh hollowly. "Punish you? No, this is your reward." Then you sink down on him fully.

He hisses out in pleasure, and you feel his swollen cock throb inside you.

"Reward? For what?" he asks, sounding slightly out of breath.

"For all the good things you've done," you whisper. "For helping Helena and her family, for example."

"Oh? And how will you punish me then?" He lifts you up and bucks back into you, causing you to moan. "By making me ask for forgiveness a hundred times and rejecting me until the hundred and first?"

"No," you say quietly, sliding up and down his length. "But that might be a better idea..."

"I trust you in your decision, whatever it is," he gives you assurance, rolling his hips in time with yours. You feel his open mouth on your neck where he bites and sucks on your skin, no doubt marking you.
You bounce up and down on him, letting him fill you with mindless pleasure. You hear yourself moan his name multiple times, and he starts doing the same with your name.

Your eyes are closed, and his forehead is resting against your neck, his hands gripping your hips tightly as your bodies rut against each other. He slides his hands up and rubs his thumbs over your nipples and you gasp his name, clutching at his hair and pulling his head down to your breasts.

He obliges, taking a nipple in his mouth to suck and lick it into a stiff peak. Your chest is pushed out to give him better access, and all your stress fades away to this mindless, rough, and primal pleasure.

When his hand reaches between you to rub over your clit, you come undone, clenching hard around him as your body trembles in ecstasy. He slams up into you, still rubbing over your clit so that you continue to clench around him, and cums with a deep growl, bucking wildly.

You feel his cum filling you up and leaking out of you, and your movements still to make room for your gasping breaths. He slowly lifts you off him, making more of it trickle down your thighs, and simply holds you, breathing heavily, his sweaty body pressed against yours.

You hear a whisper of your name and lift your head to look at him. He meets your gaze and there is a silent question in it, as well as complete unguarded vulnerability.

You don't know what to say, how to answer, so you just keep your face blank. Slowly, you get off his lap and pick up the stack of fresh clothes.

You put them on and Loki watches you. They consist of your usual tunic-breeches-boots combo. You're a bit surprised he went with practical over pretty.

When you look back to Loki, he's still in his chair, but his own clothes have re-materialized around him.

"I'm going to eat something, and then I'm going to my lesson," you announce into the silence.

"Might I join you?" he asks and rises.

You look at him for a moment. "Don't you have your kingly duties to attend to?"

"I'm sick of being shackled to the throne," he answers, a sour look on his face. "The strain of it... It has begun to take its toll on me. I'm even beginning to understand why Odin was... like that."

"You don't want to be king?" you ask in surprise.

"I've said this already. I'm beginning to loathe it," he repeats his earlier confession.

"Then... Then abdicate...!" You can't believe all your problems were for nothing. He never even liked being king, this entire time!

"No."

You reel back. "No? But why?! You just said you-"

He straightens up, a calm decisiveness on his face. "No, I will not abdicate. The only thing that will get me off that throne is brute force or, if for some reason someone find leverage against me, blackmail."

That sounds awfully like a challenge. No, a request.
"Blackmail?" you repeat. "Like 'if you don't abdicate I'll leave you?'"

He laughs lightly. "That will not work."

You think for a moment. "If you don't abdicate I'll kill myself?"

His eyes widen slightly, then his expression shifts to amusement. "No. I don't believe you would go through with that. A valiant attempt, nonetheless."

You furrow your brow. "Do I even have leverage against you?"

"If you cannot answer that yourself, then I suppose you don't." He smiles cryptically.

You think for a moment longer, then give up. You have better things to do right now.

"I'm going to eat now," you say, turning to the door. "Is my food still kept in the kitchen?"

"I believe it is." He strides forward and opens the door before you can, holding it open for you. "I will accompany you there and help you carry it to where you want to eat."

You freeze briefly, thinking of Rika, but then decide there is hardly any risk, seeing as he doesn't know who she is, and she might not even be in the kitchen right now.

"Alright, fine." You stride out the door and Loki follows behind you. He's silent the entire way to the kitchens.

When you and the king enter, everyone kind of startles and begins to bow or curtsy deeply. You spot Rika at a basin with dirty dishes, but she excellently blends in.

"At ease," Loki says, and everyone straightens back up.

"My- My king!" a well-built woman with an apron stammers. "What brings you here? What do you need?"

"I came to retrieve my pet's- My companion's food," he explains.

"Ah, it's right over here!" she quickly hurries to a small table where a tray has been prepared.

"I'm your companion now?" you ask Loki, not all too happy with that title either.

"What would you rather have me call you?" he sighs.

"I don't know..." You shrug. "Your one and only?"

He laughs at that. "You wish me to court you? You, the woman who I proclaimed a traitor and a whore in front of all of Asgard?"

You can't stop yourself. You punch him against the arm with full force.

There is a collective gasp throughout the kitchens. The woman, who is holding your tray of food, is visibly shaking, causing the dishes to rattle.

Loki stares at you, first with shock, then with malicious excitement that you dared defy him publicly.

"Now, now, pet, was that such a good idea?" he scolds, smiling cruelly and slowly stalking toward you.
You feel an involuntary flicker of fear.

"I think I've been far too lenient with you," he continues. "That can easily be reprimanded, right here, right now, don't you think?"

You give him an uncertain look. He snatches up your wrist, and roughly yanks you out into the hallway, out of sight from those in the kitchen.

He pushes you against the wall, an impish smile on his face, and whispers: "Scream."

"Huh?" You are a bit confused.

"Scream, like I'm hurting you," he clarifies, still looking awfully amused.

"Oh." You open your mouth and let out a high pitched scream.

Something drops to the floor in a clatter in the kitchen and you almost giggle.

"Good. Once more," Loki instructs.

You let out another blood curdling shriek and Loki's hand locks around your wrist again, his face hardening as he drags you back into the kitchen.

You feign a stumble and keep your gaze locked to the floor. It's completely silent in the kitchen.

"I think my pet wants to apologize to me," he says coldly.

"I'm sorry, master," you mumble, still hiding your face.

"Oh, pet, you know I can't stay mad at you," Loki says in an exaggeratedly saccharine tone. "Now give me a kiss."

He lifts your chin up and presses his lips to yours before you can react. You just kind of freeze up, until he shoves you against the door frame and forces his tongue between your lips. That's when you moan and sling your arms around him, delving into the kiss. He grinds his hips against you and draws back a little to show everyone just what your tongues are doing right now, before going back in and taking your breath away in what you think is the most inappropriate kiss you have ever participated in. By the time he pulls away, you're flushed and panting, and assume everyone in the kitchen is now traumatized.

"Now, the food, if you'd please." Loki holds his hand out to the woman, whose eyes are very wide.

As she hands him the tray, you glance over at Rika. She's staring at Loki, eyes narrowed, fists balled, and her face contracted in absolute, murderous rage.

"Now, pet, where do you want to go eat?" Loki ushers you back out of the kitchens, carrying the tray for you.

"I... I don't know." You're a little distracted by the lingering image of Rika in your mind.

"The banquet hall, then," he decides for you. "It's a little empty when it isn't filled with fodder and feasters, but you will be able to imagine the splendor nonetheless."

You nod absentmindedly and follow him. Once there, you hardly take in the grand tapestries and murals, and simply sit down at one of the overly long tables.
Loki places the tray in front of you, but doesn't sit down, instead walking around the table and pointing at one of the tapestries.

"Look, this is Thor and I as children."

You glance up, the food seeming dry and tasteless in your mouth. You see two little boys with their arms around each other. The blond one is grinning, slouching down as if he were in a fit of giggles. The black haired one stands perfectly straight, a soft, held back smile on his lips.

"Do you miss him?" you ask, washing the food down with some water.

Loki turns back to you, a solemn look on his face. "We were children then. Things have changed between us. There are parts of him I miss, others, I loathe." He looks down at your tray and frowns. "You are not eating. Is something the matter? Was it the scene in the kitchen?"

You shake your head. "No, it was fine. I'm just not very hungry."

Loki sighs and sits down across from you. "I'm pretty sure all your sorrows can be traced back to me. It is a push and a pull between us. First, I was pulling you all the way toward me, and now I want you to push. Push me where you want me, punish me how you see fit, but do not let go for too long or I will seize back the reigns in a flash."

You nod numbly and pick at your food, not eating any.

"You can, of course, sever the tie between us, but I'm hoping you won't until you've left me a scar to remember you by," he adds.

"Is this how you live your life?" you ask, looking up again. "You take until your luck runs out, and then you make yourself suffer for all the pain you've caused?"

"I suppose," he agrees, all too casually. "Winning is usually not in the cards for me. Every game I engage in, I know I will lose. Yet I do it anyway. I sow chaos, I thrive on it, and then I suffer the scars. Your scar, I will look particularly fondly on."

"You think it'll come to an end between us?" you question.

"Of course. This dance will continue until either of us slips. Right now, you are leading, but I am sure you will not hold that position forever."

"So you don't think we can just... Stop dancing and settle down?"

He laughs at that, as if you made a joke. "You're dancing with the God of Mischief, dear. You will always be on your toes."

"Do you... Do you want to actually dance?" It's a stupid proposal, but if this is his last day alive, you want to fill it with as many things as possible, things you've always kind of wanted to do with him, but never had the opportunity.

"Right now...?" he questions. "Or are you proposing I hold another ball and let you be the woman to finally drag me onto the dance floor?"

You swallow guiltily. "Right now."

He stands up and walks around the table, then holds his hand out to you. "There is no music..."

"I don't care." You take his hand and let him pull you up.
He places his other hand at your waist and pulls you closer.

"I thought I was leading," you joke halfheartedly, dropping your forehead against his chest.

He pauses. "...Do you want to?"

"...No." You reach up and put your other hand onto his shoulder.

"Are you familiar with the dances of the court?" he asks quietly.

Your face is still buried against his chest. "No... Can we just-"

You sway your body, trying to move him with you. He quickly takes the lead, softly swaying you around, no complicated steps or anything, just moving and swaying in slow circles through the hall.

You keep your head leaning against his chest the entire time, and he holds you against him with the hand at your waist.

After a little while, he says your name softly.

"Mm?" you mumble against the leather.

"I was wondering about something. Yesterday, you were full of anger, and today you still seem pained and distracted, which all makes sense to me, but isn't it me who you're angry at? Yet now you hold me as if I am the dearest comfort you have. I do not understand. Are you upset with me, as you should be, or are you upset about something else?"

"Both," you mumble, not wanting to think about this.

"Then tell me, what are you upset about that isn't me?" he presses on. "I expected you to hate me for the next decade at least, so what has hurt you so badly that you seek comfort from me?"

You stop moving and he stops, too. Slowly, you lift your head, blinking into the light. You seem to have danced all the way across the room.

"Why are you so nice to me?" you ask. "Are you trying to manipulate me into liking you again? Are you trying to stop me from hurting you?"

"I don't think that would work," he assures you. "See how distrustful you are of me now? If this were just between you and I, you would distrust me all the more if I started being nice to you. To tell you the truth, plain and simple, I love you, and I trust you, and I want you to hurt me the way I hurt you. My cruelty is a source of opportunity. If I am allowed power, I will use it, and I will let it get to my head. You were far too submissive for your own good, but I thought that was simply the type of person you were. I thought you wanted to be my pet, and I thought you wanted to be hurt by me. You surprised me as no one has ever surprised me when you dismantled all my deceit in one fell swoop. It amused me, and I simply could not bring myself to be angry, and that is when I realized I was hopelessly yours."

"You're such a smooth talker," you say with frustration, stepping away from him. "See, that right there almost had me believing everything was alright and that we could be together like normal people. But how do I know you're not lying about all that, too?!"

"That is my curse," he says sadly. "As soon as my lies are revealed, and they all are at one point, I am never to be trusted again. But far worse than that, I must constantly tread on my toes and sleep with one eye open, because who else, but the betrayer, knows how easily one falls victim to
"Treachery?"

"You said you trust me," you point out. "Why? Shouldn't you fear for my revenge?"

"Rationally, I should," he concedes. "I know it is coming, but I do not fear it. I know your heart is kind and just. You will give me what is due, nothing more and nothing less."

"And what if I don't?" you ask. "What if I'm completely lost?"

He closes the distance again and takes both your hands in his. "Then we are lost together and have an eternity to find each other."

"And what if we don't?" you press on. "What if we have only today?"

He leans a little closer, trying to read you. "...Is there something I should know?"

"Only that, if I could, I'd freeze time and have today last the eternity you promised me." You feel the tears pricking at your eyes, and you don't bother hiding them. If Loki isn't dead by tonight he'll be king again, and if he's king again, he'll pull you off the cliff you're currently walking on. You only have today, and the sun is already past its zenith.

"It is about time for your fighting lesson, no?" he reminds you gently. "Would you like to spar with me? It will be a good distraction, and I am curious to see if you've progressed at all."

You nod and wipe your eyes. "Alright. Let's spar."

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"Attack me," Loki says. "I won't hurt you, do not worry."

"Go get him, you weasel!" Brenna shouts from the sidelines. "Show him what I taught you!"

Loki's pose is flawless, the sword held like a delicate instrument in his hand. You yourself are a little more tense.

You take a deep breath and then you attack. You go through all the moves Brenna taught you, and you know you're far too slow, but Loki matches your pace perfectly, blocking each blow, yet never returning it.

"Well done," he praises when you pull away. "You're a quick learner. It took me far longer to master the basics. Now, select a training dummy and show me your killing strikes."

You emotionlessly wander over to them, and then you tense all your muscles and release all your emotions at once. You scream and hack wildly at the dummy, over and over, ripping off its arms, gutting it until the straw pours out, and slicing its head off its shoulders in one final act. You stand there, hunched over, breathing heavily.

"Is she okay?" you hear Brenna ask.

"I'm going with no," Loki replies. "But I'm not entirely sure who or what she's upset with, seeing how I was treated far better than that dummy."

You lift your sword, go to the next dummy, and stab it in the heart. And the next. And the next, until the whole row of dummies has had your sword in their chest. Then you just stand there, completely numb and exhausted, until Loki comes up behind you and wraps you in his arms.
You fall limp against him, letting him take the sword from you and guide you back inside. He brings you to his bedroom and sends for a servant to draw you a hot bath. As you wait, you sit on the bed in Loki's arms, eyes closed, mind blank.

"We belong together," he whispers, softly kissing the top of your head. "If someone tries to hurt you, I will hunt them down. And if I hurt you, I want you to hurt me right back. Each moment that passes, I only find myself loving you more. Stay with me. Do whatever you must, but don't abandon me. That is all I ask. I can live with anything, but I cannot live knowing I've lost you. So, if you must leave tomorrow, if that is what has you so upset, keep me in your heart and then, one day, return to me."

A sob wracks your body and you find yourself nodding. "Okay," you whisper.

"Shhh, love, don't cry," he coos, softly rocking you in his arms. "I will fix you. I will fix everything I've broken in you."

The servant comes, prepares the bath, and leaves, but you don't want to leave Loki's arms, so he undresses you like a child and carries you into the bathroom. He lowers you into the tub and begins washing your hair.

You sit there, the warm water and the touch of his hands so soothing, and you let yourself forget everything for a while.

You eat dinner with Loki, and by that time, the sun has set. You're now dressed in a modest cotton dress, flat shoes, and comfortable underwear, all in a light green.

"Loki? Can we take a walk? I need some fresh air."

"Of course, my love. Lead the way."

You step out into the gardens, briefly looking up at the night sky.

"It's beautiful out here at night, isn't it?" he asks, looking around.

"Yes." Your mouth feels dry.

You walk silently through the gardens, subtly moving in the direction of the forest. Loki follows you, his gaze mainly directed up at the stars. You know what constellation he's looking at without needing to confirm it.

You reach the edge of the forest, where you pause.

"Can we go into the forest?" you ask.

Loki meets your eyes. His skin is even paler than usual in the light of the moons. "Why do you wish to go there?" he asks.

"Did you ever wonder why I'm so afraid of snakes?" you ask back. Your body is stiff, your heart is numb.

"Yes, I did wonder about that," he confirms, still giving you a curious look.

"When I was a child, whenever I was angry or sad, I would run out into the forest near the house and hide in the bushes until I'd calmed down. I made myself little secret hiding places only I knew about. One night, I had a big fight with my father, and I just ran out even though it was already dark. I was
blind with anger and crawled into the thicket to hide. That's when my hand landed on something scaly, something that gave way beneath my hand and then lashed out and sank its fangs into my arm. I'd squashed it enough to kill it, but its venom was already in my blood. I barely made it home before passing out in excruciating pain. I almost died that night. My parents couldn't afford royal healers. We had a family friend who knew a little healing, and she just barely brought me back. That's why I'm deathly afraid of snakes, and why I never go into areas where I cannot see what I might be stepping on."

Loki listens attentively, a sympathetic look on his face. "Then why do you wish to go into the forest now?"

"Because you're here with me now." You reach out and take his hand. "I want to overcome my fears with you. ...You like snakes, right?"

He smiles softly. "They are fascinating creatures. Alright, then, I'll protect you."

He puts his hand on your waist and pulls you against him, walking with you into the forest.

You steer Loki in the direction Rika indicated, disguising it as picking a random direction. As soon as you get a little further in, the trees begin to obscure more and more of the moonlight, and you just stop walking.

"Loki, let's go back," you decide, already trying to turn around.

He only holds you closer, not allowing you to flee. "Are you scared?" he asks.

"No, but I'm cold," you lie. "Let's go back and I can put on something warmer."

You don't have to fake the shiver that runs through you.

"Why didn't you just say so?" He draws his hand back and summons one of his capes, wrapping it and his arm around you and steering you forward.

You try to dig your heels into the ground, but he's too strong, and you are forced to stumble along.

"Loki, please! Stop walking! Please, I can't do this!" You are desperate now.

He stops and turns you so you're facing him.

"There is nothing to fear," he assures you. "I'm here. I will protect you."

"No, you don't understand," you insist. "We have to go back! Please, Loki-"

"Look, do you see that big oak over there?" he interrupts you, pointing. "Let's go just until there, alright? You can learn to overcome this fear. Just trust in me."

You look at the oak tree. It's about ten paces away. Maybe, maybe that's not yet far enough.

"Come." Loki gently steers you in its direction. "Just put one foot in front of the other. There you go. The snakes don't want to-"

There is a whizz and the sound of a blunt impact and he stops talking. You turn to look at him. His eyes are wide, and there is an arrow sticking in his right arm. It only takes him a second, before he shoves you to the ground and covers your body with his.

He has his hand clasped over your mouth and is completely unmoving, just waiting. You're frozen
beneath him, your muscles locked up and your brain unhelpfully blank with terror. When nothing happens, he slowly draws off of you and snaps the arrow shaft, tossing the end part away.

"Someone is here," he hisses. "Go, hide in those bushes. Don't come out until I get you."

He nudges you in the direction of some shrubbery and disappears behind a tree.

You don't move. For a moment, everything is silent. Then green light erupts everywhere, shining from between the trees. You hear a shout, a battle cry, and you recognize it as Mat's voice.

Slowly, you crawl over near the bushes and lean your back against a tree. This is official out of your hands now.

You can feel shouts and multiple pairs of footsteps. More arrows fly through the air. Gradually, the green light fades, and then you hear a pained scream. It wasn't Loki's, but that means it was one of your friends.

There are grunts and clear sounds of fighting. The scuffing of dirt, blunt impacts and the sharp clang of blades. It's three against one; you know how this will end.

A dagger whizzes past you, almost impaling your shoulder, and lands somewhere in the bushes. Slowly, you crawl over to where you heard it land, searching along the ground until you find it. You lift it up and let the sparse moonlight reflect off of it. It's one of Loki's.

Suddenly, the fight is really close. It sounds like two people are fighting for nothing less than survival, only a few paces away. You hear a grunt and something heavy lands in the bushes beside you. Someone shouts your name.

"Kill him!"

Loki is lying on his back, one hand clutched over the arrow wound in his right arm, the other holding the twin of the dagger in your hand. His face is contracted in pain, and there is more blood on his armor. Whether it's his, or one of your friend's, you don't know.

You crawl over to him and lift the dagger, holding it above his throat. It looks like the burden is in your hands, once again. Just your stupid luck.

Loki's eyes widen with fear and betrayal, but something else flickers through them. Acceptance.

*Valhalla accepts all who die in battle with a weapon in their hand, protecting someone or something selflessly.*

The words he spoke in your dream echo through your mind in that moment. He has a dagger in his hand, and the thing he's protecting is... you.

He isn't fighting, or attempting to run. He just lies there, staring up at you. You have a choice now. Give Loki what he wants and bring him to Frigga, or give Frigga what she wants and save her son.

*I love you,* you mouth.

His eyes go even wider, but when you don't stab down, that's all the push he needs to scramble to his feet and disappear into the trees.

You stare after him, the dagger still held in his hands. You dropped his cape somewhere on the ground, and you crawl back over to where it lies in the dirt and wrap it around you.
"What- Where is he?" Mat shouts. "You let him go?! Rika, you said she wasn't compromised!"

"Mat, just drop it," she sighs. "He got away, and soon this place will be swarming with guards. Let's go."

"I can't believe this! The bastard almost killed me!" There is a whack and he grunts. You assume he punched a tree.

"Hey, you need to get up." Lee's hands wrap around your arms and he pulls you to your feet. You don't resist, but your grip tightens around the dagger and the cape.

"Mú, are you okay?" Rika is by your side, putting a hand on your back and gently steering you forward. Lee walks on your other side, and Mat stomps along somewhere to the right.

"Fine," you mumble, not paying attention to where they're taking you. All you concentrate on is holding the cape and the dagger.

They make you walk at a brisk pace through the forest, until you reach the edge. Waiting there is an open cart with a single horse tethered to it.

"Up." Rika helps you climb onto the back, then joins you and wraps her arms around you.

Mat jumps up as well, but he sits opposite you, glaring out into the scenery. He's clutching at his lower ribcage, his hand slick with blood.

Lee takes to leading the horse, and soon, you're moving.

You look over at Mat, who almost looks like a shadow with his dark skin and his pitch black clothes. Rika, on the other hand, is a ghost with her red hair and her almost white skin in the moonlight. You can't see much of Lee, except his head of black hair and the end of his bow.

"You're safe now," Rika tells you after a while of silence. "He can't get to you now. You can just rest and let us take care of you for a while. Do you want to try and sleep? Our hideout is quite the distance away."

You don't say anything, and you don't make a move to lie down. You just stare at a point on the cart and watch the past events play in front of your eyes again and again. Everything feels wrong. You can't stop thinking about Loki's face. The way he seemed to accept you would kill him, his eyes shining wet in the moonlight.

Chapter End Notes

And here is where act 1 ends. We'll see when the next update is, but don't fret, for I have already written the next few chapters.

If you have any songs you think I should add to the playlist, feel free to suggest them! And yes, my fanfiction is named after the first three words of "War of Hearts." But there is also another reason it is called that, and maybe that reason can give you guys some hope :)

I'm back!
I've taken a little break and gotten more writing done, so now act 2 can commence!
Thank you all for the wonderful comments and song suggestions :D

The hideout turns out to be a rundown and barred up convenience store at the very outskirts of the city. By the time you get there, several hours have passed, but you don't feel like you can sleep.

The store consists of two areas, one main room, and one back room. You're lying on a bedroll in the back room while the other three sit around a fire in the main store, after having returned the cart and horse from where they "borrowed" it. The roof has several holes, through which the smoke escapes, but that also means it's pretty cold.

You're wrapped in several furs and blankets, but it's like the warmth doesn't reach you. Your fingers are still curled around the dagger, and you clutch the cape to your chest.

Rika had tried to take them off you, but your hands had refused to open, so she just tucked you in like this.

You're staring up at the ceiling, or rather, a hole in it through which you can see the stars. You can hear your three friends talking softly, but you just let their words float through your mind without actively listening to their meaning.

They talk mainly about the fight, Mat being very angry about the outcome, and they also talk about you.

"She let him go on purpose. I know it!"

"Drop it, Mat. You don't know what he did to her."

"You're blind, Rika. Did you see how she clutched that green blanket and his dagger? She developed feelings for that monster!"

"I know, Mat. He manipulated her. But I already told her all about it. She's just going to need a while to accept it. I'll talk to her and try to help her with that."

"You don't think he brainwashed her, do you Rika?"

"I don't know, Lee. Manipulation comes pretty close."

"If she betrays us to him, I swear to Valhalla-!"

You turn over to your side and cover your head with the blankets, tears filling your eyes. Finally, you allow yourself to cry, but you do so silently. Eventually, you are so exhausted you just slip into sleep.
Suddenly, you're in Loki's bedroom, and it has changed severely. It is utterly wrecked, furniture upturned and books scattered everywhere. There are stains on the walls and tears in the sofa's upholstery. You spot Loki and your heart lurches.

He's sitting in an armchair, eyes closed, empty bottles scattered and smashed all around him. It reeks of alcohol.

"Loki?" you ask.

He jolts in his chair, eyes flying open and flitting frantically around in search of you. When they find you, they go wide, and you can see that they are wet and bloodshot.

"P-pet?" he stammers. "You ca- came back?"

His words are slurred, and he blinks several times as if he's making sure you're really there.

"Loki, I'm so sorry, I didn't want this to happen!" you say frantically, rushing over to him. "I didn't want- Didn't want you to-"

You fall into his arms, a sobbing mess.

"Pet- What...?" He sounds confused, awkwardly patting you on the back. "You came... came back?"

"But I'm not really here," you insist. "I'm just dreaming about you."

"You're... You- Not here?" he repeats. An alarmed look on his face, he grabs your arms and pulls you off him, standing up and scrutinizing you. "No, no, tha-t can't - I can't all-allow you to- to leave."

"I didn't want to leave," you tell him, a desperate look on your face. "I tried to warn you, remember? I didn't want this to happen!"

He doesn't seem to be listening to you, because he stumbles forward and pushes you against the closest wall, pinning you with one hand while a dagger appears in the other.

"I hav- have to kill you. You- too dange- dangerous."

"Please!" You struggle in his grip. "Loki, you're drunk! I didn't mean-!"

He sways slightly, but his grip is firm and painful.

"Shhhh. Will ma- make it quick." His eyes glaze over and he draws his hand back.

You scream. The next thing you know, the dagger has been stuck into your heart.

Loki's eyes go wide suddenly and jerks back, his hands shaking.

"No..." he whispers.

"Lo... Loki..." you get out, clutching at the dagger in your chest. Fear and pain are overwhelming your mind.

"No!" He screams, staring at you in sheer horror. "Pet, no. No. I- I'm so- sorry I-"
Tears are streaming down his cheeks and he looks completely helpless.

"Loki!" you say again, and then the world tilts around you and you find yourself falling.

You're on the floor, your head cradled in his arms.

"I- I didn't want-" he's stammering, and now he's the frantic, desperate one. "I did- didn't mean-"

"Loki..." You feel your eyes glaze over and you strain to reach up and touch him. The world slips around you before you can make contact.

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You jerk away, heart pounding so fast it's hurting. Light is streaming into the room through the broken roof. Your hands are still clutched around the dagger in your chest.

No. It's not in your chest. It's lying on the bedroll beside you, your fingers wrapped loosely around the hilt. It was all just a dream.

The cape is still crumbled up in your other arm. You lift it to your nose and inhale its scent. Loki's scent, though it has also taken the aroma of the forest floor and the night air.

You stay in bed until the smell of food overpowers it and your stomach growls. It's simple food—porridge, you think—but it's homely and safe.

Slowly, you stand up and use the bathroom, then put on an old outfit of yours, which Rika had laid out beside your bed. You tuck the dagger into the waistband of your pants and drape Loki's cape around your shoulders, then trudge into the other room.

Your three friends look up as you enter. Lee is squatting by the glimmering coals, stirring a pot of porridge, Rika is standing by the store counter, placing down wooden bowls and spoons, and Mat is sitting near the open front door, sweaty as if he had come back from a run.

No one says anything, and you go over to sit on the stool at the counter.

"Why are you carrying around that blanket?" Mat suddenly asks, his tone sharp and challenging.

"Mat, I think that's Loki's cape," Lee explains, completely failing to read the mood.

You are silent, just staring at the empty bowl in front of you.

"Do you miss him?" Mat taunts. "Did he promise to love you forever and ever?"

"Mat!" Rika snaps. "Shut up! You don't know what happened. You didn't see how he treated her."

"Oh, I think it's pretty clear," he counters, and you hear him stand up and approach you. "She let him wrap her around his finger and she didn't even resist."

He plops down on the stool beside you, crossing his arms. "Didn't you?" he hisses.

You have to reach down and grab the hilt of the dagger to keep the tears out of your eyes. You will stab him, if you have to.

"He tortured her, Mat," Rika reminds him in an exasperated tone. "Yesterday, actually, I got to witness myself how he treated her. He brought her into the kitchens and she punched him, Mat, and then he dragged her away and hurt her until she was screaming. He made her apologize and then he
"forced himself on her."

"Why are you talking for her, Rika?" Mat challenges. "Let her speak for herself. Tell me, did he hurt you? And if he did, why do you care for him?"

Oh, you don't have to stab him with the dagger. You can stab him with your words just fine.

You lift your head up and look him right in the eyes, a mad smile on your lips.

"Mm, yes he hurt me so good—every night, in fact, and I just looove what he did to me, mmmmm! You know, they don't tell you this, but his dick has magical, mind controlling powers and if you had been there, boy would you have begged to suck it."

Mat is staring at you aghast, and then Lee slams the pot of porridge down on the table, jolting everyone back to reality.

"Can all of you just shut up!" he snaps. "Why do you have to fight all the time? We just successfully rescued our friend! We should be celebrating!"

"You're right, Lee," Rika agrees. "We need to work together."

He scoops some porridge into her bowl, then looks to you and Mat.

Neither of you say anything for a few seconds. You were always the most stubborn two.

"I'm sorry for saying you would have sucked the king's dick, Mat," you finally say. Lee fills your bowl with porridge, too.

"I'm sorry for insulting you because you sucked the king's dick," Mat throws back his own apology.

Lee raises an eyebrow.

"It's fine. Give him the porridge," you give in mercifully.

Finally, Mat receives his share as well.

The four of you eat in silence, until you can't stand it anymore.

"Look, I slept with him, alright?" you announce. "He gave me the option to escape execution, and I took it. And he's not all evil, you know. He still treated me like a person. I'm sure you can at least somewhat understand why I did what I had to. You probably would have done the same."

Lee nods in understanding, Rika makes a face, and Mat scoffs.

"Death would have been preferable over giving up my pride!" he declares.

"What if Loki was a beautiful woman?" you challenge.

Rika raises her brows, and Mat looks disturbed.

"Are you saying the reason you slept with him was because he was hot, not to save your skin?" he asks.

"Come on, you've got to admit that he's full on tall, dark, and handsome," you keep up the sarcastic teasing.
Rika makes another face. "More like sickly and... greasy."

"He's a fucking rat, that's what he is," Mat decides.

"I think he's..." Lee starts, then stops to think. "I mean, I got to admit that I want his cheekbones. I- I mean, from one man to another, I know when I'm outmatched."

"Come on, Lee, you're not so bad," you console him.

He really isn't. He's lanky and has a soft face.

"Are we really talking about a cruel dictator like he's a schoolgirl crush?" Rika cuts in.

"It helps," you explain. "See it as my therapy, since you are so keen to play psychologist."

It really does help. It helps you pretend like everything that happened was just lighthearted fun, not at all emotionally scarring.

"Seriously, he was that good in bed?" Mat asks doubtfully. "That you like him now?"

"I- I never said I liked him," you splutter. "Also, I wouldn't like him simply because he was good in bed. I still think he's a problem, just like the rest of you."

"How... How good was he?" Lee asks.

Rika makes a gagging noise and stands up, leaving the counter and stepping outside.

"Do you really want to talk about this?" you ask back.

"Yes," Mat and Lee say in unison.

"I want to know what has your head so warped," Mat adds.

"Uh... yeah. Me, too," says Lee.

"Fine." You scoop up the last bits of your porridge, then reach over for Rika's bowl, which she didn't quite finish. "He's... charming, controlling, and demanding. He's rough and will hurl insults at you. He'll chain you to his bed and wrap his hand around your throat. But... He's not a selfish lover, in that sense."

"And you're into that?" Mat questions.

You feel your cheeks flush. "I... I don't know. Being his bedmate wasn't... bad. He's obviously not setting up for a healthy relationship, and he did make me cry a couple times, but he was still humane in a way. He let me go outside, always fed and clothed me, and then he started giving me small favors. Eventually, he let me walk freely about the palace. He even gave me things to do outside the bedroom. He gave me sword fighting lessons, believe it or not."

"Why would he do that?" Mat asks, confused. "He seems to me like the kind of guy who'd want his women to wear dresses and sit around drinking tea all the time."

"I don't know." You shrug. "He let me wear pants, too. He said he didn't mind. Oh, actually, he seemed to get more fired up when I had a sword in my hand."

"Wow," Lee breathes, and he has a sense of awe in his eyes.
"What?" Mat says. "He let you wear pants and got horny when you had a sword in your hand? Did he make you do other weird things, too?"

You think for a moment. You hadn't pegged this as weird back then, and you don't feel the need to mention that he had practically jumped you after you had killed that prisoner.

"Well, he let me chain him to the bed once, but that went poorly and he quickly flipped the tables." You shudder. The thing he had done after that was still the least pleasant experience of them all. You still feel kind of... violated.

"So, he likes chaining others up more than being chained up?" Lee asks curiously.

Mat just looks extremely weirded out.

"I think so...?" you answer with a hint of doubt. "I mean, he naturally goes for seizing control, but there were a couple times where he let me take charge."

You think back to yesterday. He had phrased it as you "leading the dance," and he hadn't seemed to mind being on his knees for once.

"I think he's flexible," you conclude.

"Okay, but when he does take control, how is he like?" Lee presses on.

Now Mat is the one who stands up. "Alright, that's enough for me. You two have fun being weird." He quickly hurries after Rika.

You don't know why Lee wants to know all this, but whatever, it helps talking about it from an analytical distance.

"I mean... He liked obedience. He liked hurting me. I think he liked receiving affection. He liked being worshipped. ...Maybe he's insecure. He's possessive. Like, extremely so. Like, maybe abandonment issues or something. He also insulted and degraded me a lot. I mean, you saw the speech, right? He made me kiss his fucking feet."

"Yes, I saw. I'm sorry you had to go through that," Lee expresses his sympathy. "...And he called you 'pet.'"

"Yep. Amongst other things." You frown into your empty bowl.

"But he never really hurt you, did he?" Lee asks uncertainly. "Like, never permanently?"

"No, he didn't," you confirm. "Unless you count emotionally—but I'm not sure how permanent that is yet."

"Then I understand why you... why you don't hate him."

"Oh, I hate him alright," you correct, looking back up at him.

"What I mean is, if you do feel something for him, I understand," Lee clarifies.

"Really?" You're surprised. "You understand why, after all the horrible things he did to me, I still somehow feel for him? Rika and Mat certainly don't."

"Yes, I understand perfectly. From what you've told me, he's... intense. And some people like that intensity. It's like a drug. He's a horrible person, but he'll make you feel things you can't feel with
anyone else. He keeps you on your toes, and that sort of thrill can be addicting."

"So you think my feelings for him are simply-"

"Lee!" Rika calls out, coming back into the store. "Mat's going hunting and you're gonna go with him. I need to be alone with my patient."

"Alright, Rika," Lee agrees, standing up to fetch his bow. "We can talk more later."

He gives you a nod and disappears outside.

"Do we have to do this?" you ask Rika once you're alone. "Can't we just forget about everything?"

"Yes, we have to," she confirms. "Let's sit somewhere more comfortable."

She goes into the back room and drags out all the blankets, pillows, and furs. She piles them up in a makeshift seat and gestures for you to sit.

Reluctantly you go over and plop yourself down, still keeping Loki's cape wrapped around you. Rika brings over a stool and sits down there, putting on a serious face.

"We're going to start with word association-" she begins.

"Word association?" you groan.

"Yes, now be quiet. Close your eyes. I'll give you a word and you have to say the first one that pops to mind. No hesitation."

"Fine, but I really don't think this will help." You close your eyes and prepare yourself.

"Now, what do you think of when you hear the word assassin?"

"Me," you say immediately.

"How about knife?"

"Loki."

"Loki?" she repeats. "And why is that?"

"He has knives," you answer with a shrug.

"Alright. What about kingdom?"

"Asgard."

"King?"

"Loki."

"Green?"

"Plants."

"Kiss?"

"...Lips. Loki's lips, you add in your mind."
"Love?"

"Hate."

"Loki?"

"..." You say nothing. Nothing comes to mind, except one word, and that one word is not a word you want to say right now.

"You have to answer," Rika prods. "What's the first word that comes to mind when you hear the word Loki?"

"I..." You falter. "It's not even a relevant word, Rika. It has no connections. Well, almost none. I don't even know why it pops into my mind."

"I told you not to hesitate or overthink," Rika scolds. "Now say it. Loki?"

"Master." You almost choke on the word, but you manage to say it. You are glad your eyes are closed and you can't see Rika's expression. You are also glad the boys aren't here.

It's a long while before Rika speaks again.

"Okay. Let's just continue. What do you think of when you hear the word sword?"

"Fighting."

"Star?"

"Moon."

"Pet?"

"M-me."

Again, there is momentary silence before she continues.

"Sex?"

"...Loki."

"Punishment?"

"...Loki."

"Slave?"

"Loki's."

"You?"

"Lo- Loki's."

"Again: Loki?"

What you answer then isn't a word. It's a choked off sob. Your answer comes in a painful squeeze around your heart.
"Okay, I think I've gathered enough," Rika concludes. "You can open your eyes now. I'll give you a break, alright? Go outside a bit, cry it out."

You nod and open your eyes, getting up and stumbling out of the shop.

The outside is overgrown with plants, but there are a few areas of hardened dirt where nothing has managed to grow yet.

Instead of crying, you go to one of those patches and start doing pushups. You keep going until your muscles scream, and even then you continue, this pain preferable to the one you feel in your heart. The cape slips off your back at one point and lands in the dirt, but you leave it there until you collapse to the ground, which is when you bunch it up and pull it against you.

You lie there until Rika comes and finds you.

"Oh, sweetie," she sighs woefully and pulls you up into an embrace. "Let's go back inside, alright? I'm going to tell you a story. You can keep the dirty cape with you, if you want."

You nod numbly and follow her back inside. She sits you down on the pile of blankets again, but this time, she sits next to you.

"Okay, so this story is about a warrior and a dragon," she begins. "Once upon a time, in a small village on Midgard, there lived a great warrior. He was the protector of his home, and he was fearless. Back then, great monsters still roamed the mortal realm, known as dragons. It just so happened that one of those dragons had taken residence in a cave near the village.

"One day, the dragon grew hungry and flew out of its cave to wreak havoc on the village. Even with the great warrior, the villagers were defenseless. The dragon burned down half their village and ate most of their livestock, and even some of the people. Once it was sated, it flew back to its cave to sleep off its meal.

"The warrior, full of anger that he had not been able to protect his people, vowed to find the cave and kill the dragon in its sleep. He set out on his journey, honing his skills along the way. When he found the cave, the dragon was indeed fast asleep.

"He climbed onto the dragon's back and sought to sever its head, but alas, his sword shattered against the impenetrable scales. The dragon woke at that sound, and shook the warrior off its back. Without his weapon, the warrior was very afraid.

"The dragon, however, was not yet hungry again, so it decided to keep the warrior as a snack for later. Tossing the warrior into a corner, it curled up in the entrance of the cave and went back to sleep.

"The warrior tried to escape multiple times, but each time the dragon tossed him back into the corner of its cave. Eventually, the warrior simply gave up.

"When two days had passed, the dragon noticed that the warrior had grown weak. It realized that humans needed constant sustenance in order to stay fresh. So, not wanting its meal to spoil, it left the cave in search of nourishment. Before it left, it rolled a big boulder in front of the entrance, one far too heavy for the warrior to remove.

"So it came to be, that the dragon would bring food and water for the warrior to consume, successfully keeping him alive in the cave. Dragons eat rarely, so it was quite a while before it felt hunger again."
"By that time, the warrior had long been gone from home. He had nothing but the company of the dragon, and since it was feeding him, he mistook it for kindness. He began to feel sympathy for the dragon. It had only plundered his village out of hunger, after all, and now it was caring for him like a pup.

"The dragon decided to take one last nap before it would eat the warrior. As it slept, however, a large army of knights appeared at the foot of the hill. They, too, had heard of the dragon, and were looking for the glory of the kill.

"The warrior was dismayed, and shook the dragon awake to warn it. The dragon took to the skies, forgetting, in its haste, to seal the cave door.

"The warrior was startled. The entrance had been left open, and he could easily run out. He could return to his home at last! But, there was a bit of hesitation. Did not the dragon care for him like a child? Would it not be heartbroken if he left? Perhaps it would be so full of sorrow it might fly into a rage and destroy even more villages in hopes of finding him. He could not possibly risk that happening. It was but one life against many, and he had become content in his life with the dragon.

"So he waited there, as the dragon breathed fire on the knights. The battle took only half a day before all knights had been slain. The dragon had grown even hungrier from the fight. It picked around the carcasses of the dead knights, but found their iron husks sealed tight around them, welded together by its fire. So, it flapped its wings and flew back to the cave.

"The warrior was happy upon its return, glad to see it had not been fatally wounded. It rushed up to the dragon, which promptly opened its maw and consumed the warrior whole."

You turn to Rika, giving her a hard look. "That ending sucks."

She shrugs. "It's how the story goes."

"Yeah, right," you scoff. "And I suppose there is a moral to all of this?"

She shrugs again. "That's for you to determine."

"You're not subtle, Rika," you grumble.

"And you have a hide of dragon scales in your hand," she retorts.

You look at the cape. There are bits of dirt, dust, and dried leaves clinging to it. You brush it off with your hand.

"Why do you cling to that thing?" she asks. "You know he would have eaten you without hesitation."

You smirk drily. "Oh, he already has."

"Gahh! Did you have to say that?" Rika shudders.

"Yes," you say, amused by her reaction. "I told you, it helps."

"Well, don't do it in my presence, then," she orders.

"Some therapist you are," you tease.

"I just don't get it!" She sounds frustrated. "Why does this man warp your head so much? I mean, he's manipulative, sure, but I would never have gotten into bed with him! How can any woman fall
for him? Do they not know that there is so much better out there?"

"Like who?" you question suspiciously.

"Like- Like-" she splutters, her face going a bit red. "Like anyone else!"

"Sure, Rika," you say, not believing a word. "You know, maybe you should go to the palace and
give him a piece of your mind. I'm sure he would appreciate the criticism."

She rolls her eyes and stands up. "We're staying far away from that man. Especially you. You
seem... damaged."

"Wow, thanks, Rika," you say ironically. "That's such a great way to cheer me up!"

"I'm just saying, if he suddenly shows up at the door, you'd probably not react very well." She
begins tidying the shop a little, sorting through food stocks and bringing some of your belongings to
the back room.

"I don't think any of us would react well," you point out.

"But we'd at least grab for our weapons. We need to get you to a point where you do, too," she
informs you.

"So you basically want me to forget everything that happened between us? That could take many
moons." You press the cape to your face and take in his scent.

"Maybe not," she says, pausing in her movement to look at you. "I just need to heal your wounds
and transform your sorrow into murderous rage. Then we can all kill him together."

You lift your head out of the cape. "He doesn't deserve to die. He's not a bad king, and we shouldn't
murder him just because of a personal vendetta. That would make us no better than him."

"That's complete nonsense," Rika disagrees. "He's evil, plain and simple, and he deserves to die
many deaths."

"And he's in pain, a victim of his upbringing," you argue. "His mother was the only one he had.
Don't you remember when we were still in school, on Prince Loki's birthday, when he was supposed
to participate in a hunting tournament, and he refused to slay the doe and instead healed her? It was
such a big scandal, and I heard so many rumors that he was severely punished by the Allfather for
embarrassing him. Loki probably knew it was weak and unmanly not to slay that doe, but he spared
her anyway."

Rika scowls. "He was a child, mús, as were we. He changed. He tried to steal the throne from Prince
Thor so many times. He is power hungry and ruthless. He has no mercy."

"He helped a mother whose child had been killed!" you insist. "I was there! Not only that, but he
played with her new children like they were his own. He let one of the little girls braid his hair and
ride his horse."

Rika stares at you in disbelief. "And you were there? I don't believe that he had pure intentions for
one moment. What if it was all staged? What if... What if he wants children of his own... And he
brought you along to show you what a good father he is... so that you would accept them from
him..."

Your mouth drops open slightly. "No! That- That's ridiculous, Rika. Stop being such a conspiracy
theorist. I... I'd never want his children. I never want children, period. You know me!

You laugh nervously and Rika narrows her eyes.

"Besides," you continue. "He wouldn't want children from me. I'm apparently a traitorous whore. Not worthy of a king."

"Well, that's certainly a convincing argument," she agrees. "I wouldn't be surprised if he gathers every noblewoman in Asgard and chooses his mate via lineup."

You chuckle at the thought. "He totally would. And I bet they'd all be eager, up until the point he drags them into his bed. You know. I advised him to find himself a wife who could soften his edges, and maybe now that I'm gone, he'll take that advice. I think we'll all be better off if he does. If he has a child to care for. It changes you, hopefully for the better."

"Hopefully, yes." Having finished whatever she was tidying up, she wanders back over to you. "Do you want to do something together while the boys are gone?"

You gaze up at her. "Like what?"

"Something to distract you from him completely. First, drop that cape." She puts her hands on her hips, giving you a stern look.

"I'll put it in the back room," you agree, getting up and doing just so. You hide it and the dagger under the pile of clothes Rika put there for you. You don't want her to burn it in your absence or something.

Upon returning to the main room, you put on a cheerful smile. "So, what are we doing?"

"I was thinking you need some feminine influence," she tells you. "We're going to go out and pick flowers like naive village girls, and you're going to like it."

You groan, but let her take your hand and lead you outside.

The sun is shining, the birds are chirping, there are wildflowers and meadows around the back of the shop. It's somewhat sickening, that everything around you seems so happy.

"Pick some flowers and then I'll braid them into your hair," Rika tells you, letting your hand go near a cluster of puffy purple flowers. You have no idea what they're called.

"This is stupid," you grumble and aimlessly pluck up flowers here and there. Purple ones, white ones, yellow ones. You think those are called buttercups, but you're not even sure. You really aren't a flower person.

Once you've gathered about ten individual flowers, you hand them to Rika. She nods in approval and brings you over to a sunny spot on the meadow. You sit down, with her behind you, and she begins braiding your hair and tucking them in.

It's relaxing, and you close your eyes. You slide down lower and practically rest your head in her lap. She keeps styling your hair, occasionally tugging on it or lifting your head to reach the back. You don't really care what it looks like.

When she's done, she keeps her hand on your head, simply stroking over your hair. You feel yourself getting sleepy in the warm sunlight. She was right. This is so different from what Loki put you through, you feel some of your stress melt away. Slowly, you feel sleep overcome you. You
really didn't sleep much last night. Maybe you deserve to take a nap...

"You've betrayed me."

You're standing face to face with Loki, his expression schooled into a cold mask.

"You've made an enemy of me."

"I didn't want to!" you insist. Why are you here? Weren't you just in a field of flowers?

"But you did so anyway," he replies tersely, gazing down at you with half lidded eyes. "I could have given you everything. Instead, you reject my love and betray my trust. You do know I will not forgive you for this, don't you?"

"I made a mistake; I get that!" you plea. "But we can fix this! You hurt me, too, you know!"

"Fix this?" he repeats. "There is naught to fix. You were my pet, my slave, and when you became something more, you showed me just how little you cared for me."

"But I do care for you, Loki!" you say and reach out to touch his cheek.

He catches your wrist in a painful grip, narrowing his eyes.

"You've forgone the privilege of my affections, traitor. I made myself vulnerable to you once, and I will not repeat that mistake. We are nothing now. My heart is closed off to you forever. All you can do is beg me for mercy, because, believe me pet, I will make you suffer for this."

You yank your hand from his grasp, taking a step back and feeling anger mix with your heartbreak. "I won't ever let you control me again."

He laughs coldly. "Oh, but I already am. I am your king. There is nothing you can do. Nothing, but grovel at my feet."

"See, I don't think you ever loved me!" you declare. "Love can't just be turned off at the snap of your fingers! You saw me as your plaything, loved me as your possession, so don't pretend!"

"Yes, I fully agree with you," he says, smiling cruelly. "Thinking I loved you was a weakness. I feel nothing for you now, quisling. The hand of retribution will fall upon you swift and hard. You make me sick, you treacherous scum."

He gives you a derisive sneer that makes your blood freeze over.

"I hate you so much, Loki," you get out through gritted teeth. "You hurt me so badly, and now you wish to hurt me more. You are a monster, nothing else."

"Oh, I'm not a monster," he disagrees. "I already told you to beg me for mercy. If you don't know what's good for you, that is hardly my problem."

"Please, Loki," you say as calmly as you can. "I apologize for what happened. But I don't think falling to my knees is what we need right now. I think we need to be on equal ground. Power makes you harsh and cruel, you said so yourself. I know I betrayed your trust, but I will make up for it, if only you would trust me again."

He regards you intensely as you speak. "I will not deny the truth in your words. But you remember I also told you it would be over if you slipped. That I would not give you second chances. Pity, it was so soon."
You hang your head in sorrow. "I understand... I messed up badly. I wish it could have gone differently between us, but I get that you don't want to try again. Now if only I could stop dreaming about you, you might be easier to forget."

"Oh, you don't want to forget me," his voice is suddenly at your ear, his fingers skimming up and down your arm. "I never said I'd let you leave. You're still my property."

"What?" You lift your head in alarm.

"I think you still love me, no?" he asks, still touching your arm. "Don't you crave my affections? Have you begun to miss them, my pet? I'll tell you what, as long as you remain aware that I care nothing for you, I will allow you to work to obtain them back."

"I... I don't-" You suck in a sharp breath when his other fingers gently grasp your chin and tilt your head up.

"Don't you want to be good for your master?" he lulls. "You don't have to feel cold and alone. I can give you all the warmth and affection you desire, so long as you earn it."

"Earn it, how?" you repeat, mesmerized by his gaze and his soft, alluring words.

"With your submission. I want you to show me just how much you regret betraying me." His thumb strokes over your cheek, then your lips. "I'm the best you ever had, after all."

"I- I'm not-" You feel like this is a bad idea.

"Hush," he silences you. "Don't think. Don't speak. Just submit. I know you want to. There is no one here to judge you for it. Just let go. It should come naturally."

For a moment, your resistance holds steady. Then it breaks.

"Okay..." you breathe, lowering your gaze.

"Kneel," he orders.

Trembling slightly, you sink to the floor.

"Now kiss my feet and beg for leniency."

"I love you, Loki," you whisper, and press your lips to his boot. "I love you so much."

"That is not what I asked you-"

You ignore him. "I care for you so much. Your mother cares for you just as much. You're a good-"

His foot connects with your chin, snapping your head back and causing you to crash to the floor.

"Shut your mouth," he snarls. "I did not permit you to speak that way. Are you seeking my wrath?"

You grunt in pain, clutching at your chaw. "I love you, Loki," you say again. "And you love me, too. There's nothing you can do about that. See how I can make you lose your temper?"

You know he's seething, but he takes a few deep breaths and manages to force calm into his words. "You are nothing. I could crush your neck beneath my heel."

"Then do it!" you challenge, still lying on the floor.
"No. You have not suffered nearly enough."

"I love you, I love you, I love you..." You begin to repeat the phrase over and over, practically begging him to lose his temper again and end you.

He snarls again and yanks you up by the front of your shirt, practically tossing you against the nearest wall.

You know you're dreaming. You know he can't hurt you. But it seems so real. You feel your head throb painfully from the impact.

"See how much you hate those words?" you wheeze. "I remember when you wanted me to say them. But now they're a little too real, aren't they?"

Your arm almost gets yanked from its socket when he grabs your wrist and pulls you away from the wall so you're lying on your back. He's on top of you immediately, pinning you to the floor with his knees on your hips and his hands on your wrists. His face is full of unrestrained rage, his eyes wet with angry tears.

"Alright. If you want to make this personal, then you can have your wish." His voice is trembling with rage, his chest heaving with rapid breaths. "I will begin to break every bone in your body, slowly, until you pass out from the pain. Then I will heal you just enough to bring you back and do so again and again until your mind no longer functions. I'll reduce you to nothing but primal pain and fear, and only then will I crush your mangled body beneath my boot and give you mercy."

"Frigga would be so proud of you," you spit, defiantly staring him in the eyes.

"I care nothing for Frigga!" he practically shouts at you. "Stop mentioning her, as if you knew her! You are an insignificant speck of dust on my timeline. You could not possibly hope to alter the course of history. I am the God of Mischief, of Lies and Deceit. This is my destiny. I will destroy Asgard, nay, all the nine realms, and I will take myself down with them! Not for you, not for anyone, simply because I am the God of Chaos and Destruction, and this is who I am!"

You jerk up in Rika's lap. You're back in the meadow. A cloud has passed over the sun.

"Are you alright?" Rika asks, reaching out and placing a hand on your arm.

"Yeah... I just... I had a bad dream." Your chest is heaving and you try to calm yourself.

"Do you want to talk about it?" she asks, wrapping both arms around you now and hugging you from behind.

"No." You shake your head. "It's just... Loki."

"Did he do something to you?" Rika rests her chin on your shoulder. "Do you want me to dream-murder him?"

You let out a weak laugh. "No, he was just angry that I left."

"I bet he is. But I won't let him near you again. He won't ever see or touch you again," she promises.

"Rika, it's not that big a deal." You try to pry her arms from around you, but she holds you tighter. "Whatever the future brings, I can handle it."

"No you can't." There is tension in her voice. "If you think he's your master, you're not okay, and
you certainly won't know what's good for you."

"Rika?" You try to squirm out of her arms, but as soon as you break free, she wraps them around you again and puts her head on your shoulder. You're not sure, but you think she might be crying. "Rika, I don't think he's my master. It's just the first word that came to mind-"

"Did you really like being dominated by him?" she asks, a slight tremble to her voice.

"I... uh, well, yes, but-" You try to explain, but she interrupts you.

"You let him take advantage of you, humiliate and degrade you, and you liked it?"

"Well, he- He has this way about him, it just- Maybe you'd notice it, too, if you met him."

"No, múls, I really wouldn't," she says bitterly. "Everything about him is unappealing to me. You couldn't possibly understand how much it disgusts me to even think about him. How much it hurts, the way you talk about him after what he's done to you. He messed with your mind, and I plan to revert all the damage he has caused, even if it takes all my life."

You don't know what to say. Rika has always been protective of you, but not like this. "I... I won't talk about him, then," you offer. "We can just pretend he doesn't exist."

She takes a deep breath and loosens her hold on you. "As much as I'd like that, I don't want to risk you internalizing everything. I want you to let everything out, and then I want you to forget him. Talk about him as much as you want, but always keep in mind that he's in the past. That you won't ever have to see him again. That he can't hurt you anymore. It'll get better."

You nod. "Okay. I'll try, but it's kind of hard when I keep having vivid dreams about him, like he's still part of my life."

"They'll fade in time," Rika assures you. "If you want, I can sleep in the back room with you and wake you when I notice you being in any distress."

"It's fine, Rika." You lean back against her. "I can handle myself, even in my dreams. And I'm always somewhat aware that I'm dreaming."

"Okay. Do you want to go back inside? It's getting a bit chilly out here now that the sun's gone."

You nod and the both of you head back inside. Rika starts a fire, and soon, Mat and Lee return with a dead rabbit and some root vegetables. While Mat skins the rabbit and Rika prepares the vegetables, Lee sets up a pot of water and gives the instructions, fetching this and that seasoning from a store shelf and adding it into the water.

You aren't required to help, but you do so anyway, going outside every so often to fetch some herbs. A few times, you get the wrong plant, mainly because Lee gives very vague instructions and all plants kind of look the same anyway.

All in all, it's quite a lot of fun to cook with your friends again. Before this whole Loki ordeal, you never really enjoyed the labors of preparing a meal, but now it's almost therapeutic not to have your food served on a silver platter.

It takes quite a while before the stew is ready, making it almost sunset, by which time everyone is starving. Living with Loki, you almost got used to not going hungry for very long, so it will probably take some painful adjusting.
Everyone sits down outside on the steps leading up to the door, and you simply eat and talk as the sun sets around you. It's so peaceful.

When it's sufficiently dark and chilly out, you go back inside, tidy up a bit, and everyone gets themselves ready for bed. Mat, Lee, and Rika stay by the fire and continue talking just like yesterday, but you don't join them. You had planned to, but with the setting of the sun, all your brief happiness faded away and it became harder to push back unpleasant memories. So, you just excused yourself and went into the back room.

You drag the cape out from under your pile of clothes and press it to your chest. Then you get under your blankets and cry quietly until you feel better and the cape has a wet spot on it. You don't know what to feel or think, so you just go to sleep.

Chapter End Notes

I know it's probably frustrating to be apart from Loki, but as you can see, the plot still pretty much revolves around him. Besides, the reader character is going through allllll the same frustrations most of you probably are, so you'll just have to get through this together :P
You have a sword in your hand. Briefly, you wonder why, when you hear a shout and see someone running at you. It's Loki, and he's angry. He also has a sword in his hand. One that's set to kill you.

You barely manage to jump aside and raise your sword up before his gleams against it, barely sparing your shoulder. He twirls around and swings again instantly. You get the feeling this is him at his full power. Elegant, deadly, full of rage.

For some reason, you manage to block his strikes with equal speed and finesse. Maybe dream-you is a master in swordplay.

His eyes bore into you with such intense hatred, you almost want to duck your head and cower. Your hands, however, bring the sword up again and again, parrying his strikes and returning them with equal vigor.

The sound of clanging metal, heavy breathing, and the occasional grunt fills the air. You think you're on some sort of grassy hillside near a forest, but you can't be sure, since all of your concentration is required to not die.

"Why...are you... trying to... kill me?" you get out between blows.

Loki slides his sword down along with yours, taking a step back to briefly catch his breath and answer. "A better question is: Why won't you die?"

"Because I'm immortal," you say, quickly taking a step back when he raises his sword again. "If you kill me, I'll resurrect, only more powerful."

Loki gives you a look like he doesn't quite believe you, but is open to anything at this point. It's enough to get him to lower his weapon, to your relief.

"Then I suppose we're at an impasse," he notes drily. "I would ask that you leave me alone."

"I don't even know how I got here," you say with an equally dry laugh. "Or where I am."

You look around for the first time, and you are indeed on a grassy hill near a forest. The landscape seems unfamiliar. It's probably just an imaginary dream landscape.

Loki, too, is looking around, seeming puzzled.

"It's a dream," you inform him.

He looks at you, and slowly clarity fills his gaze. "Ah. That makes sense."

There is an awkward silence.

"So..." you begin, then can't think of anything to say. You end up sitting down in the grass, sword across your lap. To your surprise, Loki follows suit, sitting a little distance away and staring out into the scenery.

You sit like this for a while until a sense of loneliness overwhelms you. You glance back over to
Loki, who's still staring straight ahead. He doesn't look peaceful, but you enjoy the view at his profile nonetheless. You wish you could go over to him, but you know you can't. Not after everything that happened.

Eventually, Loki glances at you, too. "This is a dream, yes?"

You nod.

"And I can't kill you?"

You nod again.

He picks up his sword and holds the tip of it to his chest. "Alright. Then I hope to wake up from this nightmare." —And he impales himself.

You stare in shock, but don't move. His body slumps backwards, and then the dream dissolves. You have only a brief moment of wondering what the Hel his issues are, before you are pulled under into dreamless sleep.

***

"What are you thinking about?"

You shake yourself out of your thoughts, realizing that Rika has sat down beside you on the wooden steps. Her gentle tone of voice means she's ready to play the therapist again.

You tilt your head up toward the sun, closing your eyes. "I feel numb. It still feels like I'm part of Loki's life, but I know I'm not. I feel broken and hollow."

She's silent for a moment, then asks another question. "Do you feel that way because you're apart from him, or because of what he did to you?"

You realize with surprise that you don't know the answer to that. "You mean… Did he break me, or did I break when I left him?"

You turn your head to look at her and she nods. "I want to know how you feel about him. When you were with him, did you feel stressed, tired, and unlike yourself? Did you feel like someone else? Did you feel like being yourself would get you punished?"

"I… don't think so," you realize. "He did make me upset often, but he also made me really happy. I know he's dangerous, I know when he gets angry he will lash out at me, but he isn't some great controlling force. In fact, I think he made sure I could still be me. He didn't force me to wear pretty dresses and watch my tongue. He knew I needed something to do, something more, and he gave it to me. He wanted me to learn sword fighting, and although he was strict, he tolerated failure. I think he's a good king, and I don't think I would have suffered had I stayed."

She nods, picking at the splintered wood of the steps. "Does it feel worse, now that you're not with him?"

You know what she's asking, and how she will feel about your answer. You draw in a deep breath. "I'm not sure… I'm not sure about anything, Rika. He's so intense. Lee told me that can be addicting. Maybe he was just an addiction."

"Okay, yeah," she agrees. "That could be it. Maybe you just have to be apart from him for a while, and then you'll get over him. Maybe you're not lost."
You give her a displeased look, but let it slide. Even if you did love him, you wouldn't be lost.

***

The rest of the day is such a blur, that the next time you dream, it feels almost more real than when you were awake. This time, the dream is completely different from the previous three.

You're in an opulent room with polished floors and marble pillars. In the center are chaises and large piles of pillows. You aren't alone. Quite the opposite, in fact.

There are a lot of naked men and women on said chaises and pillows. All of them are engaged in various stages of erotic activities. On the very largest pile of pillows lies Loki, in all his nude glory.

His eyes are closed, his mouth partly open in silent pleasure. On each his arm clings a woman, pressing herself against him and peppering kisses over his throat and chest. Between his legs is a man, his head bobbing up and down.

Looking away is not an option at this point. A blush on your cheeks, you stare at this artfully erotic display. You wonder how your mind even came up with it.

No one pays you any attention, so you just keep on staring as the man between Loki's legs brings him to climax. He shudders, his mouth falling open further as he cums. The man licks his cock clean and moves away, which prompts Loki to sit up and open his eyes. They land right on you.

You realize suddenly that you, too, are naked.

"What is she doing here?" he asks, frowning. No one reacts or looks at you. The women are still kissing over his muscles. "Go away."

You don't move. You are too stunned. Besides, this is your dream, and Loki shouldn't be so rude.

"Leave," he insists. "Stop plaguing me."

The itch growing inside you keeps you rooted to the spot. Loki is a beautiful sight, and all this around him is just overkill.

"Why is she not leaving?" he asks one of the women at his arms. She doesn't react.

"This is my dream," you tell him. "If I leave, it'll go away."

"A dream?" he repeats, looking back at you. "Then I can make you go away with a bit of concentration."

His stare grows in intensity as he tries to will you out of existence.

"I can just leave the room, if you want," you offer. You turn around, and there is a door. You approach it and pull it open. Outside is nothing. Not even a floor to walk on. Just blackness. You quickly shut it again and turn back to him.

Loki is still watching you, but he's reclined back on the pillows. He has a hand in the hair of one of the woman, affectionately scratching her head as she licks over his abs.

You feel the heat rise at your core. You're glad this is only a dream, otherwise you'd be getting jealous. Instead, you resolve to annoy dream Loki as much as possible for his rudeness.

You stride over to the nearest decently attractive man and tap his shoulder. He turns to you and pulls
you onto his lap, his lips landing on your neck as he keeps fondling his original partner. You don't look at Loki, but you know he's looking at you.

The man is... warm. It's strange, after Loki's coldness, and you press your body against his, simply enjoying the contours of his muscles, the hold of his arm, and the touch of his lips.

A dark haired woman comes over and her lips are on your collarbone. Normally, you'd protest, but this is a dream and she is also warm.

You glance over to Loki, but he's no longer where he was. When the woman's hand lands on your thigh, you pull away and take a few steps back, looking around for Loki.

You spot him, just a few paces away, leaning alone against a pillar. He's still watching you, but makes no move to approach you.

His dark hair is a stark contrast against his pale skin and the whiter pillar. His expression is completely relaxed, but his eyes show deeper emotions, none you can quite make out.

A new woman comes up beside him and stands on her toes to tilt his face toward her and kiss him. He kisses her deeply for a few moments before pulling his head back up. She reaches down and grabs his soft cock, working it with her hand until it swells in size. Loki remains coolly leaning against the pillar, his eyes on you again.

Once his cock stands sufficiently at attention, she lifts one leg to his hip, encouraging him to lift her and slide inside her.

He gives you one long look before obliging. Carefully, he hoists her up and she wraps her arms and legs around him.

He turns her so her back is to the side of the pillar, giving you a view of them both. His head turns, his eyes meeting yours once more, and slowly, he pushes inside her.

There is an ache now at your core that you can't ignore. You want him inside you.

You stare, as the woman's eyes close in pleasure, her chest heaving. Loki watches you, slowly rolling his hips and making her gasp, and you watch him and the pleasure he's giving her.

It's torture. You need him. Need his body.

You reach down almost subconsciously and stroke over your clit. Loki's eyes follow the path of your hand, and his look changes to one of what you think is approval.

He watches you pleasure yourself now, and you watch him take his pleasure from another woman. He rolls his hips slowly, sensually, almost as if he's putting on a show, and the woman in his arms seems to greatly enjoy it.

You are too turned on to think about the people around you. This is a dream, you remind yourself. There is no shame. You keep rubbing over your clit, not daring to go further, knowing your fingers won't compare to him.

Loki fucks the woman slow, hard, and precise, until she's practically crying from pleasure. He lets off soft grunts with each stroke, and she moans, gasps, and writhes. It's all highly erotic.

When his thrusts grow more erratic, and her moans a little higher pitched, he surprises you by pulling out and gently lowering her to the ground. Her legs are shaking, and he helps steady her, before
signaling her to leave. She doesn't complain or show displeasure and simply walks off.

He turns to you, leaning back against the pillar, and wraps his hand around his glistening cock. Slowly, he strokes it, his eyes landing back on the hand between your legs.

You can't stand this. You need him, need him so badly inside you. You can feel yourself throb in need, and every touch of your fingers is so insufficient.

You could try to walk over to him. Maybe he'd let you. But no, you'd never get over your pride. You're going to pleasure yourself, show him that you can. You rub harder over your clit, trying to get yourself to orgasm. It doesn't work, as standing up isn't exactly a comfortable position. Maybe you should just give in.

Just as you're about to decide this, he groans and cums in his hand. He gives you one last look before turning and walking off, back to the pile of pillows.

You are so frustrated you simply wake up.

It's early morning, your thighs are wet, and you have to bite your tongue not to curse out loud. There is no way you can survive this day.

Chapter End Notes

I know this is short, but I feel like I wouldn't be doing anyone a favor if I dragged out this Loki-less existence into great lengths. I'll be updating fairly quickly, because I don't want anyone getting too restless. These short chapters will be a pretty accurate representation of my reader character's state of mind, which is basically 90% obsessed with Loki and 10% focused on dragging herself through the days.
You punch a tree. Punching a tee helps when you just dreamt about an orgy with the one man you're trying to forget, right?

Your arousal had flickered out briefly when you had washed yourself in icy well-water, but then you remembered that Loki had kissed you in icy water once and there it was again.

Now you're trying desperately to release your excited energy by exercising. First, you followed the routine set up by Loki, now you resigned to punching trees.

Damn him! Even in your dreams he was a total ass! At least he hadn't hurt or killed you this time. No, you wish he had. At least that only gave you a temporary shock of fear.

The worst thing is, you don't even have to try to pleasure yourself. You know it won't be enough. You need him and only him. You need his hands, his tongue, his cock. You need him there, nestled deep inside you where he belongs. Not in some other woman!

"Gahh!" You yelp as you hit the tree a little too hard and hurt your hand.

You hear someone say your name. "Uh, what are you doing?"

You whip around and see Mat approaching, a bag slung over his shoulder.

"Just... Just letting off some steam," you say, stepping away from the tree.

"I can help with that," he says, dropping the bag. "Want to spar?"

At first, you think that might be a good idea, but then you realize that wrestling with a decently attractive guy might confuse your hormones even more.

"No thanks!" you decline with false cheerfulness. "I'm good just being by myself!"

Mat gives you a doubtful look, but picks up his bag again. "Alright then... I'm off to gather some firewood. Do you at least want to help me with that?"

"Yeah... Yeah, sure," you agree.

You walk with Mat to a little cluster of trees and shrubbery a little ways off. The whole way there, neither of you says a word, and you keep thinking of Loki. How much you want him. For him to acknowledge you, even in your dreams.

"Can I ask you something?" Mat asks, setting the bag down and beginning to gather fallen branches.

"Go ahead." You do the same, helping him collect sticks.
"If Loki had asked you to betray us to him, would you have done it?"

You freeze, midway down to reaching for a stick. "No. Of course not, Mat. Unless he had tortured me. Then I can't make any promises."

Mat walks back over to the bag, his arms full of branches. "What if he'd said something like: 'If you tell me where your friends are, you can all live here together and serve me?'"

You pick up your stick. "I mean... Would that be a bad thing?"

You hear the clatter of wood as Mat drops his armful onto the bag. "Yes, yes it would be! Come on, what happened to you? We are rebels! We fight guys like him, not lick his feet!"

You turn to him, an angry look on your face. "I don't lick his feet! You just don't understand how he makes me feel. I... I don't think he's so bad. In fact, I'd go so far as to say that I care for him."

Mat grimaces as if he's in physical pain. "Of course you do," he scoffs. "Even now, you want to suck his dick rather than helping us. You know, Rika says he manipulated you, but I don't think he can do that in just a fortnight. I think the side he revealed in you was part of you all along. You're not who I thought you were. At all." He shakes his head and gathers the sticks into the bag. "I would have died for you."

His words hurt. They were supposed to hurt. You grit your teeth and toss your own bundle of sticks into the bag.

"Yeah, well excuse me for not meeting expectations," you snap, and begin stomping back in the direction of the shop. Mat follows a few paces behind, but you ignore him.

You're so angry, you go back to punching inanimate objects that bruise your knuckles. You're so frustrated, confused, and emotional, you just want one thing. Loki. He's smart; he'll know exactly what to say and do to make you feel better. He'll smile gently at you and make you remember your place in the universe until all you feel is clarity.

With this thought in mind, you rush through the day, hoping to see him again in your dreams. And you do.

As soon as the fuzzy dream around you takes clarity, you recognize your surroundings as Loki's bedchambers. They've been cleaned up since the last time you dreamt you were here, but it looks like most of the books were only haphazardly stacked back into their shelves. The door on one cabinet is missing, and the upholstery of the sofa is still open and leaking its filling.

You spot Loki standing in the middle of the room, frozen midstride to stare at you.

"Lok-" you start, but immediately get cut off.

"Don't talk," Loki urges. "Don't say a word. I couldn't bare it."

He moves, then, toward you, and you back away, thinking he might kill you again. He doesn't, and simply comes to stand in front of you when your back makes contact with his door.

"I need you," he says, his green eyes bloodshot and burning with emotion. "I need you, yet I do not want you. I don't want anything to do with you. You've betrayed me. Broken my trust. I despise you. Yet you plague my thoughts, my dreams. ...This is a dream, right? I've gotten better at identifying them, because whenever you're with me, I know that I'm dreaming."
You sense such sorrow in his words that it seems to reflect inside you. You nod, giving him a sympathetic look. "Yes, this is a dream."

"Then..." His hand lifts up as if to touch your cheek, but it stops in midair. "...None of my actions have consequences, right?"

He doesn't say or do anything further, awaiting an answer. You know you should be wary of such a question, but there is a sick part of you that wants to know what someone like Loki would do if he knew none of his actions held consequences.

"Yes," you breathe, a thrum of nervousness building in your gut. "You can do whatever you want."

His hand lands on your cheek, cupping it tenderly. He stares at you for a moment, raw hurt in his eyes, then draws back regretfully.

"I can't ask you to say that you still love me," he says, and makes a spherical gag appear in his hand. "But I can hope to fill the gap inside me with your body."

He pushes the gag against your lips and you accept it willingly. Once it's secured around your head, he pulls you over to his bed and motions for you to lie down. You do so, playing the role of the mindless dream figure.

You feel the cool sheets beneath you and realize your clothes are gone. Loki's, too, have disappeared. He crawls onto the bed, and on top of you, his stringy hair falling down beside his face. He's looking down at your naked body, not meeting your eyes.

Slowly, tentatively, he reaches down between your legs and tests for your readiness. You let your legs fall open for his hand, but you're not aroused. He looks dismayed and tries rubbing heat into you, but you don't find yourself responding much.

You feel serene. Impassive. Detached.

Loki glances up at your face, but your expression is blank. He looks pained, but then seems to come to a decision. Sitting up on his knees, he begins to stroke his cock until it's sufficiently hard. Then he positions himself back over you, the head of it prodding at your entrance. He closes his eyes, grimacing, and pushes inside you.

It's a slow and painful process. You feel the sting of being forced to open for his massive girth, but you will calm into yourself. This is a dream after all. Your pain is only imaginary. You manage, somewhat, until you only feel discomfort.

Loki doesn't open his eyes until he's fully inside you, and when he does, they're glistening with tears. He looks down at you with teary eyes and draws back to rock into you again.

He looks like he's in extreme emotional turmoil, but he simply grits his teeth and keeps rocking into you, slowly picking up the pace. He's softly grunting, casting his gaze away. You have to will yourself completely numb to prevent yourself from feeling the intense pain that comes from his massive length spearing itself into you repeatedly.

His eyes meet yours again, and they're so full of pain you can't help yourself. You slip out of your impassive facade and reach up to stroke some of his hair from his face, giving him a look of pure compassion.

He stops moving immediately when you do so, but doesn't withdraw.
"No, don't touch me!" He sounds like a wounded animal. "Don't look at me that way!"

He snatches up your wrists and pins them down, causing chains to appear around them, connecting them to the headboard. Then, a blindfold appears over your eyes, and you become an object.

He's sobbing now—you can hear it, can feel the cold tears land on your face—but he thrusts into you again, harder, faster. He takes you like a wild animal, grunting and growling and crying, driven by pure instinct and need. You feel his hands grip your arms, holding so tight it hurts, as he drives himself toward his finish.

In his mind, you're not there, just a toy for him to take his pleasure from. He slams into you hard, again and again, your whole body shaking, your arms bruising, until finally he snarls and releases inside you.

You can hear his heavy breaths as he slowly stills. He draws out of you and you feel the shaking of the mattress as he drops down beside you. You suck in a sharp breath through your gag, realizing that this may have been a mistake. You can't reveal yourself to him now. Even if this is only a dream, you can't just act like yourself after telling him it was okay for him to do whatever he wanted to you. You can't reach over and comfort him, can't wipe away his tears. So, even when he makes the shackles, gag, and blindfold disappear, you remain limp, staring blankly at him.

He looks back at you, halfway sated, halfway remorseful. He reaches over and smoothes your hair back. You can't put your hand over his. Can't mirror his tears with your own. Can't tell him you miss him.

His hand travels down your neck, over your shoulder, down your arm, until it grasps your hand. He holds it in his, stroking his thumb over your knuckles. Slowly, he brings it to his lips and kisses it. Then again. Then he's kissing your forehead, your shoulder, your collarbone. Your lips.

He pulls you close, kissing your lips tenderly, wrapping an arm around you. His lips move softly against yours, his breath tickling your skin. You can't kiss him back. Can't hold him tightly against you. Can't tell him how much it hurts to be apart from him.

Slowly, his eyes close and his breathing steadies. His hand is smoothing up and down your back. You think this might be the end of the dream, but then Loki's eyes open and he sits back up.

"I need you again."

His cock has already stiffened, and he strokes it until it's fully hard. Then he shoves you back down, his hands on your hips, and drives himself back inside you.

You gasp, eyes wide, but thankfully his cum from before acts as lubrication. He begins to rock into you immediately, pleasuring himself with your body.

He grunts and groans, grimacing in pleasure, letting you see and hear exactly how he feels. There's only mad need, no mutual desire like all the other times.

He lifts your hips up, angling himself to pound even deeper inside you. He's slamming against your cervix again and again, and all you can really do is watch in horror.

This is a dream, so of course you could do something, but all you really do is numb your pain and let him take you. Watching him so unhinged and unguarded is at the very least fascinating. At the very worst, you find it exciting. With no emotions involved, he can just take his pleasure from your body. Harsh and brutal and beautiful. His face is a mask of pure ecstasy, his skin gleams with sweat and his muscles ripple and pop from the strain. Watching him turns you on, not the body he is fucking, but
your real body, out there on your bedroll, fast asleep.

He is pure passion, pure sex, and when he cums, you draw in a sharp breath. He is beautiful, so beautiful, so erotic. It's a moment of pure weakness, giving himself up completely to the pleasures of his and your body. You didn't think men could be this striking. The few times you snuck a peek at an erotic book, it was always the women's moans and orgasmic faces depicted as beautiful and sexual. But every hitch of Loki's breath, every twitch of muscle, is nothing less than that.

As he stills inside you, his breaths steadying, his eyes open fully and meet with yours. They are wide with vulnerability. With affection. His hands slide down your thighs, drawing himself out of you and placing you back down on the mattress.

He just stares at you for a while, breathing heavily. You look back at him, wishing to convey your equal affection for him through your eyes. You smile softly and reach your hand up.

He takes it in his, entwining your fingers and kisses them. Then he lies back down beside you, pulling you onto your side and draping your arm over him. He nudges his knee between your legs and you oblige, draping your leg over his as well.

You lie like this until his breathing has calmed. He runs his fingers over your cheek lovingly.

"I miss you," he says. "I don't want this dream to end. Why did you run from me? Every day that we're apart I grow less certain that you ever loved me at all."

His hand moves down to your chest, his gaze following it. "You are heartless. You knew what you would do to me, and you did so anyway. What made you so cold?"

"I'm sorry," you whisper. "I miss you, too."

Loki looks into your eyes. You can see a mixture of hurt, tenderness, and exhaustion in those rings of green. "Then come back."
You're distraught. Could you really just go back? Show up on his doorstep and ask him for forgiveness? No, dreams are never rational or realistic. The real Loki is out of your life. All you have left are those dreams and your memories. The dagger, the cape, and the pain in your heart.

Too bad you don't have time to brood, because one of your friends just ran into the shop and is excitedly calling your name. It's Lee.

You hide the dagger under your pillow and dry your tears, slowly getting up from your bed, where you had hidden yourself away.

"Come out, you have to see this. Quick!" He calls through the door.

You exit the back room, giving him a dazed look. He grabs your hand and is already pulling you from the shop. Rika gives you a confused look, but doesn't interfere.

"Lee, where the Hel are we going?" you ask, somewhat annoyed.

"I was at the Wooden Fork, it's the tavern closest to us, and I heard some people talking about something that caught my attention," he explains as he drags you along. "They were going up to the barkeep and requesting to see the mead selection in the cellar. But then the barkeep returned without them and more people started disappearing into the cellar. That's a secret meeting if I ever saw one!"

"And why are you dragging me there?" you protest, jogging along behind him. "I'm not exactly a mead enthusiast."

You've got better things to worry about than some "secret meeting."

"Well, I followed them into the cellar by asking for the mead selection just like they did," Lee continues, picking up the pace. "There were a lot of women there, which is unusual in and of itself, but they started talking amongst themselves about an assassin and a resistance. About King Loki and wanting to dethrone him. I just knew they were talking about you!"

You almost stop dead in your tracks, but you force yourself to keep running. "About me?" you pant. "But I was publicly humiliated! Loki made me say that rebellion is a bad idea! If anything, they would be talking about how to stop dumb youth like us from trying to bite off more than we can chew."

The ground beneath your feet has turned to packed dirt, and when you round a hill, you're at the edge of the city.

"I don't think so," Lee disagrees, still excited. "Come and see. We're almost there."

He leads you between run down houses and through narrow alleys until you reach a rather well maintained pub with a giant wooden fork hanging over the door. You get a few glances from patrons
when you enter, but this doesn't seem like the kind of place the royal guards would hang out.

"Hi, it's me again," Lee breathlessly greets the barkeeper. "I brought a friend this time. I want to show her the great mead selection in your cellar."

The blond bearded man looks unimpressed. "Yeah, yeah, just go in. No one here ever asks questions anyway."

Lee beams at you and motions you toward a dusty wooden door that almost blends in with the stone walls. He opens it and you step into a dark staircase leading downward. Reluctantly, you descend it, trying not to get caught in any cobwebs.

There is a surprisingly large room at the bottom, lit brightly with torches. Besides the usual barrels of drink, there are round tables at which groups of people are sitting, maybe twenty over all. On one such table stands an elderly, silver haired woman in a crimson cloak. It seems like she was holding a speech, but when she spots you, she stops talking.

"Ah, a newcomer. Sit down. We will catch you up on our discussion," she greets you with a firm, but friendly smile.

"Actually, you might be interested in hearing from her," Lee says, coming up behind you. Most of the attendants are now looking at you. "This here is the assassin who went for King Loki's life. I am part of the group who rescued her from him after she failed."

A gasp runs through the audience. You cringe. He can't just tell them that! What if someone here wanted to betray you back to Loki?

"Is it true?" The old lady lowers herself from the table and approaches you. "You are the assassin we all saw at the last address?"

You glance at Lee, but he's just smiling. "Yes. It was me, but I don't understand what this all is."

A few of the people start murmuring amongst themselves.

"We are the beginnings of the resistance," the old woman says proudly. "We are mothers and daughters, fathers and sons, and we all agree that someone like Loki, who neglects the need of his people for his own vanity, who feels entitled to have every whim of his served, who made you plant your lips upon his boots as his way of telling us how little he cares for justice in favor of his sick little games, does not deserve to rule our beautiful Asgard. We are the Assassin's Sisters—and Brothers, of course—and we will voice our opinions and gather allies. We will not stand for this!"

There is applause, but you are just stunned. "But I- I said- He made me say not to resist."

The woman smiles. "That is exactly why we resist! You see, if he thinks forcing a woman to her knees rids her of her power, he is mistaken, and we will prove it! You said some inspiring things, actually. Something like 'it will take a lot more than a few assassins to dethrone him' and 'think of your families.' So we did! We thought of our families, how we did not wish to raise our children under his rule, and we got together to discuss this. What started as a simple neighborhood group is now already quite a number of people strong, and we plan to make influence even more minds! With you here, that might be easier than we thought! You could be our leader!"

You take a step back. "What...? You want me to lead these people? To do what? Kill Loki?"

A few people cheer. The woman just smiles.
"That might be a little difficult. The amount of guards in the city has doubled in the last week and they're doing random house searches. They haven't gotten to us yet, but it's only a matter of time. Stocking up on weapons might be a bad idea, but there are still plenty of things we can accomplish! Come, why don't you sit down?"

Feeling dazed and confused, you follow the lady to the table she was previously standing on, and sit down.

"Now, we don't use our real names here, but you can call me The Grandma," she says. "That way, if I send you a note and sign it as such, no one will get suspicious, but you'll know who it is. You'd just have to tell me where you live."

You nod, barely registering Lee sitting down beside you.

"We have two other members in our group," he says. "We'll have to discuss this with them, but I'm sure they'd love to join. When's the next meeting?"

"Oh, normally it would be in a week, but for such an occasion, we'll do it day after tomorrow!" The Grandma says excitedly. "Everyone alright with that?"

There's a general murmur of consent.

"Great! What say we meet around noon? I find that meetings after sundown attract way more attention for what it's worth."

Lee laughs in agreement. "Fine by us! I'll tell the others. In two days then."

"Wait, what if I don't want to be your leader?" you cut in. "What if I'm not good at that sort of thing?"

"Oh, don't worry about it," The Grandma assures you, placing a hand on your arm reassuringly. "You can just sit in and listen, and if you have any insider information, feel free to share it."

You're starting to feel a little panicked. You don't want to be involved with this rebel group. You want to smooth things over with Loki and then live happily ever after. If you stay here any longer, if they tell you any of their secrets, you'll feel like a traitor, and you don't want that.

"Sorry, I have to go," you say and jump up from your chair. "Lee, come on."

You're already headed for the stairs by the time he gets up.

"Uh, are you alright?" he calls after you. "Sorry everyone, I gotta make sure she's alright. See you next time."

He runs after you until he's caught up, by which time you've just exited the basement. The patrons give you another couple glances, but no one says anything as you cross the pub.

"Is... Is something wrong?" Lee asks helplessly. "Are you not feeling well?"

You step out of the pub and lean against the wall, taking a few deep breaths. "I'm fine. I just... needed some air. I don't think I'm ready for this."

"Sorry, that's on me. I shouldn't have dragged you here so spontaneously," Lee apologizes, looking crestfallen. "I thought it would be cool, you know. To show you that you had an impact. But I get that you're still suffering the aftermath of what happened to you. We'll see how you feel in two days,
and if you're not up for it, we'll drop this."

You nod, taking a few more deep breaths. "Okay. I think I just need to lie down for now. Can we go back?"

"Yeah. Yeah, of course!" Lee takes a step and waits for you to follow.

You shove yourself off of the wall and trudge after him, letting him lead you back to the shop.

Rika is waiting there, demanding enlightenment as to where Lee dragged you off to. He explains to her, and you just go back to the back room to be alone.

You lie down on your bedroll, taking Loki's dagger and looking at your reflection in the blade.

You look tired. You feel tired. You want to sleep. You want to dream of Loki again.

You lie on your bedroll, letting your exhaustion take over until you drift off to sleep.

It's only when you wake roughly two hours later, that you realize you dreamt of nothing at all.

Frustrated, you toss the dagger against the far wall, where it bounces off and clatters to the floor. You heave yourself out of bed, somehow even more tired than before.

You stumble out of the back room and forage around the food storage for something suitable to eat. Dried meat, bread, dried fruits, pickled vegetables, pickled fish...

Eventually you just grab a fistful of the fruits and stuff them in your mouth. When you turn around, you see Rika and Lee sitting at the far wall, both of them watching you.

"Uh... Hi, guyff," you say, trying to swallow down the fruit so you can speak properly. "What're you talking about?"

"Oh, Lee and I have been talking more about the Assassin's Sisters," Rika says.

"Yeah, we both really want to join them, but we won't if you're still too traumatized," Lee adds. "We'll ask Mat, too, when he returns."

"It's fine, guys," you give in. "We'll go to the next one. I can't promise I'll become their leader, but we can at least sit in."

"Great!" Rika gives you a smile that looks kind of strained. "I think it'll be good for us to get back on track. If we can ally more people to our cause, that can only benefit us. We'll just learn from our previous mistakes and move on."

You know who she's referring to when she says "previous mistake." Sure, falling in love with Loki can be considered that. But you're beginning to feel like it's a tactical advantage. Maybe you can bridge the gap between Loki and the resistance in a diplomatic way. Listen to their concerns and present them to him. If only you knew how to bridge the gap between your and his heart, first.

***

Mat returns with two hares and dove, which puts everyone in a good mood. After going through the usual time consuming ritual of sorting the edible parts from the inedible, the four of you prepare a pretty good meal. Lee and Rika tell Mat about the resistance, and he is immediately on board, as was expected.
You don't participate in the conversation much, instead thinking about Loki. Strangely enough, after going to that tavern, you feel no ill will toward him, no reason to rebel against him. Instead, you're thinking about how nice it would be to be back on his side, a sword at your hip, an important part of his court. If only Rika hadn't shown up, then you could be there now. Then again, it was probably for the best, because all your feelings were being manipulated. Now, though, you have a clear enough head to know what you want. And what you want is Loki.

You want to work for him. To fight and kill for him. You aren't quite sure where all this came from, and you still have to flesh these ideas out, but you are quite sure you can be with Loki and shut any stupid feelings away in the process. Maybe you'll dream of him again tonight, and gain some further inspiration.
Chapter 24

You wake up grouchy, having dreamt of nothing important again. You're pretty sure your most prominent dream involved getting chased by a giant apple, but that was about it. Damn it, dream Loki! Was last time too much?

Because of your lack of dreams, you are restless all day. You can't wait to go to sleep and try again! One good thing came from the Loki-less night, however. You are sure now that you are over your heartbreak. You've cried, you've shut away your feelings, and now you can go on from there. If only you knew how Loki feels about you. You both did shitty things to the other, so maybe that cancels out and he'll forgive you. If only there was a way to send him a letter or something.

Well, you could send him a letter, but you don't know how many of those he gets, and if he even reads them.

You are quite content and lost in thought most of the day, and of course your friends take notice of your sudden mood change. You lie and tell them it's because of the resistance, that you've gathered hope and are beginning to regain your strength. In reality, you are just waiting for the sun to set so you can hopefully talk to him in your dreams.

The rest of the day is uneventful, as it tends to be when you're living on the outskirts of the city instead of the palace. You become more and more antsy, and as soon as the sun sets, you excuse yourself for bed.

Lying on your bedroll, you try to calm down enough to go to sleep, which is almost impossible, since you are far too excited.

In one hand, you're holding the cape, in the other, the dagger. You smile to yourself. You're going to take charge of your own destiny. You're no longer a whore or a prisoner. Loki wanted to make you more, and now you really appreciate what he did for you. Surely you can reason with him enough to reinstate you. To prove yourself. If you have to warn him about the resistance, you'll do just that.

Thinking those thoughts, you slowly calm down and eventually drift off.

***

You're in an empty palace hall, with no semblance of where it leads. Not really caring, either, you just follow along it, taking random turns at intersections. The halls don't really change, but you keep walking anyway. You walk and walk for what feels like twenty minutes until there's a sort of tug on your consciousness and a sense of clarity fills you. You follow that tug, and when you round a corner, the person you desire to see most is standing there.

Loki is clad in full battle regalia, his helmet and his spear glinting in the daylight from the windows.

"Loki," you say and smile.

He says your own name back at you, then looks you up and down. "A dream?"

You nod, strolling toward him. "I forgive you, Loki," you say. "Do you forgive me?"
He also takes a few steps forward, until he's right in front of you. "I do," he says. "As much as I'd like to resent you, I feel that you did what you thought was right."

He reaches out and cups your cheek, tilting your head up and leaning down to kiss you.

You sigh blissfully when you feel his lips on yours. You lean into the kiss, digging your fingers into his hair as best you can from where it spills out from the helmet.

The kiss is needy and it takes a while before Loki pulls away. Then he pushes you against the corridor wall and reaches between your legs.

You realize suddenly you are naked and almost giggle. This time, you let yourself become aroused as Loki rubs you. Once satisfied, he unlaces his breeches and hoists you up to bring you down on his stiff cock.

You wrap your arms and legs around him, reveling in the fantastic stretch of him inside you once more. He keeps still for a moment before withdrawing and rocking back into you.

You almost explode at the wonderful feeling. You've missed this so much.

Loki is persistent, yet gentle, rocking into you in a way that sends hot pleasure raking through your every limb. He grunts softly and you shamelessly moan every time his cock bumps the pleasure spot inside you.

Your back is pressed against the cool wall, pieces of Loki's armor digging into your skin, and it all feels so wonderful. You completely forget what you wanted to talk to him about.

Loki's head falls forward, the golden horns scraping against the wall as he turns it into the crook of your neck. His hips buck a little faster, his grunts becoming more labored. There is no thought or intent behind this for either of you. There is just unguarded, mutual pleasure.

"Oh, Loki!" you moan, rocking back against him with each thrust. "Yes, yes, right there!"

He picks up the pace, hitting your sweet spot again and again until you practically scream from pleasure.

"Fuck, yes!" you cry out, getting so close. "Yes, Loki, yes!"

He's surprisingly quiet in comparison, but when you cum around him, he snarls and jackhammers into you for a second before cumming himself.

You gasp, feeling blissful and breathless as the both of you ride out the last aftershocks of your orgasm. Slowly, Loki draws out of you, causing some of his cum to trickle down your thigh.

He sets you down and pulls back, and you can see that his cheeks are flushed and a few strands of his hair are sticking to his skin.

"Loki..." you breathe. "I love you." You say it in a lighthearted way, the way one might say it to a friend who just did you a huge favor.

He says nothing, breathing heavily, but he gazes at you with at least a touch of affection in his eyes.

"I wish I could be with you," you say, smiling solemnly. "I wish I could fix this."

"You can," he says, tucking himself back into his pants.
"How?" you ask hopefully.

His green eyes meet yours, and once again they show simple truth. "You know where I am."

"What...?" you ask, confused. He's right in front of you. Of course you know where he is.

"You know what to do," he says. "Come to me, kitten. You know the way."

You're still confused. It would only take you half a step to come to him.

"Come to me," he repeats one more time, seeing your confusion. "Wherever you are. You can always come back to me."

Only with the clarity of waking up, do you realize what he meant. In that moment, your decision is already made.

Chapter End Notes

LET'S GET THIS DICK!!!
...Uh, I mean, let's reunite true love!
Starting next chapter, the chapters will be longer again yay
Your heart pumps and you feel alive again. A light smile plays around your lips. Nothing can hurt you now. They are all ghosts, and all that matters is the beating of your heart, and the pull of his.

You know what you have to do. You have to go back. The sooner you go, the sooner you can fix this. You know now that what Loki was feeling was guilt, when he asked you to hurt him, to punish him. You know it, because you feel the same way now.

You also know that Loki deserves redemption. No truly bad man would feel guilt for his actions. He wanted to fix what he had done, and you want to help him with that. You won't excuse his actions, but you feel that you and he can start fresh. You feel hopeful.

"You're smiling," Rika says. "What're you thinking about?"

"The meeting," you answer immediately. "I think if we all work together, we can truly bring down Loki."

Rika and Lee exchange a triumphant look, but you pretend you didn't see and skip ahead of them, as if you truly were eager to reach The Wooden Fork. Maybe it's just the sun on your skin, but you feel like you could take on the world right now.

Mat is in a more subdued mood, as usual, but he has a determined look on his face as if he's imagining finally gutting Loki.

You laugh to yourself. If only they knew there would be no need for violence. You'll talk to Loki, and Loki can talk to the resistance, and everyone can express their concerns peacefully.

"Have you decided if you'll take the leadership role?" Mat asks, coming up beside you. "If you won't, I would take it."

"That's great!" you enthuse. "I don't feel like much of a leader anyway. You can take it."

You skip forward again, stopping at the side of the path to pick up a daisy. You twirl it in your hand and smile, reminded of Loki once again. Maybe you should bring it to him.

"You look like a village maid with a crush," Lee jokes, laughing at you.

You turn around and walk backwards to face them. "Maybe I do." You wink and turn back around.

"Uh... what?" Lee sounds a bit flustered.

"She's just joking," Rika clarifies. "Don't worry, Lee, the bad woman won't threaten your purity."

You hear the scuffing of feet and then laughter, and assume Lee gave Rika a little shove.
Finally, you spot the first few houses and fall back to let Lee take the lead. You stuff the daisy into your pocket and put on a more serious expression. Now you do feel a bit of nervousness. Would those people even be willing to compromise with Loki?

Would Loki be willing to compromise with them? Diplomacy is a delicate thing.

You stay behind your friends when you enter the tavern, ducking your head low and keeping your gaze averted from any of the customers.

Lee walks up to the bartender, the same one as before, but before he can open his mouth, the man gives him an annoyed look and points to the cellar door.

"Just go in. Nobody cares. I'm sick of all these secret codes I have to remember, when royal guards haven't been seen here in centuries."

Lee looks a bit stunned, but then he nods and gestures for you and the others to follow. You descend the cellar steps and are immediately met with cheers. There are a lot more people here than two days ago. Maybe double the amount, making the room rather crammed.

"I'm so glad you all came!" The Grandma exclaims, weaving between tables and people to reach you. "You are all so brave for trying what you did! The very first people to actually take action! We're all so incredibly grateful to you for giving us courage and hope."

She takes each your friends' hands and shakes them, as well as yours. A lot of the people present are smiling and nodding in agreement. You see Rika and Mat look around in astonishment.

"Thank you," Mat says. "We were brought together by our sense of justice, and when Loki seized the throne, we knew we needed to take action." He steps forward, and you know he's already slipped into the role of the leader. "We did not wish to sit around and wait until our realm was brought to ruin, before we did something about it. In the time he has been king, Loki has erected a gigantic statue of himself, held parties and plays almost weekly, and altered every law and norm set up by King Odin. He is wasting funds for his own amusement and needs to be stopped."

You cringe a little and everyone claps and calls out words of agreement. This is going to be a lot more difficult than you hoped for.

"But-" you say, before Mat can continue. Some people look at you, others didn't seem to have heard. You step forward as well. "But Loki has also done good things!" you call out a little louder.

Mat gives you a look of disbelief. Everyone's attention turns to you.

"We cannot condemn him simply for his vanity! I've seen him help people! There was this family-"

Rika yanks on your arm and drags you back to the staircase. "What are you doing?" she hisses. "I just... I want the whole truth to be presented," you defend yourself.

"I just... I want the whole truth to be presented," you defend yourself.

"He made you his sex slave!" she whispers angrily. "Are you going to present that, too?"

That makes you shut up. Mat glances at you over his shoulder before continuing his speech.

"In addition to all that, he is also cruel and merciless toward his subjects," he says with emphasis. "Every minor slight against him is cruelly punished! But after we sent our assassin, he's been recruiting new guards! He's afraid of us!"
More people cheer. You grit your teeth. Of course he's scared. You almost killed him multiple times!

"We should try diplomacy!" You yell, trying to get back into the room while Rika holds you back. "We could try talking to hi-mp!

Rika clasps her hand over your mouth. Everyone stares at you in confusion, while Mat looks angry. "Diplomacy is very wise," The Grandma says placatingly. "But how would we receive an audience with him without putting targets on our backs?"

You tear yourself from Rika's grip. "I could help with that! He knows me! He trusts me!"

There's a shocked murmur in the crowd.

"Ehm, she- She's still sick," Rika fumbles, grabbing your arm again and dragging you back.

"Stop being an idealist and face the facts," Mat snaps at you. "Love and politics don't go together."

Lee looks uncertainly between the three of you.

You stare in shock at all those people. Maybe they don't want to talk to him. Maybe they just want to be angry. Maybe nothing you say can convince them. Maybe you were just like them before actually meeting Loki. Maybe you need to get Loki to talk to them, instead of the other way around.

"You're right," you say in surrender. "He is unpredictable. Maybe my idea wasn't so good, after all."

"It's alright," The Grandma says with a friendly smile. "We welcome all ideas. Though, usually, with a little less yelling."

"Sorry," you mumble and hang your head. You feel embarrassed, and go over to the corner, where you sit down on the floor. Lee comes over and sits down next to you. There is a moment longer of awkward silence, before Mat continues his rousing speech.

"Hey," Lee says softly so only you can hear him. "You alright? You still have feelings for him, don't you?"

You look up at him. "It's complicated. I just... I feel like he deserves a chance to defend himself before we do anything rash."

Lee nods. "I understand that, but diplomacy is very difficult when one person is king and the other merely a subject."

"I guess," you mumble.

"And he did seize the throne unjustly, through trickery and possibly murder. That alone is a crime," he adds. "Even if he isn't all bad, he should still be held accountable."

"Yeah..." You have to admit he has a point. That still doesn't deter you from your plans tonight.

You wait in defeated silence until the stupid meeting is over. Stupid Mat and his stupid plans and the stupid resistance wanting to fight rather than talk. On your way home, you kick at rocks instead of prancing around picking flowers.

Rika tries to talk to you, but you go to sulk in your room. You also start deciding how exactly you will do this tonight. You really don't have a plan beyond waiting for everyone to fall asleep and literally walking to the palace. Sadly, no matter how much thinking you do, you can't find an
alternative. You kind of want to avoid stealing a horse.

You spend the rest of the day chatting with your friends and pretending everything is normal. You would feel bad, but this is about something greater than you all. Love, and politics.

Come nightfall, you put on the very same green dress and shoes you had on when you left him. Then you stuff the rest of your clothes under your blanket in case someone goes to check on you in the middle of the night. You've waited a couple hours, and now you take the cape and wrap it around you, holding the dagger in your hand. Carefully, you open the door into the main store, checking for any sign of activity.

"Is anyone awake?" you whisper, just loud enough that only those awake would hear you. When there is no answer, you tiptoe across the store toward the door. When you pass by Rika, you pause, looking at her sleeping face.

Your heart clenches painfully. She looks so at peace, and what you're about to do is betrayal. Still, you know you have to do this. If everything goes right, you'll be back the next day.

You exit the store and step into the chilly night air. It's colder than you expected, and you regret wearing the dress, but it's too late now. You wrap the cape tighter around yourself and start walking.

You don't know exactly where you're going, but the golden towers of the palace are jutting up in the distance, glittering in the moonlight, so you know the general direction. You walk at a brisk pace, knowing it will take you hours to get there.

It's kind of scary alone in the city at night. If anyone wanted to kill you, you'd only have a dagger to defend yourself with. ...Well, that might be enough. You walk faster, your feet carrying you over cobblestone. To distract yourself from being scared, you plan out what you're going to say to him.

*Hey, Loki, I know I betrayed you and ran away, but here I am! Take me back!*

You scoff at yourself. That just won't do. You'll have to be very delicate. State your peaceful intentions, your willingness to fix your mistakes. Maybe grovel a little. Or maybe avoid just that?

It takes about an hour before you've come up with the right words. By that time, clouds have covered the moons, and it gets harder to see. It also gets significantly colder, and ten minutes later, it starts to rain. Just your luck.

You walk even faster, holding the cape over your head. Summer really is over. The rain is icy cold, but thankfully not too heavy. Still, after another half hour, you're chilled to the bone and about ready to give up. You wonder how your friends are faring, considering the leaky roof. Maybe they woke up and already know you're gone. You can't go back.

You hurry onward. The closer you get to the palace, the more guards you encounter, which you have to carefully avoid. They would, no doubt, ask questions you are unwilling to answer.

You are physically exhausted by the time you see the palace gates. Your gait has slowed significantly, and you're pretty much out of breath.

Slowly, you lumber toward the two men guarding the gate.

"Halt!" One of them calls out immediately. "State your business!"

"I... Here to see the king," you wheeze, finally coming to a standstill and allowing yourself to catch your breath.
"Do you have documents of identification?" The man questions. "The gates are closed for common folk at this hour."

"I... He knows me," you pant. "I'm his lover. He would want to see me."

"Anyone can say that," the guard sneers. "If you have no documents, leave. The king is asleep. Come back in the morning."

"Wait, I-" You slide the cape off your shoulders and hold it and the dagger out to him. "These are his. I'm that... I'm the assassin, the one who ran away."

That gets a reaction. The guard reaches for a torch that was mounted to the pillar next to him and holds it up to see you properly. The flame has trouble staying up in the rain and wind, but apparently the little amount of light is enough.

The guard takes the cape and dagger from you, tosses the torch aside, and grabs your arm.

"Open the gate!" he yells to someone unseen, and another guard comes up to it from the inside, unlocking it and making it swing open.

Your guard shoves you forward, pushing you inside.

"Bring her to the king at once," he tells the other guard, shoving the cape and dagger into his arms. "She is the assassin. She brought back his belongings."

The other guard fumbles with the things and then takes your other arm, giving the first guard a nod, who lets you go.

You are now dragged along by the second guard, while the first one returns to his station. He beings you inside, and finally you are out of the rain. It isn't much warmer inside, but it is definitely dryer and brighter, which is an improvement.

"Stand still while I check you for weapons," the guard says, releasing your arm and tucking the cape and dagger under his to get his hands free.

You obediently hold out your arms and let him pat you down, which makes you a little uncomfortable, considering he even checks your cleavage for a hidden dagger—not that you've never tucked a knife there before.

When he's finally done, he grabs your arm again and drags you further into the palace. You expect him to bring you to Loki's bedroom, but it turns the king is not, in fact, asleep, because you end up in front of the door to his study.

Your heart pounds louder in your chest when the guard knocks. You're only seconds away from seeing him again.

"Enter," you hear Loki's voice through the door.

The guard opens it and pulls you inside, bowing. "Your pet has returned, sir."

Loki's eyes are wide, and he jumps up from his chair. The guard notices you're still standing and pushes down on your shoulder so you are forced to kneel.

You sit on the carpet, staring up at Loki. There's a fire crackling in the fireplace, and it feels so nice and warm.
"Have you searched her for weapons?" the king asks, turning toward the guard as if you were not there.

"She had none, sir—besides your dagger, which she brought with her," he reports, holding out Loki's belongings.

Loki takes the soggy piece of cloth and his knife, tossing the former onto his desk.

"Leave us," he instructs. "Wait outside for further orders."

"Yes, sir." The guard bows again, fist over his heart, and takes his leave.

As soon as he is gone, you jump up from the floor. "Loki, I-"

Loki turns to you, knife still in hand, and you falter.

"Hush, now," he says, stepping toward you. "I'm so glad you returned. Now I don't have to go to any trouble before I can kill you, you treacherous bitch."

You are too shocked to move. You just stand there, wide eyed, and follow the arc of his dagger as he swings it at you.

Chapter End Notes

Emotional suffering in *my* trashy romance novel? It's more likely than you think!

Okay guys, Endgame is at the door, and I will not upload the next chapter until sometime after opening weekend, because I do *not* want to add to the inevitable heartache this movie will put us through. I'll give me and you guys a little time to focus only on the One True Canon Loki, however his story may end, and then you can come back to my story. I know I don't have to say this, but neither I nor you should reveal any movie details here so nobody gets spoiled. Anyway. Whatever happens, we're in this together, and our love for him will live far beyond the MCU and maybe our lifetimes. Here's hoping for that Disney+ TV show!
Chapter 26

Chapter Notes

It's back! :)

WARNING: This chapter is a lot darker and more emotionally taxing than the previous ones. Loki *does* assault you and tries to kill you in this chapter. If you think you aren't in the right mindset to read about this, proceed with caution, or wait until you are. You know yourselves best!

I *promise*, though, this isn't going to turn into a psychological horror or have any major character death. Though this chapter and the following ones don't have a happy ending, things can always recover! And I know a lot of you enjoy a really evil Loki, so here goes:

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"Hush, now," he says, stepping toward you. "I'm so glad you returned. Now I don't have to go to any trouble before I can kill you, you treacherous bitch."

You are too shocked to move. You just stand there, wide eyed, and follow the arc of his dagger as he swings it at you.

You scream, now. You scream and jump backward, but only after the dagger has already met its target.

A target, which was thankfully not your heart. Or your throat. Instead, there's a tiny little cut across the bridge of your nose. The barest graze, a well measured sample of Loki's anger.

He stalks toward you, another step, the dagger lifting for a second strike. His eyes are those of a predator, watching intensely for every twitch of muscle indicating your intended movement.

As soon as you stumble back, he swings, cutting the fabric of your sleeve, nothing more.

"Loki!" you plea, desperate and afraid.

He smiles, toying with you, and takes another step. You realize too late he's driving you away from the door.


"Loki, listen to me!" you beg. "I came here to apologize! To fix things! Please, stop this!"

Loki doesn't pursue you further, standing on the other side of the desk, the dagger lowered. He's no longer smiling—thank the stars.

"I know why you came," he says softly, all the while gutting you with his eyes. "Because you love
The hand with the dagger in it trembles, his knuckles clenched too tightly around the hilt.

You take a few steps back until you hit the bookshelf behind the desk.

"Loki..." Your voice fails to rise above a whisper. "Why are you doing this? Please let me fix it. I never meant to betray you."

"Yes, you did," he says calmly, and begins walking around the desk toward you. "But if you think you betrayed me, you are mistaken."

You try to run from him, but to your horror, you can't move. It's like your body is glued to the bookshelf, and you realize he's doing it. No matter how hard you strain, you can't get free of his magic.

"Nothing happened that I did not anticipate," he explains, coming to a halt in front of you. For the first time, you feel nothing but terror when you look into his ice cold eyes. "You think I would let you lead me into an obvious trap, because what? I'm blinded with love?" He laughs mirthlessly at the notion.

You keep pulling against your invisible bonds, needing all your willpower not to panic. That means you have no strength left to keep the tears from your eyes.

Loki doesn't seem to care, regardless.

"I don't love you, pet," he says in a low voice, leaning down so his eyes are level with yours. "I don't now, and I never did. In other words—" he leans so close you can feel his hissing breath on your lips — "I lied."

You are trembling now, and you have to bite your tongue not to make a noise of fear.

Loki watches you impassively for another moment, then pulls back, pacing about in front of you. "Yes, pet. The day you came at me with that kitchen knife, I deduced immediately what must have happened. You are far, far too naive to realize my manipulation, so of course you had help. It did not take me long to find her, you know. One kitchen maid disappears, another replaces her. Clever plan, but of course you had to ruin it."

He pauses his pacing to look at you. You're shaking harder and harder. Silent tears are running down your cheeks. His words don't even register emotionally. There's only so much pain your mind can handle, and it maxed out the first time he swung his dagger at you.

"You realize now, it was all an act?" he continues, making it sound like a question. Slowly, he wanders back to you, closer and closer, until his hand grips your chin and his mouth is at your ear. "I was so convincing, was I not? Saying how helplessly I've fallen for you. How I would do anything for you. How I need you. Kneeling at your feet and pleasing you. Pretending that I'm nice. That I deserve you. That I deserve your mercy, and your guilt. You ate it all up so willingly, didn't you? – Almost didn't go through with it, did you?" He chuckles lightly. "But I pushed you forward, and pretended that you betrayed me."

He pulls back again to soak up your reaction. You're still trembling, but now you ball your fists.

"No..." you say, and then louder. "No!"

"Yes," he says. "Yes, sweet pet. I knew the entire time."
"No, no, no!" you scream, pulling at the restraints again. "It isn't true! You couldn't have known! You couldn't have! You do love me!"

You sob loudly, and Loki reaches out to caress your cheek tenderly, a look of pity on his face.

"Oh, sweet thing," he coos. "Look at you. So desperate for my love that you refuse to accept the truth. I never did love you, pet. I said all that so you would not kill me. So you would run back to me in case you managed to flee. And here you are, just as I planned. Even sooner, actually. You must have missed me."

"No, no, no," you sob, refusing to listen or look at him. "You're lying! You just want to hurt me!"

"Shhhh," Loki hushes you, still gently stroking your cheek with his thumb. "Your desperate wishes will not change the truth. Why do you think I made a show of claiming you in the kitchens if I did not know your friend was there? Why do you think I was so adamant about getting you further into the forest? Or did you think my dagger landing near you was a coincidence? I do not miss my targets, pet. I threw it there, so you would pick it up, and you did. Then I drew the fight toward you and let myself be knocked to the ground. I knew you would not kill me. If you had tried, of course, I would have stuck this in your throat."

He laughs and holds up the dagger. You stare at it. Your whole world is spinning around you. Reality itself is changing, rewriting itself into a horrible nightmare with each of his words.

"But..." Something doesn't make sense. "But why would you... Why would you not kill all of us in the forest? Why would you let us get away? You had us."

You've calmed somewhat, feeling completely numb. Maybe this is your body's last defense against the pain. Maybe you won't even feel anything when he sticks the dagger in your heart.

"That was my original plan," he admits. "In fact, I was planning to kill you even before your friends came. You were such a nuisance to me. I was impatient to get rid of you as soon as possible. I would have slaughtered you all in the forest, but I underestimated their coordination. It is quite difficult to get your bearings when being assaulted at three fronts in a dark forest."

His words register in your mind, but they don't stick like the rest of them. They aren't convincing you, for some reason.

"No, you couldn't have known all this," you mumble. "Wouldn't have underestimated your opponent."

"But I did," he says immediately. "Just accept it."

And then you realize why his words aren't adding up. Because they're lies. And that means all his other words are, too. They are lies, cleverly hidden behind layers of truth. And again, you realize why. He did suspect what you were planning to do. He did know Rika was there. But he did nothing, for the same reason he's lying now. Because he loves you.

"Loki," you say quietly, meeting his eyes. "I don't believe you. You're saying all this to hurt me, and you're trying to hurt me because you want revenge. And you want revenge, because I did betray you. Because I broke your heart, and you weren't in control at all. Your words are contradicting themselves. If they actually were true, you wouldn't be telling me all this. You would have just killed me."

Loki's eyes narrow, and then his face contracts in anger, and you know you're right.
"That is a pretty bold statement, pet," he spits. "Are you sure you're not in denial?"

You draw in a sharp breath. You can feel the adrenaline thrumming through your veins. "I'm sure."

"Then let me prove it to you," he snarls, his teeth bared. "You're going to betray your friends to me, and then I will kill them. I won't even let you watch. You die tonight, with the knowledge of what you've done."

Before you can even open your mouth to tell him you would never betray them to him, he has his hand pressed against your forehead, and suddenly you lose all vision.

You can feel him in your brain, feel his magic penetrating your skull and pushing into your memories. Like fingers rifling through pages, he goes through your most recent memories and pulls them forward.

You see yourself at the abandoned store, eating breakfast with Rika, Mat, and Lee. It was just this morning. Loki watches the three of you for a moment, then goes forward, until you're leaving the store. You go along the dirt road until you reach the city, then enter the tavern. Loki now knows the general location of the hideaway. He watches briefly as you meet with the Assassin's Sisters, then draws out of the memory and rifles further back in your mind.

You see more flashes of memories, see yourself getting younger. You're in school, presenting a report. You've practiced for days for this presentation, but when you begin it, you fumble with your words and misspeak your own name. Everyone laughs, and you start crying. They start yelling your misspoken name until the teacher quiets them down, but you know they would call you by that name for the remainder of your time at that school.

Thankfully, Loki doesn't stay in the memories of your school life for too long, going back even further. It seems he is looking for something specific, and soon enough, he finds it.

The door slams behind you as you run out into the dark street. You're crying and completely blind with rage, ignoring the shouts of your parents to come back. Instead, you run even faster. You run straight into the forest, sobbing the entire time. As soon as you see your favorite thicket, you slow down, wiping your face on your sleeve. Determined, you get on your hands and knees, move some of the branches aside, and crawl forward through the hollowed out tunnel you've created there.

It's hard to see, and some of the branches whack you in the face, but you know where to go. Dirt and dead leaves cling to your palms and the skirt of your dress.

Suddenly, your right hand makes contact with something dry and malleable. Something scaly, something that moves. You hear the crack of its spine, and suddenly it lashes out and there's incredible pain in your arm.

You scream and jerk back. The pain is so intense that your reflexes take over and you hit it with your other fist, but it's not moving anymore. You jump up and run out of the thicket, clutching your wounded arm to your chest.

You can feel the blood running down your skin, but worse than that, the pain seems to spread. You're gasping and crying and running and thinking that you're going to die. It gets worse and worse, your whole arm feeling like it's being dissolved with acid. Your vision keeps blacking out and your feel yourself getting cold and clammy. Is this what dying feels like?

Your legs have turned to lead, by the time you near your home. Thankfully, your parents are out on the street with lanterns, in search for you. You scream out to them, then fall to the ground.
unconscious.

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Your eyes are glazed over. You can hear heavy breaths, and at first you think they're yours, but then you realize that they're Loki's.

He pulls away from you and steps around the desk, going to the door. He opens it and begins talking to the guard. You vaguely register him describing the location of the abandoned store, then the appearance of your friends.

"They should be asleep," he says. "Send ten men. Use as much force as necessary to apprehend them. I want them in my dungeons ere sunrise. Go."

"Yes, sir." The guard claps his fist over his heart and hurries off.

By the time Loki closes the door and turns back to you, you're alert with fear.

"Please... Please don't hurt them," you beg.

"Shhh," Loki says and comes closer. His expression is neutral, and you can't read his intentions. You realize he's no longer holding the dagger. It's on the desk, next to the dirty cape. You don't know if that makes him any less dangerous or not.

He walks all the way up to you, crowding your space. Then he leans down and connects his lips to yours.

You stare at him in shock, but his eyes are closed. He kisses you softly, but your body doesn't react the way it used to. As soon as you've mustered the strength, you twist your head away and break the kiss.

Loki draws back, opening his eyes with a long, shuddering breath.

"You don't know what you do to me," he says, grabbing your hands and moving them up beside your head. They're still stuck to the bookshelf, but now his fingers are entwined with yours.

The closeness has your heart jumping in your chest. "Please," you say again. "Please don-"

"Shhhhh," he breathes against your lips. "Hush, sweet thing. Stay calm. I don't want you to suffer."

You realize with horror that he's talking to you the way one would talk to a horse with a broken leg. A horse that's about to be put out of its misery.

"No, please!" you wail. "Please, don't kill me! Please, Loki!"

This time, Loki doesn't interrupt you. He just watches you, unaffected.

"Shhh," he says again. "I can make it nice. I can make it good for you."

His thumbs stroke over your fingers, and you realize he's pushing more of his magic into you. It's an uncomfortably hot sensation spreading through your veins, but once it reaches your heart, you feel some of your fear and sorrow dissipate. It moves lower and you feel the familiar trickle of arousal. The heat spreads through your belly, through your entire body, and you feel calm and warm and aroused. With the last bit of clarity, you realize just how much worse this is to before.

Loki studies your expression, and once he's satisfied, pulls his hands away. "There, is this not
better?"

You don't answer. "You still love me," you say instead. "Otherwise you would not be doing all
this."

Loki's hand moves to your cheek. "You understand that I must do this, don't you? That I must kill
you?"

His words are soft, his eyes big and there's pain in them.

"No, I don't," you say firmly, shaking your head. "I know I hurt you, but this won't heal your heart.
All this will do is cut another scar where there are already so many. If you let me go, I promise I
won't abandon you."

Loki draws back, his expression turning into a sneer. "You're saying that to save your life," he says,
his eyes glistening. "You don't mean it. How can I trust you, after what you've done? How can I
trust you, when everyone I've ever loved has betrayed me?" He practically yells the last part, his
voice shaking with emotion. He reaches behind him and grasps the dagger once more, waiting for
your answer.

You eye the dagger, unable to hide your nervousness. "You have no reason to trust me," you say
calmly. "But I am willing to prove what I said. Put me in shackles, if you must. Keep my friends in
your dungeons. I won't abandon you."

Loki grits his teeth, the dagger trembling in his grasp. "That proves nothing. If I force you to stay, of
course you will. Prove that you would stay of your own free will. Prove that you're mine."

"Oh... Okay," you breathe, trying to remain calm. Whatever spell Loki put on you seems to be
fading. "What... do you want me to do? Let me go and I'll do it. I won't run."

Loki's eyes are narrowed, trust clearly void in his heart. He thinks about your words. "Let me fuck
you," he demands, and you can't stop yourself from flinching.

He notices, and scoffs. "So you won't do it. But when my life is the one in your hands, then you
have no problem taking pleasure from me. Is that it?"

You realize with a pang of guilt how right he is. What you did was multiple levels of wrong. No
wonder he's hurt enough to want you dead. Pretending to sweeten his last moments, you just made
your betrayal so much worse. You took from him, danced and had sex with him for your
pleasure, not his. Knowing full well he would die. You are in no way better than him. Not after having done
that.

Loki watches the theater of emotions on your face, eyes wide and searching. Then they narrow, and
he lifts his dagger. "I think I need to remind you who exactly you belong to, slave."

He brings the dagger down and tears the front of your dress open, exposing your chest.

You stare at him in shock and fear. "Loki! Wha- what are you doing?!"

He ignores you and places the tip of the blade just above your right breast. Then he slices it upward,
cutting a bright red line to your collarbone. You suck in a sharp breath, but the knife is moving again,
halfway back down at an angle. The rune for "L".

You whimper at the sharp, stinging pain. Your blood is trickling from the gashes, running over the
slope of your breast. He move the knife to your left, leaving four more cuts as he spells an "O".
He glances briefly at your face, which is contracted in pain, before moving over your left breast. You flinch and whimper at each further cut, breathing through your teeth as tears flow from your eyes. He cuts you three more times, and then it's written out across your chest in bright red pain: LOKI.

He leans back, breathing heavily, and looks at his work. Blood is trickling down between your breasts. He leans down and catches the rivulet with his tongue. He follows it up to its origins. And then, he licks over your wounds.

You wince as his tongue makes contact, but he doesn't stop. He licks up your blood until its flow has lessened, coating every cut in his saliva. At first, the pain gets so much worse, but his cool tongue is somehow soothing, and it turns into a dull throb. Finally, he straightens up and licks the last bit of your blood from his lips.

"Open your mouth," he commands.

You blink, too stunned to react.

He reaches for your chin, tilts your head back, and pulls your mouth open. Then he steps closer and leans over you, and you think he's going to kiss you. Instead, he spits some of your blood into your open mouth. Then he shuts it again. You are even more shocked now. You taste the metallic tang in his saliva. Before you can think to stop it, your natural swallow reflex kicks in and it slides down your throat. Only then does Loki let your chin go and steps back.

"You belong to me," he says. "I own you. I am your king. Your master. I can do with you what I wish. Do you accept that?"

"Do I..." You're completely lost. "What?"

He comes closer again, grabbing your chin and rubbing his thumb over your lips. "Are you willing to prove your loyalty? You said you wanted to prove it."

This doesn't sound good, or safe, but you prefer it over death. "Yes..." You nod, looking up into his eyes.

"Good. Then let me fuck you." His gaze is challenging. "One more time."

"Before what?" you question, uncertain.

"Before I decide what to do with you. I've already replaced you, you know. I have other women warming my bed. One of them should be there right now, in fact." He searches for a reaction. You don't give it to him. You simply hang your head and lower your gaze. "Okay."

He lets your chin go, and then he's pushing up your skirt. He moves one hand between your legs, pulling away your panties. You let them fall down your legs. His fingers brush against you, testing for your wetness. Due to the spell he used earlier, there is a bit there.

He draws his hand away again and unlaces his pants, then pulls his cock out and gives it a few strokes. You don't look at him. He steps even closer and you feel it push at your entrance. When the head slips inside, you gasp and your eyes snap back to his.

There's a sting. You're not wet enough, or maybe it's because you haven't had him in a week. He pushes further and you whimper. Then he grabs your legs and hoists them up around his hips, sliding all the way inside with one thrust.

You make a pained sound, squirming about to ease the sting that accompanies the massive stretch.
Loki hisses in pleasure, growing even harder inside you.

He begins to grind into you, bumping the mouth of your womb. His eyes are closed, his head leaned back, his hands gripping your thighs so tightly you know they'll leave bruises.

You whimper, but your legs hook around him, your body finding familiarity in this sensation. You rock against him, craving the mix of pain and pleasure he's giving you. If your arms were free to move, you'd probably sling them around him.

Loki is grunting softly, delivering short, hard thrusts into you. He rams against your cervix with each stroke, making your toes curl with pain and pleasure in equal parts.

"Lo... Loki," you gasp, flexing your fingers and wishing you could push them in his hair or rake them down his armored back.

"Are you enjoying this, little slut?" he asks, his attention drawn back to you. "Does your body crave me, even now?"

You give him a helpless look and he thrusts harder, just to see your expression change to one of pain. You gasp, soft whimpers and moans escaping from your lips.

"You do," he assesses. "You like this, you filthy whore. Are you going to cum? Hm?"

He steps as close as he can, pressing his chest against yours and driving himself as deep inside you as possible.

You wince and squirm helplessly, his leather tunic brushing against your wounds, his cock bruising your insides.

"I know you want to, little bitch," he continues insulting you. "Should I let you, do you think? Should I make you squeeze down around my cock?"

He draws his hands away from your thighs, but they stay up around him by force of his magic.

You're crying, and when he moves one hand between his and you body and rubs over your clit, you sob in unwanted pleasure. He leers at you, feeling you twitch and clench around him. He keeps rubbing against your clit, forcing pleasure into you, the drag of his cock intensifying with each thrust.

"Mm, fuck, that's good," he hisses. "Your cunt is gripping me so tightly. It really missed me, didn't it?"

You keep squirming and whimpering, but there's nothing you can do. Your only comfort is the fact that he won't kill you after this, and that he's already replaced you. Some other woman will have to suffer him. He's just getting you out of his system one last time.

His thrusts grow faster and more erratic, and then his free hand wraps around your throat. He's grunting in pleasure, and you think he's nearing his finish. His fingers are squeezing the sides of your throat, his other hand still rubbing against your clit, and sadly, you're getting close, too.

Your hips are bucking against him, not caring about the bruising force of his thrusts. "L-Loki," you gasp, feeling the blood dam up against his fingers, no longer circulating to your brain. "What- Please!"

"Cum for me, slut," he grunts, not even looking at you, too lost in pleasure. "Cum and milk my cock. I want to shoot my seed into you right as the light leaves your eyes."
Your eyes widen, and you try to struggle. "Please, Loki!" you wail. "Please don't kill me!" But you already feel yourself fluttering around him, your orgasm brought to its beginnings by his fingers, the ones rubbing furiously over your clit, and the ones throttling the life from you.

He looks up and grins as it erupts around you, causing you to clamp down around him and wail in ecstasy. He rides you through it, his own breaths becoming labored, a layer of sweat on his skin.

"Are you sure you wish those to be your last words?" he asks, slowing his thrusts to delay his own release.

Your eyes have rolled back in your head, your vision blacking out. Your head hurts more and more from all the blood stuck there. Dying isn't like the explosive burst of your orgasm. It's harsh and painful and every fiber of your being is fighting against it. You feel your senses shutting down, and it leaves you enough room to think of your final regrets, your final memories, the faces of your loved ones. You try to think of Rika and Mat and Lee. Of your parents. For some reason, in your state of half consciousness, all you can think of is one moment in the tavern.

You see The Grandma smiling at you, and all the faces of the people you inspired. You smile back at them, and then you realize something.

"I... I'm a martyr."

You aren't even sure if your raspy voice has reached Loki, but now you go willingly into the blackness, knowing it to be the truth.

Chapter End Notes

Ahhh please don't lynch me
I *had* to end the chapter there. I just had to >:)

"I... I'm a martyr."

You aren't even sure if your raspy voice has reached Loki, but now you go willingly into the blackness, knowing it to be the truth.

You slowly wake to the sound of laughter. At first, you think it might be you, because who else would be laughing? –but then you realize it's a man's laugh. A man you know. Mat? Lee?

...No, not them. Another man. A man who is far less pleasant.


You're lying on something bristly. The carpet? It's warm. Are you still in the study?

You crack open your eyes. Your vision is blurred. You're lying on your side. You see the heavy desk, and two shiny black boots.

"Some martyr you are," Loki says. "Fucked to death."

Then the laughter breaks out anew.

You blink slowly, clearing your vision. You try to sit up, steadying yourself against the wall. You see the leather clad legs bend as Loki crouches down before you. In his hand is a glass of water, which he holds against your lips.

You open your mouth and let the cool liquid slide inside, drinking gratefully. Loki holds it for you until your hand reaches up and shakily takes it from him.

"I saw the tavern and the... 'Assassin's Sisters' in your memories," he says as you drink. He still sounds amused. "It seems you have quite the influence. Martyr indeed. ...Do you think they would have come at me with pitchforks, had I killed you?"

You say nothing. You don't meet his eyes. You just drink slowly until the glass is empty, and then put it down beside you.

Loki's hand reaches out and brushes some stray strands of hair out of your face.

"I think you deserve a little rest," he says kindly. "Guard!"

The door opens, and a guard steps in. You don't know if it's the same one as before. Don't care.

"Take her to one of the cells in the tower. Make sure she has to eat."

"Yes, sir."

Loki helps you stand and the hands you over to the guard. You walk willingly, too dazed to even feel or think. The only presence of mind you have is to fold the torn pieces of your dress up over your breasts.
The guard brings you out of the study and through numerous hallways. There are a lot of stairs involved you have to walk up, and it takes quite a while for you to ascend them.

When the guard stops in front of an iron door with two slots in it, you are out of breath and little flecks of light dance before your eyes.

He takes a ring of keys from his belt and unlocks it, gesturing for you to step inside. You do so willingly.

The room is tiny. Smaller by far than Loki's bathroom, and smaller even than the cells you saw in the dungeon. This must be where they put the most rowdy of the prisoners.

The door shuts behind you, but you barely register the sound. There are no windows, and the only light comes through the two slots in the door. One is on eye level, the other near the floor, casting two strips of light into the room.

There is a straw mattress in one corner, a pillow, and a woolen blanket. In the other corner is a wash basin, a small mirror, and a place to relieve yourself.

You trudge over to the bed and lie down, pulling the blanket over yourself. You feel nothing. You're neither tired nor fully awake. The dull pain is ever present in your mind and your thoughts swim slowly through your head. A while later, something you assume is food is slid through the bottom hatch. You don't move, or even look at what it is. You just lie there, in the darkness, thinking that out of all the pain he's inflicted on you, the one in your heart is the most unbearable.

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You know you're tired, but you don't sleep. You know you're hungry, but you don't eat. You feel the prickling behind your eyes, the hollowness in your stomach, but the actual feeling is gone. Your mind has shut down to its barest minimum, and you lie numbly on the mattress. You just can't get yourself to move.

The light from the hallway eventually changes from low, flickering torchlight to diffuse daylight. You know it's only a matter of time before someone comes to get you, but you still don't feel like you can move.

When the door swings open, you don't even look up. The guard's foot bumps against the tray of untouched food with a clatter, and he curses.

"You need to eat," he says, and your heart leaps. It's Sven.

Clumsily, you sit up. Your mouth is dry and your head hurts.

Sven picks up the tray, thankfully not having spilled anything, and brings it over to you, placing it on your lap.

It's a cold bowl of porridge and a tin cup with water. You take the water first and take a few sips, then put it back down. Despite the emptiness in your stomach, you can't convince your brain to pick up the spoon and start eating.

"Katharina, please," Sven begs.

You look up at him. "That isn't my name," you croak, your throat still dry. "It's a pseudonym I chose to hide my identity." Then you tell him your real name.
"Oh." Sven looks helpless. He repeats the same phrase as before, except with your real name. "Please eat. It will give you emotional strength, as well as physical."

You pick up the spoon and scoop up a bit of porridge, bringing it to your mouth. It tastes like nothing and your brain doesn't react to it, but your stomach seems to be desperately trying to get your attention.

You eat another spoonful, but only because Sven is insistently watching you. You manage to get through half the bowl before you give up and push it away.

You look up at Sven, who still wears a pained expression, but he takes the tray from you.

"I'll let you clean yourself up, before I take you to King Loki. Sadly, I have no change of clothes for you. You'll have to ask him for that." He gives you a nod and steps back outside your cell, closing the door behind him. Like Hel you will ask him for anything.

You throw the blanket off and stand up, watching through the top slot as Sven sets the tray down on the floor beside the door and positions himself with his back toward you.

You pad over to the washbasin and get a shock when you see yourself in the mirror. Your hair is messy and matted, your eyes dull and hollow, underlined by dark circles. There's a shallow cut across the bridge of your nose, and one along your cheek. Your throat is bruised purple on either side. Across your chest, reflected backwards in the mirror, is Loki's name, written in barely scabbed over gashes. Your dress hangs open, revealing more of your breasts than you would like. You pull it up as best you can, covering at least your nipples. You don't even want to think of the state further down beneath your skirt.

After relieving yourself, you wash your face and chest, carefully removing dried blood without reopening your wounds. You pat down your hair so it doesn't stick up as much, and leave it at that.

You ignore the pain between your legs and go back to the door.

"I'm ready now," you call out to Sven, your voice is far more quiet than usual.

He turns quickly, as if you startled him, and opens the door. You step out and he takes you by the arm, far more gently than the other guards.

You walk in silence, staring at the floor, until Sven speaks again.

"I'm not supposed to tell you this, but... three people were brought in last night. I think they are your friends."

You nod, but say nothing. You had suspected that three sleeping rebels wouldn't be a match for ten armed soldiers.

You are brought back down the many stairs into more lively parts of the palace, but you don't pay attention to your surroundings. You don't even realize you are being brought to the throne room until you're already there, but you aren't surprised either.

Sven leads you forward, toward the throne, but you don't look up at who is inevitably sitting there. When Sven bows, you curtsy, just because you don't want a spectacle made.

"Has she eaten?" Loki asks, his voice filling the room.

"A little, sir," Sven answers apologetically.
"Ah, well," the king sighs. "That is her choice. You are dismissed."

Sven bows again and his hand leaves your arm. His footsteps recede, and Loki's draw closer, down the steps of the dais.

"Come, pet. I wish to discuss things privately." Now Loki takes your arm, and you stiffen. Nevertheless, you let him guide you from the room.

You're nervous, but it's not like you are any safer anywhere else. Not when your friends are in the dungeons.

Loki takes you to a parlor you've never been in before. There's a big window overlooking the shady garden, which you put all of your attention on.

When Loki releases your arm, you simply remain standing in place, staring outside.

He closes the door and moves about the room. You hear the pouring of liquid, then the shuffling of fabric as he sits down.

There is a pause.

"Are you afraid?"

His voice is soft.

You say nothing, and try to move as little as possible in your spot.

"I won't kill you," he says, sipping whatever drink he has. There is the clink of porcelain. "Or your friends. At least not now. So don't worry."

You don't find that comforting at all. You try not to let your body tremble, knowing he's watching you closely.

Another pause. Longer, this time.

"Have I broken you? Your eyes are blank."

Again, he waits for your answer, and again you don't give it to him. You know you're not broken. You just need time to recalibrate.

"I apologize. That was not my intention." Another clink, and he takes another sip. "My intention was, however, to kill you. Despite how ridiculous it seems, I do want to avoid martyrdom, so I have a different fate in mind for you. Why don't you sit down and let me tell you about it?

You turn to him without meeting his eyes. He's sitting on an ornate sofa, sipping tea. Across from a little table is another sofa, to which you trudge over and sit down stiffly. You refuse to look at him, so you stare at the very edge of the table.

He doesn't seem to care. "Do you know what a consort is?" he asks.

You do know. "Some-" You clear your throat. "Someone who has no claim to the throne herself, but were she to bear you a child, that child would be acknowledged as your heir." Your voice is frailer than you would like.

"Very good," he praises you. "She would be officially acknowledged as my lover, but would not receive the status of queen. Do you know why I'm asking you this?"
You swallow, and nod, still not meeting his gaze. "Because you want to make me one of yours."

"Correct again. My first one, in fact." He pours himself more tea. "And do you know how the public might react, were I to announce this? Perhaps with a big ceremony, even."

"They would..." You have to think a moment. "They would think I was already pregnant with your child."

"And?" he prompts, dark thrill bleeding through his composure.

"And that you would want to keep it. To acknowledge it as yours." Your half empty stomach is knotting up with dread.

"That's right," he confirms, his voice singing like a knife's edge drawn through the air. "Do you think there would be anyone out there still willing to acknowledge you as a martyr, a symbol of resistance, after I make this announcement? Especially if you and I act happily in love at the celebration?"

You shake your head. It's a great plan, you have to admit that, but there is one thing in particular that makes you sick with apprehension. "And what then...?" you question, your voice raspy. "After... After nine moons have passed?"

"I've thought about that, too," he says, sounding like a teacher who was waiting for his student to ask the right question. "I'd need an heir then, wouldn't I, unless I wanted my deceit to be noticed?"

You nod, gripping at the skirt of your dress. You know where this is going. And you know you absolutely dread it.

"Well, you're right about that," he agrees. "I would need an heir, unless you both died during childbirth."

You are so shocked your head jerks up and you stare at him. He's leaning back, casually sipping on his tea as if he didn't just say that.

"Why me?" you ask, your voice high pitched and shrill. "Why not just the imaginary baby?"

Loki shrugs. "I'd think, at that point, you'd be quite willing to accept such mercy."

You can't believe this. You must be dreaming! "And... And then?" you ask desperately.

"Then I would be grief stricken and unwilling to take another consort, let alone a wife," he explains nonchalantly. "That way, I would have a few decades of peace without some meddling woman by my side, or the pressure to accept one. It would really only benefit me."

"Great," you scoff, glaring at him. "That's all anyone's here for, isn't it? Your benefit."

He smiles conceitedly. "Ah, there it is. A bit of your fire has returned."

You just glare at him further. "And what happens during those nine moons? I'm sure you're not planning on doing lovey-dovey stuff with me every day for the public. Especially since they'll notice at one point if I'm not pregnant."

"I've already thought of that," he says, putting his teacup down on the table. "You will stay out of the public eye due to frail health. As for what you will be doing during that time... Well, I actually have a gift for you." He opens his hand and in a shimmer of green light, something appears there. "Do you know what this is?"
At first, you don't. He's holding two pieces of metal, two half circles made of gold. It looks like someone spilt a large ring in half. A ring that would roughly fit around a person's neck... with white runes glittering all along the outside...

You gulp, feeling a rise of panic. "That's... That's a slave collar... I thought they were outlawed two kings ago!"

"They were," he confirms, smirking wickedly. "But who makes laws now?"

You don't answer, needing all your brainpower to think of how to get your way out of this one.

"Come here, pet," Loki beckons, still smirking.

You shake your head. "No. Please don't. I... You have my friends in your dungeons, isn't that enough leverage?" You sound desperate, but you really, really don't want to be collared.

"Yes, but this is a special one," he mockingly entices you, shaking it a bit as if to lure you. "You know you really don't have a choice here."

You shift back further on the sofa. "I know I don't, which is why this is completely unnecessary! I'll do whatever you say, anyway!"

"Getting you to do as I say is not the main function of this collar," he clarifies. "Come now. Do not make this difficult."

You know you have no choice. He has your friends, and even if he didn't, he could just overpower you. You get off the sofa and walk around the table, standing in front of him. He doesn't rise or make a move to reach up, and you realize what he wants you to do.

Gritting your teeth, you kneel down. Now he does move, bringing both halves of the collar around your neck after brushing your hair aside. They snap together, sealing by magic. He draws his hands away and the golden band rests heavily against your collarbones. You reach up and feel along it.

There is no seam or hinge where one might open it, but that isn't what worries you the most. There's a ring at the front, and you can only think of one function for that.

Loki looks down at you through hooded eyes, and you realize he has you exactly how he always wanted you. You jump up and return to your seat on the sofa.

"So this is it, huh?" you ask, your voice a little squeakier than normal. "You have me perfectly under your control, like you wanted from the beginning. Your name is carved into my chest, and if you wanted, you could lead me around on a leash."

Loki says nothing to that, but he does look satisfied. "Do you know what these collars were used for?" he asks.

You nod. You did learn about them in history class once. "They were used to punish slaves, as well as keep them confined to a perimeter. Basically like a training collar for dogs."

"Except this one is far more advanced," he adds. "Not only does it punish you for disobedience, it also sends suggestions to your brain that lower your defenses. I'm sure that is hard to imagine, so I will show you. I order you stand up."

Immediately, you feel energy emit from the collar. It feels like when you look at a cake through the window of a bakery, and although you can't even smell it, you know exactly how it would taste on your tongue. Just like that, you see yourself standing up in your mind's eye, as if it were your own
idea to do so.

You didn't plan on resisting, so you just stand up how you normally would on your own: without hesitating or thinking too much about it. You look at Loki, who gazes back at you with interest.

"Now, I'm going to give you another order, but this time, I want you to try resisting it," he continues. "Bow to me."

Again, the suggestion shoots into your mind immediately. Being emotionally drained and exhausted, you're halfway down bowing before you manage to think about resisting. There is absolutely no physical push coming from the collar, so you just straighten back up. That's when the discomfort sets in.

It's about as intense as if someone were dragging their nails down a chalkboard right beside your ear. Not unbearable, but definitely unpleasant. You realize the longer you remain upright, the worse it gets. It becomes someone invisible breathing on your neck. Someone dragging a knife down your spine. Someone plucking each individual hair from your head. Someone taking a needle and slowly jamming it beneath your fingernail.

At this point, all your resistance crumbles and you are almost happy to drop into a bow. Immediately, the sensation stops, and you are flooded with relief.

"Good," Loki says, and the collar returns to a regular piece of metal around your neck. You quickly straighten up and sit back down.

You are distraught. This is horrible. Anything he orders, you will have to do. There is no way you can dodge his commands.

You give him a nervous glance, and he smiles.

"Yes, this is quite the enchantment," he confirms. "I created it myself, just for you. You will be my servant for those nine moons. You will attend to me and fulfill my every order, but it isn't as bad as you might think. I have no interest in pursuing you sexually any longer. As I've said, I have already replaced you. You will be a regular servant, and you will live in the servants' quarters. Your friends will also receive the option to serve me instead of living in the dungeons, in which case they are allowed contact with you, but must wear similar collars. Does that sound agreeable?"

You nod. You had expected way worse. "And what happens to them after the nine moons?" you ask. That's the only part you're worried about.

"I'm getting to that." Loki leans forward on his sofa, his eyes on your neck. "I said before, this collar's purpose is not only your obedience. It has a primary purpose, which serves to benefit you. I have implemented a way for you to remove it, but certain conditions must be met."

Now you perk up. "How... How do I remove it?" You can't wait to be rid of this thing!

"You must look me in the eyes and tell me that you hate me, and it must be the truth. There cannot be a single scrap of love for me left in your heart."

You're floored. "That... That's easy! I hate you!" You reach up for the collar. It doesn't budge. "You're lying! It's not coming off!"

"Am I lying, pet?" Loki is suddenly right in front of you. "Or are you? I think a part of you still loves me. Perhaps a big part. What do you think, hm?"
He reaches out and touches your cheek. Immediately, your heartbeat quickens, and it's as if your treacherous organ wants to jump out of your chest and into Loki's hand. You realize with dismay that he's right.

"If you manage to get the collar off before the nine moons are over, I will set you and your friends free," he continues, drawing his hand away. "If not, you will all be killed."

You gulp. "So... So you'll try to make me love you and keep the collar from coming off?"

Loki stares down at you for a moment. "No. I will be doing the opposite."

You look up at him, confused. "What? So you'll be trying to make me hate you so the collar will come off? Why?"

"Because this is your true punishment, pet." His words have turned to ice. "I have erased the part of me that loved you, and I will do the same to the part of you that loves me. I will destroy our future. A future of happiness that you have forsaken. All that is in your future now, is death."

You're shaken. Absolutely horrified. He's going to take his kindness and the love you feel for it and murder them in front of your eyes. This is so, so much worse than you imagined. You can't win. He'll turn you bitter and cold, and if he doesn't manage to, he'll punish you by killing you.

"Loki, please," you croak.

His gaze is merciless. "I forbid you to speak my name. Address me by my royal titles, or call me 'master.' That is all."

You feel the collar respond. You don't care. "Ma- Loki!"

You feel a shock of pain, causing you to clutch at the collar in reflex.

"You will notice the pain you feel when disobeying me on something I told you not to do, is different than if you refuse something I did tell you to do," he explains. "That is because you cannot take back doing something you were not supposed to do, but when the opposite is the case, such strong pain might actually prevent you from following my order. It is all well thought out."

You don't give a damn about this stupid collar and its stupid rules. You just want it off! "Fuck you, Loki!" you yell, and once again feel as if your nerves are being told directly to produce as much pain as possible.

You scream and collapse onto your side, pulling hard at the collar.

"It's not coming off," he tells you pointlessly, and you know he's smirking.

"I hate you! I hate you!" You yell when the pain recedes, but nothing happens.

"Apparently not." He sounds greatly amused.

"Please," you sob. "Please, please, please take it off, your majesty."

You hadn't meant to say that last part, but the stupid collar made it slip out.

"As much as I like hearing you beg, I have things to do," he rejects you. "You may take your leave."

You don't move.
He sighs. "I order you to leave my presence. You will eat your food, and you will rest when you are permitted to. You will make sure you are as healthy as you can be with the resources provided."

You aren't sure, but you think Loki just said "take care of yourself" in the worst way possible. You don't care. You're glad to leave him. Still clutching at the collar, you hurry out of the room.

You're surprised to see Sven waiting for you. You thought Loki had dismissed him, but maybe they had discussed beforehand where he should return to.

"I'm supposed to bring you back to your cell," he says, already taking your arm.

You nod, walking willingly beside him. You are tired, hungry, and mentally completely drained. Even the tiny cell sounds good right about now.

Suddenly, there's a sharp pain in your neck and you jerk back, gasping out. Sven's hold breaks and he turns to you, eyes wide with worry.

"What's the matter?" he asks, looking you up and down to search for what might have hurt you.

"It's the collar," you explain. "I don't know why-" For the first time, you look around you, and realize you are at the mouth of a corridor you don't recognize. "Where are we going?"

Sven glances around him, but both intersecting hallways are momentarily deserted. "I'm taking you to see your friends. Come on, if we hurry, you'll be back in your cell before anyone gets suspicious."

Your heart beats in excitement. Your friends! You'll get to see them!

Before you can thank him, Sven grabs your arm again and pulls you forward. As soon as you take one step into the side corridor, another sharp jab of pain shoots through your neck and a little way down your spine.

You scream and jerk away, clutching at the collar until the echoes of the pain recede.

"What's happening?" Sven asks, sounding desperate. "Why can't you follow me? What's the collar doing?"

"It's a slave collar," you get out through clenched teeth. "It will hurt me if I go somewhere I'm not supposed to. I thought it would only prevent me from leaving the palace grounds, but apparently the only place I can go is my cell."

"A slave collar?" Sven steps back out of the corridor, shock on his face. "Did the king...? What did he do?"

"He just put the collar on me," you dismiss the question. "Can we please just go to my cell? He ordered me to rest and eat, and I can feel the collar getting impatient. ...I'm beginning to think he didn't even order you to take me back. The collar would have done the job for you."

Sven nods slowly. "He didn't." He takes your arm and leads you forward nonetheless, this time toward the stairs. "I can't believe this! A slave collar! Those are illegal for a reason!"

You don't say anything to that, finding his revelation to be obvious. Sven, however, keeps on talking.

"This is entirely wrong of him! Only a madman would think of such a thing! Taking your free will? Being able to control every aspect of you at any time? It's insanity!"
He shakes his head, clearly agitated.

"Yeah, I have yet to come to terms with it myself," you agree. "So far, he hasn't done anything bad. But he probably will. That much power... It's just not good. Still, don't try to attack him or something for my sake. It's not worth it."

Sven gives you a side glance. "Oh, I wasn't planning to."

You don't know if you should feel relieved or offended.

The cell is a welcome sight. The old tray has been cleared away and there is another one waiting for you. It only contains half a loaf of bread and a small amount of cheese, but all you care about is satiating your hunger. After that, you drop onto the mattress and fall asleep almost immediately, perhaps aided by the collar.

Your last thought before drifting off is that you are really glad to be in solitary confinement instead of the open cells of the dungeons.

You have exactly one dream in your hazy sleep. It is a dream you dreamt before.

You see Loki in his all black outfit again, holding a baby in a white nightgown. Just like before, you feel a desperate sense of needing to take the baby from him, to hold it and protect it.

You walk up to him, nervous that he will hold it out of your reach like before. To your surprise, he simply smiles and gives it to you.

You feel the weight of it in your arms, see its tiny fists closed tightly like its eyes. Your heart beats faster the longer you look at it, and you know that it is where it's supposed to be. You cradle it carefully against your chest, feel it stir slightly and snuggle up to the warmth of your skin. It is the most beautiful baby in the world. More beautiful than any you have ever seen, and far, far more precious to you. You know you will not let it go again.

You look up at Loki, fearing he may take it, but he simply stands there, smiling. He seems just as content as you are to let you hold the baby.

That's all the dream entails, or at least it's all you remember when you are startled awake by a knocking on your cell door.
Chapter 28

Chapter Notes

In which Loki continues being horrible and abusing his power.

I know this is hard, BUT Loki's initial anger will slowly subside over the next few chapters, making him a bit more bearable, and there is one super long and amazing chapter coming up that acts as a little relief from all the current tension!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

"The king invites you to dine with him," an unfamiliar male voice calls through the cell door. "You have three minutes to tidy up before you are taken to get cleaned and dressed."

You jump up from the mattress, heart pounding. Quickly, you do what you can to tidy both yourself and the cell up, before the guard opens the door and escorts you out.

You are brought to a communal washroom—thankfully empty—which doesn't have any hot water, but it does have soap, combs, and hairbrushes. You are given ten minutes to clean yourself, which makes it a rather hasty affair, but you are glad for it anyway. Set out for you is an off-white linen dress, like a servant might wear, clean cotton undergarments and simple leather slippers. Thankfully, the dress is modest, though it is cut low enough to leave the wounds on your chest visible.

Regarding yourself in the mirror, you look every bit like a slave, and not even a pleasure slave anymore. You think perhaps Loki means you to serve him during his dinner, but when you are brought to the dining room, there are indeed two sets of plates, and a servant is already present.

Loki is sitting at the head of the table, a feast laid out before him. Well, a feast for you, a regular meal for him. You've missed this so much over the past week, and you are pretty sure Loki knows this.

"Sit," he orders as soon as the guard has taken his leave.

The only other chair is at the opposite end of the table, so that is where you go. The servant pulls your chair out for you and scoots you back in. You wonder why Loki is treating you like royalty, but decide not to complain.

"There are a few details we must discuss about the event in which I will announce you as my consort," he says while the servant begins serving him food. You watch hungrily as meat and vegetables get piled onto his plate.

Loki pauses, looking at you as if waiting for a response. You leave him waiting.

"I can see you harbor quite hostile feelings toward me," he eventually remarks when the servant has finished with his plate. "Which is exactly why I've summoned you here."

You eagerly watch the servant come over to your plate and serve equally large helpings of everything for you. As soon as they are done, you grab your fork and look questioningly at Loki.

He looks weary. He looks like he hasn't slept for over a full day, which he probably hasn't, judging by the fact that he was awake when you came to him last night. His eyes are sunken and cast in
shadows. His lips are thin and slightly cracked, and he looks even paler than usual. You wonder how you didn't notice before, or if he had hidden himself behind an illusion.

"Eat," he finally says, and you dig in.

You shovel huge amounts of steamed vegetables into your mouth and ignore everything around you. Loki seems to watch you eat for a while, because when you look up next, he hasn't touched his own food.

"Do you find me appalling?" he asks then, his voice touching on helpless.

You pause, chewing, then swallow. "After what you did, yes."

"But you still love me?" He glances at the collar.

You keep eating, but slower this time. "...I think I just feel pity."

"Not love then, just pity," he repeats, as if trying to come to terms with it. "You realize you will have to be convincingly in love with me during the ceremony. We will have to kiss."

You nod, and just keep eating. "I'll do whatever you say. There is nothing I can do to prevent it anyway."

Loki looks disappointed, as if he had wanted to shock you with that statement.

"There is tension between us," he continues. "You won't be convincing if you behave like this. And I'm sure you know what will happen if you're not convincing."

You shrug, really not wanting to hear it. "I can imagine. What will you have me do, then?"

Loki's gaze bores into you for a few seconds. "Practice, until I deem it good enough. I have invited you to dinner as a sign of good will. A token of kindness to show you I am not as cruel as you think. But our familiarity is erased. You have torn a rift between us, and I doubt you can pretend it isn't there."

You shrug again, stuffing more food in your mouth. "Can you?"

He stares at you again. "I can. Deceit comes easily to me. But you are emotional and impulsive. You need practice. Kiss me."

You reel back in brief shock when you realize the collar has responded to that order. Glaring at him, you put your fork down and walk over to him.

"Where?" you grate out, hoping he will draw back the command and form it as a request.

"Kiss me in a way that has no one doubting that you are madly in love with me," he says breathlessly, his tongue licking over his chapped lips.

You give him a look of betrayal, tears springing to your eyes. Then, feeling the urging of the collar, you crack a mad smile.

"Ah- I love you so much!" You lean forward, taking his face in both hands, and touch your lips to his, squishing them together. You are seething on the inside, but you pretend like you are greatly enjoying this, opening your mouth and nipping at his lips.
Loki is still at first, but then he starts returning the kiss, pushing a hand into your hair and licking into your mouth. He tastes like wine.

You want nothing more than to draw away, but Loki's will, channeled by the collar, keeps you there as an unwilling participant. By the time he pulls away, you are shaking and crying.

"That will not do," he assesses immediately, frowning at your reaction. "Kiss me again."

Your eyes go wide. "No!"

His eyes narrow. "Yes. Kiss me."

You wince as soon as the collar becomes impatient, and lean in to kiss him again. The same thing happens as before: You cry, and Loki shoves his tongue into your mouth.

When he lets you pull away, there's a mad need in his eyes. "Again," he rasps.

It's pretty obvious now that he's no longer just practicing.

"You said you weren't interested in me sexually!" you protest. "Please stop!"

The discomfort emitting form the collar grows to a painful level.

"I'm not," he says and watches you grimace in pain. "But you will have to kiss me during the ceremony, so you may well practice now."

"Stop, stop, stop, please stop!" you beg, the painful sensation getting worse and worse. Still, you don't kiss him.

"I withdraw my order," he finally says, and the pain stops.

You gasp, breathing heavily, your head spinning.

"On your knees," Loki orders coldly.

You quickly do so.

"Press your face to the floor."

You do that as well, feeling the carpet against your forehead.

"Apologize for disobeying me."

You take a shuddering breath. "I... I'm sorry, my king."

"Now kiss my feet and thank me for my leniency."

Defeated, you crawl under the table and plant a quick kiss on the tip of his boots. "Thank you... for your leniency."

"Stay there. Keep your head bowed."

You freeze in place, your face barely hovering over his feet.

"Now tell me. Do you prefer kissing my lips or my boots?"

You pause, thinking. You don't know. You hate both equally. They are both humiliating and give
him satisfaction. "I'd rather kiss a dog," you growl, and spit onto his boot.

Loki jerks back, rising from his chair. "You will regret this," he hisses. "Lick it off."

You grit your teeth and resist his order. Quickly the discomfort rises to the level of getting your fingernails peeled off, but you still keep resisting. Then the pain rapidly shoots up, making you feel like your teeth are being pulled out one by one.

You scream and sob, lurching forward and licking your spit back off his boot. As soon as you've done so, he draws his foot away and plants his heel on your neck, pressing you into the carpet.

"I should let you sleep in the kennel with the dogs," he sneers.

"I'd love that," you say immediately, your voice muffled against the carpet.

There is silence for a moment, then the pressure lifts off you. You sit up, but before you can get off your knees, Loki has hooked a golden chain to the ring on your collar and is in the process of attaching it to the table leg.

"I have a better idea," he says icily, moving his chair back and sitting down on it. "If you love dogs so much, perhaps I should treat you like one. It is either that, or having you spend the night in a pit of snakes."

"I love snakes," you lie obviously, pretending to be unaffected by his threats.

"Of course you do," Loki says, his lips curling sardonically. "I would just love to give you some, right now. Oh, wait. I can."

And then he summons not just one snake, or even two. No, he summons a bucket, and that bucket is so full of snakes they fall over the brim and land on the carpet in front of you.

You scream louder than you have ever screamed before and try to get away as fast as possible, but all that happens is that you get jerked back by the chain on your collar. It gives you less than an arm's length of leeway, making it impossible to even stand up.

Loki laughs cruelly and starts upturning the bucket, pouring snake after snake onto the floor in front of you. They writhe about in a pile, slithering aimlessly around on the carpet.

You can't even scream anymore. Your vision is tunneled, and you're just sitting there, as far away as the chain allows, praying none of them have fangs and hoping none decide to slither in your direction.

Loki, of course, takes it upon himself to destroy that hope. He nudges the biggest pile of them toward you with his boot. You realize with paralyzing fear that some of them have started lashing out. They are obviously distraught, biting at each other and trying to get through the thick leather of Loki's boot. He just pushes them into your lap, and you sit so still you don't even dare to breathe.

The snakes are squirming around near your knees, and some begin moving onto your legs, or even trying to hide beneath the skirt of your dress. You feel the smooth scales brush against your skin, and you are hyper aware of everything they are doing. Loki is just a distant memory.

You feel the blood rushing in your ears, hear nothing else, see nothing but the snakes. Your heart is beating so fast it feels like it's about to give out, and you aren't sure if you're even still breathing. Alarms are running wild in your head, adrenaline everywhere with no place to go. You see yourself in the forest, feel the fangs in your arm and the venom in your bloodstream.
I'm dying, you think. I'm dying, I'm dying, I'm dying.

You want to scream, to cry, to call out for help, but your body isn't responding.

Suddenly, the snakes are gone. You feel someone touch you, wrap you in their arms. You don't want to be touched, you can't breathe, but you can't move to get away.

He whispers your name. And then he whispers false comforts in your ear.

"Hush now, darling," he breathes. "It's alright. You can't resist this. Struggling only makes it worse. Just obey me, alright? It's your own fault for disobeying me. If you didn't, you wouldn't be in this situation. Maybe if you're a good servant, I'll be nice to you. Oh, sweet thing, calm down. I'm not going to hurt you. It was just a little punishment. I know this is hard for you, but you're so strong. I know you. You won't give up now, hm? Take a deep breath, darling. There you go. You can do this. You're not going to break down here. What fun would that be? Come back now. That's it…"

You have drawn far into yourself, completely out of control. You know your eyes are open, but whatever it is you're seeing doesn't reach your brain. You can hear his voice, can feel him, but you don't know anymore if you're hallucinating or if this is real.

Clearly Loki is insane. Maybe you're insane. There were snakes... and a baby... Loki's baby... Was it real? No, it was a dream. You're marrying him... No, just his consort. And your friends are here. Somewhere. You haven't seen them. Did he kill them? No, he's going to. He's going to kill you and them if you don't get the collar off. You hate him. You have to. You have to hate him, but you don't. Can't. He wants to kill you. You're so scared. What is wrong with you; why don't you hate him?! Loki...

You focus on his face. He's looking at you. Loki?

He doesn't react. His fingers are tracing the wounds on your chest. Loki.

Why is he so horrible and so beautiful? Why do you like it when he touches you?

"Loki?"

Now he reacts. "Yes, pet?"

You have so many questions. You can't choose. "Why...?"

"Why, what, pet?"

"Why..." You think. "Why this?"

"This?" He repeats, prompting you to be more specific.

You try to think again. "Why you? Why... do you love me?"

He draws away, letting you slide off his lap and onto the floor. He silently gets up and walks away. You don't mind. You turn to your side and look at the table leg. The chain is gone.

Loki's got a thorn in his paw. Maybe you put it there, or maybe someone else did, but whenever it presses into him he seems to lash out at you. You wish you could just pull it out and send him on his way.

Slowly, you sit up. You thought Loki might have left the room, but he's standing by the window, staring out. Shakily, you stand up, steadying yourself on the table.
There's a carving knife on the meat platter. You reach for it, purposefully making it clatter. You don't turn back to see if Loki is watching you, you just trust that he is. Then you take the knife and lift it to your throat.

Immediately, your hand is yanked away, your wrist being squeezed until your fingers open and the knife falls to the floor. Loki is behind you, breathing heavily. He doesn't say anything and lets your wrist go.

You stoop down to pick up the knife again, but he steps on it. You scan the table for another one, and see one by Loki's plate. Before you can reach for it, Loki has both your hands pinned flat to the table, covered almost entirely by his own.

His chest is pressed against your back, and he's breathing heavily beside your ear. He doesn't say anything for a long while. Then, a single word.

"Don't."

He pulls away. You don't reach for the knife again. You weren't going to. You just wanted to see how he would react. Instead, you turn around and face him.

"It doesn't have to be like this," you say quietly.

Loki looks even more tired now. His eyes slide half shut, and he speaks without emotion. "The ceremony is already announced. You will become my consort in a week."

"A week?" you repeat, pondering. "Is that enough to plan a whole party? Don't I need a special dress made? Don't we need to decide how, where, and what we're gonna do?"

Loki's eyes open fully, and he looks at you for a long moment. "I was thinking of a feast. A ball going into the night. We met at a ball. You once said you wished to dance with me."

Your eyes go wide and you take back a step, bumping against the table edge. He had thought about this. Considered your request from a week ago. From the day you betrayed him.

"As for the collar..." He glances down at it. "I implemented only one way to remove it. Two, if you count severing your neck and sliding it off that way. It is up to you to remove it, if that is what you wish, but I can help you."

"You're going to help me sever my neck?" you ask, immediately going the darker route.

Loki stares at you as if he's trying to decide whether to take you seriously or not. "I will help you hate me. I will continue to be cold and cruel to you. It is clear your feelings for me are minimal. All we must do is find your breaking point."

You nod slowly. You suppose, if this is the only way, it might be a good thing to lose your last bit of love for him. "So I will still be required to serve you, then?"

"Yes," he confirms. "You and your associates have committed treason. I will try you and offer you the option to serve me. The nine months will be a trial period. Freedom is something I cannot promise you."

"But can you promise us our lives?" You pray silently for his answer. It comes after a moment.

"I suppose I can. After the nine months are over, if you all have served me well, I may permanently put you in my employ. That way, you will have a decent life whilst still serving the crown. For you I
might make a special case and offer you a higher position. The position I already had in mind for you when you started your training. My court spy. My hit woman."

Your eyes go even wider than when he said the thing about the dancing. "A spy? A hit woman? Like... breaking into people's houses, stealing their documents... killing them?"

A very slight smile appears on Loki's lips. "Not quite like that. You may need to steal things or kill people for me, but they will usually be those I invite to court. They might stay the night, and they might find themselves in the company of a seductive woman with a knife strapped to her leg."

It takes you a second to realize that he's talking about you. "Seductive?" you repeat.

He looks impassive again. "You can be, if you want to be. But you must go through a lot more training first. You will not merely seduce foolish lords. You would dispose of people I wish disposed of. Some who may be armed and quite intent on fighting back. You will kill them, but I think you might find you enjoy it."

You actually don't find the idea all too appalling. In fact, this is kind of what you were hoping for. This is how you wished to be when you first started training to be a rebel assassin.

"Aren't you afraid?" you ask, looking up at him through your lashes. "That if you train me, I will one day be stronger or better than you? That I will wield the means of which to kill you?"

"I have taken down foes ten times my strength," Loki says haughtily. "And seeing as you have already failed to kill me many times over, I doubt you have the conviction to do so now. You are the only person I trust for the job. Besides, you must first prove your loyalty by serving me those nine months."

"You trust me?" you repeat, your hands clutching at the table edge behind your back. "Even now?"

Loki moves a little closer, leaning over you. "As my lover? No. As my assassin? Yes."

"Why not as your lover?" you question immediately.

"I find the emotions you evoke in me loathsome," he says bluntly, a new glimmer in his eyes. "It is best if we keep them away, don't you think? After what happened?"

You find yourself nodding. Love makes you do stupid things.

Loki's fingers land on your chin, drawing your attention fully to him. "I want your heart to turn cold as the winter," he whispers, staring down at you with an intensity that might have once unnerved you. "I want it to turn to ice like mine has."


"A flame in a snowstorm," he says dismissively, but he draws his hand back. "Kindness? Surely not. All I do has an ulterior purpose. But I know how much you like to pretend."

He turns and walks back to the window. The sun has set outside.

"Maybe you pretend," you argue, going after him. "Pretend you don't still love me."

"Do not play with fire, my pet," he lectures, not sparing you a glance.

"It's painfully obvious," you decide to provoke him. "You say it almost every time you speak to me.
Without even using those three words. Your actions say it even louder.

Now he does look at you. You stare out the window, into the twilight, but you watch his reflection in the glass.

"My love can be even colder than my hatred," he says stiffly after a long pause.

You have to suppress a comical shiver. "Well, if you want my heart to turn to ice, then maybe you should give me some of it."

He keeps staring at you, then seems to make a decision. "You don't deserve it."

Chapter End Notes

"You don't deserve my love," he says, "But you should totally practice kissing me twenty more times."

Loki is so transparent smh
Chapter 29

Chapter Notes

The sexual tension grows

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

You sleep in your cell again, and your day begins the way you assume it would for a regular prisoner here. You are given your tray of food, a new set of clothes, and brought to the communal washroom. Thankfully, there are still no other prisoners around who you would have to share it with.

As soon as you are done getting ready, the guard informs you that you will be required to begin serving Loki today. You get handed over to him in front of a set of closed doors. He seemed to be waiting impatiently for you to arrive.

You bow, but say nothing. Emotional distance. That's what both of you are striving for.

"You will follow me as I attend to my royal duties and assist me wherever I require it," he says blankly, already reaching for the door handle.

You glance up at him, but can't think of anything to say except "Yes, my king."

He opens the door and you trail after him.

There is a large table in the center of the room, and every seat except one is taken by various people. They all rise as Loki enters, bowing briefly.

You spare them only a brief glance, not wishing to draw more attention to yourself than you would already receive. There are only two women compared to about a dozen men. They are all dressed in variants of a colorful, well decorated outfit signaling their nobility. Purples, reds, blues. No green. Gold trim, heavy necklaces, feathered hats that are removed in Loki's presence. Most have parchment, quills and inkwells before them.

Loki walks to the head of the table and stands beside his chair, glancing at you. You interpret a silent command from this glance and walk over to pull his chair out for him. He sits down now, sorting through his own stack of papers. Some are blank, some seem like documents. You stay by his chair, a little behind him and off to the right.

As soon as Loki is sitting, there is the scrape of chairs as everyone else sits, too.

He continues building suspense, until he finally looks up and speaks.

"In continuation of yesterday's meeting, the word is yours, Lord Nilsen."

One of the men, an older one with a wrinkling face, graying hair and a meticulously styled beard, begins to speak.

"My king, as presented yesterday, I am more than willing to supply the royal guard with refined steel for a handsome price."
His voice is surprisingly smooth and sharp. As are his irises, which seemed to have swallowed up his pupils in their pure blackness. As he speaks, they move often over to you, regarding you like a piece of furniture, then trailing back to Loki.

He draws on and on about steel production, how useful his forges are, how he could single handedly supply every guard and soldier in the kingdom with weapons. Occasionally, Loki interrupts to ask questions, which causes him to launch into another unnecessarily long answer.

You feel your eyelids drooping. His voice is so smooth and deep, and then there's the occasional rustle of paper, the scratching of quills on parchment, the crackling of the fireplace...

"My seal," Loki demands, holding his hand out toward you.

You jerk back to alertness and quickly look around for anything resembling a seal. Almost everyone's eyes are on you, except Loki's. He's signing some sort of document.

You see no seal on the table, but there is a small cabinet in the corner of the room. You go over to it, assuming that's where you'll find it.

"Top drawer," Loki supplies, knowing full well you have no idea where it is.

You quickly pull open the drawer and dig around between spare nibs, inkwells, and quills. You find several identical sealing stamps, the royal crest of Asgard indented in them, and sticks of sealing wax. You select a green one, assuming that is appropriate, and bring the two items back over to your king.

You place them in his palm, your fingers brushing against his skin. You aren't sure on etiquette, but you decide keeping your gaze lowered and staying silent makes you less noticeable.

Loki takes them, summoning a flame in his hand and melting the wax. He lets it drip down beside his signature, forming a little pool, then extinguishes the flame and presses the stamp into the wax.

He waits a while, then removes the stamp and hands it and the stick of wax back to you.

"Next time, bring the matches as well, won't you?" he says patronizingly.

You almost flinch from the embarrassment that shoots through you. Begrudgingly, you return the items to the drawer, using that time to compose yourself.

"She's still being trained, isn't she?" Lord Nilsen's voice cuts through the silence.

You turn and walk back to stand behind Loki, seeing those unnervingly black eyes on you.

"She has a debt to pay me," is all Loki answers. "Now, if I remember correctly, Vanaheim wishes to discuss new trade deals."

The room's attention turns to the two women, but the Lord's eyes remain on you. You look back at him, narrowing your eyes slightly. You don't like him staring at you.

He smiles when you meet his gaze. His eyes dip down to your cleavage and back up again. Or maybe he was looking at the name carved into your flesh? Or maybe your collar? Honestly, you can't tell, but you feel uneasy nonetheless.

The meeting draws on. You try to keep track, but all the technical terms and the stilted language quickly has you losing focus. Trade is discussed, political tensions, unhappy citizens.
Loki accepts or denies appeals as he sees fit, occasionally giving you curt, monosyllabic commands. He makes you walk back and forth between him and the cabinet, pass around documents to the attendees, or simply wipe his fingers when he gets ink on them.

It's not fun by a long shot, but you suppose you deserve this after all the times you tried to kill him. The thing that bothers you most is the Lord's attention on you, especially whenever you are asked to hand him something and he purposefully brushes his fingers against yours and smirks.

His demeanor reminds you of Loki's, but he's far older and far less stoic or subtle. Most of his reports are superficially disguised boasting.

Finally, after over two hours of standing around and fetching things, Loki draws the meeting to a close and dismisses the attendees. They all gather their things and shuffle out, bowing to Loki when they pass him. Only Lord Nilsen remains seated.

Loki pretends not to notice him, giving you his writing supplies to put away and rolling up his documents.

"An obedient slave you have there, your majesty," Nielsen finally speaks, causing you to freeze in your tracks.

"A slave?" Loki repeats, his voice light and disinterested. "You refer to my servant?"

You take your time putting away the ink and quill. You don't want to turn back and look at them.

"I know the collar she wears," Nilsen continues, his smirk audible in his voice. "I know what it is. There is no need to deceive me, your majesty, I will not tell."

"I know not where you get such an idea," Loki deflects, a hint of irritation in his voice. "The collar is symbolic of her debt to me. It is a reminder. It has no other purpose, and to imply such a thing is an insult to me, and to the crown."

Now you do turn back, wanting to see if the threat had any effect on Nilsen. He looks unfazed, smirking at you and the collar.

"I mean no offense," he drawls. "In fact, I would very much be interested in purchasing such a collar. Think of how much more efficiently I could produce weapons for you, my king." He gives a sly look over to Loki.

You realize with awe that both these men are equally devious and smooth with their words. This should be interesting.

"It is a decorative collar, nothing more," Loki states firmly, making the rolls of parchment disappear in green light. "If you wish to purchase one of your own, I recommend commissioning it at a jeweler's."

Nilsen only smirks wider. "I was there when these collars were still being used. Good times, good times. You needn't hide it from me, my king. It seems we are of a similar mindset. If you give me just one of these collars, I shall give you all my steel for free. How does that sound? Or perhaps a harem of beautiful women?"

Loki stands up, giving Nilsen a cold look. "Servant, come here and prove to him that you are not enthralled by your collar."

Quickly, you walk over to his side, feeling slightly nervous. "How should I do that, my king?"
"By letting Lord Nilsen give you an order and disobeying it."

"As much fun as that would be," Nielsen cuts in, still smiling, "I am aware that such collars can be made to only obey one master. Let her disobey one of your orders, your grace."

You can feel the resentment rolling off of Loki, but he keeps his composure. "I have nothing to prove to you, my lord Nilsen. My word is law. But, for the sake of diplomacy..."

Nilsen nods. "Yes, for diplomacy..."

Loki takes a deep breath. "Pet, disobey me on my next order to prove to the lord that there is no enchantment on the collar."

He pauses and you nod.

"Alright. I want you to go open the window for me."

He looks at you expectantly.

Your eyes go wide when you realize just how clever he is. I want you to go open the window is not an order. It's a simple statement of Loki's desires. Disobey me, however, is an order. You remain rooted to the spot. Of course, you could throw a wrench in Loki's plan, but you want Lord Nilsen off your back as much as he does. Still, you don't let the opportunity pass.

"Lord Nilsen, let me put your mind to rest," you say, turning to him. "King Loki is an arrogant fool. There, would a slave ever dare say that?"

Nilsen chuckles heartily, his eyes crinkling with amusement. "Thank you, my king. I am convinced. My apologies." He stands and bows, making for the door.

Loki grabs his arm before he can exit. "If I catch wind of anything remotely exploitative happening in your mines, you will sit in my dungeons," he hisses. "Now leave my sight so I may discipline my servant."

Nilsen stiffens up, briefly showing a flicker of fear. Then he puts that obnoxious smile back on, "Of course, my king," and hurries from the room.

Loki takes a deep breath as soon as the door has shut behind him, then slowly turns to you. He doesn't look relived or grateful, and you realize he just said he would discipline you.

"My king, I-" You hastily take a few steps back. "I really don't think a punishment is necessary here. I was helping you! I know I insulted you, but it worked! And I didn't really mean it—you know that, right?"

Loki groans and pinches the bridge of his nose. "I do not need you taking up Nilsen's bootlicking habit and fawning before me like some spineless whelp."

Damn. "My king, I have literally licked your boots before," you remind him. "If you have something against bootlicking, you should have said so."

Now Loki gives you such an astonished and disbelieving look, you almost laugh. Then, realizing it was a joke, he narrows his eyes and stalks toward you.

"You like licking my boots," he says matter-of-factly. "You like a lot of things that most women I've had don't like. I was thinking of giving you a couple lashes, but you just might enjoy that."
You back against the window, feeling flustered. "Please don't tell me you put this collar on me simply because it turns you on that I have to obey you."

Loki's eyes widen in shock at your audacity, which gives you a lot of satisfaction.

"I put the collar on you to show you that even when I let you out of your cell, you are still a prisoner," he clarifies stiffly. "Don't read anything into-"

You press your hand against his crotch, smiling triumphantly when you feel him hard. In a matter of seconds, your arm is twisted behind your back and your cheek is squished against the cold glass of the window.

"Ow!" you protest.

"You've grown awfully bold since I collared you," Loki hisses into your ear, his voice sending a shiver down your back.

You shrug. "I have nothing to lose anymore. There is no use in fighting you. You have me and those I love completely at your mercy. We could all die tomorrow, so I'm not going to spend my last day eating up your every lie."

He pushes you harder against the window, and you groan when you feel his crotch press against you. If the circumstances were different, he might take you right here against the window for everyone to see.

"You're aroused," he remarks.

"So are you!" You squirm against the uncomfortable grip he has on you.

"I didn't want this," he informs you, grinding himself against your rear. "And I do not intend on giving you what you want, either. Perhaps it's just my cock you want. Perhaps your lust keeps the collar around your neck. Either way, it is your fault."

"It's... not... my... fault!" you pant, partly from the effort to get free, partly from the fact that everything Loki does is madly arousing for some reason. "You put the collar on me!"

"Mm." Loki keeps grinding against you, seemingly purposefully riling you up. "Look how eager you are. Like a bitch in heat. You miss being my whore. You miss pleasuring me. This was never about love, was it?"

"Loki, no!" you gasp, then scream when the collar punishes you for speaking his name.

Loki draws away and lets you turn around. He's sneering down at you with disgust on his face. Your heart stutters.

"Well, you will get what you want," he says drily. "You'll be my consort. And my slave. Though I will not touch you again, you can pretend those words mean something."

You feel shocked and betrayed. Where did that come from? If he's so disgusted with you, why did he want you to serve him? Why was he even touching you? This isn't making sense!

You realize tears have filled your eyes, and you are ashamed that his words could hurt you. You turn your head away, trying to wipe at them so they don't stain your face.

"Are you weeping, little slave?" Loki taunts. "The truth hurts, does it not?"
Now, you're angry. Your gaze snaps back to his and you glare defiantly. "It's not the truth, and you know it!"

"So I am lying just to hurt you?" Loki's lips curl in a pitying smile. "And yet you still can't bring yourself to hate me. What a pathetic thing you are, so driven by lust."

It suddenly hits you. He did say he would help you get rid of the collar. He's trying to find a way to hurt you enough that it will come off.

"It's not just lust!" you snap. "And if you think some insults are enough to get me to stop caring for you, you're more stupid than I thought."

Loki's eyes go wide and you realize what you just said.

"I did not realize you were so protective of your love for me," he says softly.

"I- I'm not," you stammer, backing against the window again. "Maybe I just don't want to give you the satisfaction of taking it!"

"What would it take, I wonder?" he muses. "Should I torture you? Kill your friends?"

You hastily shake your head.

"No? Would you love me even then?" He purposefully misinterprets your denial. "That's the thing about this collar. I needn't have inhibitions about hurting you, because if you truly didn't want it, it would simply fall off."

You slide along the wall, backing further and further away. His words scare you. That's not how that works, is it?

Loki follows as you back away, albeit completely unhurriedly. "I already know you'd let me kill you, and I can even prove it. Stop breathing."

You freeze in horror, holding your breath. You know what will happen when you disobey. But nothing is as bad as the shock you feel in your heart when he says those two words.

"You see?" Loki says, wearing a conceited smile. "It hasn't fallen off yet, and you have mere minutes before you die."

You give him a pleading look. You don't want to be tortured by the collar, but you also don't want to die.

Loki watches you, letting the seconds pass. Just as you're about to take your chances with the pain, he speaks again.

"Breathe in."

You suck in a breath, but then you realize he never told you that you were allowed to breathe it back out.

He smirks. "Breathe out."

You release the breath again, feeling lightheaded.

"Breathe in again. Hold it."
You realize what a sick, sick game he's playing, and still, you obey. You hold your breath until Loki tells you to release it again, and as he continues to command you, you feel just how much power he has over you. He can control everything, down to your very breath. He makes you breathe like this, on his command, and you see just how much it thrills him by the sadistic look in his eyes.

A sense of calm floods you, and you realize it's because of the way he has you breathing. Deep, oxygen rich breaths. Inhale. Pause. Exhale. Pause. You let your eyes close and follow the rhythm on your own.

When you do, you feel Loki's fingers skim across your cheek.

"You may breathe freely again," he whispers against your ear.

You keep your eyes closed, but relax into your normal breathing rhythm.

His fingers skim up and through your hair, carding through it gently.

"You're mine," he whispers into your other ear. His hand slips down to your chest, stroking over the carved name. "Submit to my will."

Your eyes flutter open, gazing up at cold, green ones. Then you bow your head until your forehead rests against his chest. Both of Loki's hands move to cradle it, combing through your hair. You reach up and clutch at his lapels.

"Do you even want the collar to come off?" you whisper.

Loki laughs lightly, causing his chest to shake. "What I want is to hurt you until it does."

You lean your weight against him, turning your head to the side. Slowly, you wrap your arms around him and sigh.

Loki laughs again, still combing through your hair.

Feeling a heaviness settle over you, you slide down his body until you're kneeling on the floor, clutching at his leg like a lost child.

"I know it hurts," you whisper. "In your heart. But you can't get rid of pain by inflicting it on others."

Then you slide down lower until your face is touching his boot and you are prostrated before him in the ultimate gesture of submission.

"Is this your way of asking for mercy?" he inquires, his voice is soft.

You shake your head, remaining in position. "It is my way of showing you that you have everything you want. The throne. Me, bowing at your feet. An entire realm at your command. But it's not enough, is it? You want more."

You press a kiss to his boot. Then you move higher, peppering kisses across the leather up to his knee, looking up at him. His pupils are dilated, his lips cracked open.

"What do you want, my king?" you breathe. "Do you want sex? Any woman in the realm is at your disposal. Every man, too. You have endless riches." You slowly rise up on your knees, kissing up his thigh. "Do you want love and adoration? Do you crave it? Get a woman. Let her give you a child. My king, you have everything you've ever wanted." Your lips reach his hip and you hear the inhale of breath. See the bulging desire in his trousers. "But you're not happy, are you?" you
whisper, kissing him just beside it. "You have everything you want, and yet you feel so empty. You tossed away the family you had, thinking you did not need it. Tossed away your heart, because you did not want it. Tossed away trust, and kindness. Forgiveness. You hollowed yourself out from the inside, filled yourself with greed and lust."

You lick along the length of his erection through the leather, hear his breath stutter. "You want me at your feet."

You start sucking at the leather.

"You want everyone at your feet. But, my king—" You grasp it in your hand, squeezing lightly. "—who then will be left to stand by your side?"

You pull your head back, gazing up at him. His eyes are spewing pure lust.

"I suppose..." He gives you a teasing smile. "...you want it to be you?"

"I'm the only one you have," you answer decisively, slowly rising until you're standing before him.

"I liked that little performance," he says mockingly. "If you truly wish to stand by my side, you should continue it."

"You want me to suck your cock?" you ask bluntly, looking him undauntedly in the eyes.

His smile grows wider. "Yes."

"And here I thought you found me repulsive," you retort, rubbing your palm against his crotch.

"You are repulsive," he drawls. "But your mouth is useful for one thing. Don't you want to be useful?"

You scoff. "Look, you're clearly still into me, so how about you stop pretending otherwise?"

"I could say the same about you." He's still smiling impishly. "Now, if you aren't going to do this willingly, I order you to-"

"No!" You draw back and clamp your hands over your ears. If you can't hear him, he can't order you, right?

You see Loki laugh. Then his lips move, and he tilts his head, awaiting an answer.

You lower your hands. "What?"

"I asked if you are aware that your adorable little efforts to gain control are entirely futile," he repeats.

"I'm not trying to control you," you huff.

"No? So you were not attempting to arouse me to a point where I would give into your demands?"

"I'm not making demands!" you insist. "I just want you to be honest with yourself!"

"You're asking the God of Lies to be honest?" It's clear he isn't taking this seriously. "What does that make you? Goddess of Fools?"

You glare at him. "You're the one being foolish! You-"
"Shh," Loki cuts you off. "You talk too much, and the grate of your voice is starting to annoy me. Go kneel down and show me what your mouth is better used for."

You feel like he just slapped you in the face. Completely shocked, you kneel down, trying to find your words.

"You- You absolute-!" Before you can think of a fitting insult, Loki has already unlaced his pants and shoved his cock into your mouth.

You go very still, feeling it glide over your tongue.

"Suck me," he orders, his gaze completely compassionless.

You don't, but you don't pull away either. You feel him prod at the back of your throat, feel the discomfort rise from the collar.

Now Loki looks annoyed. "Obey before the collar hurts you and you accidentally clamp your teeth down," he warns.

You gaze up at him, smiling slowly around his shaft.

He jerks out of your mouth so quickly you have to laugh. Now the collar is starting to hurt you, and you pointedly close your teeth as you try to breathe through it.

"I withdraw my order," Loki says mercifully.

There is silence, in which you remain kneeling on the floor, and Loki seems to be battling between lust and irritation.

"I should whip you for this," he finally decides, tucking his still half erect cock away. "Drop down to your hands and knees."

You do as he says, and he walks behind you, lifting your skirts up and pulling down your panties.

There is silence again, and then you feel the bite of a riding crop across your ass.

You suck in a sharp breath, the sting quite a lot harsher than anything else he's done to you. You feel as though he's already left a mark across your skin.

He brings it down again, and you jolt forward a little. It's less arousing and more actual pain. You have to bite your lip to keep from whimpering.

The next few blows come in quick succession, and your arms buckle. Your eyes fill with tears and you make various pitiful noises of pain.

There is a pause, and then Loki speaks. "This is real pain. How does it feel? Clearly not too bad, otherwise the collar would come off. Are you aroused? Do you like this?"

You shake your head, feeling his cool hand smooth over your abused skin. Then his hand dips between your legs, two fingers sinking into you without warning. They slide in with little resistance, and you gasp.

"Hm, you seem to like it," he notes, rubbing against that spot inside you that has you trembling with pleasure. "Do you want more?"

"N-No!" you protest, but the crop cracks back down on you, causing you to clench around his fingers.
"Look at how you squeeze me," he purrs. "Do you think you're going to cum if I continue flogging you?"

"No!" you say again, resting on your elbows, your body shaking with silent sobs, pain, and pleasure alike. He's stroking your insides so maddeningly slow that you know you couldn't cum from it, but every time the searing pain erupts under the crop, you feel as though the heat travels straight to your clit.

He keeps lashing you, slowly, rhythmically, stroking your pleasure spot until you have completely soaked his hand. You want to buck against him, ride his hand until you come undone, but your pride and dignity fight against that urge.

"Come on, pet," he coos. "I know you want to."

He hits you so hard you fall forward onto your face, but through the intense pain you feel something. Slowly, you rock back against him, and he whacks the crop lightly across your thighs. You wish he would touch your clit—maybe then you could cum, but what he's doing isn't enough.

"What do you want, pet?" Loki asks, as if sensing your need.

You say nothing, just clenching down around his fingers and trying to build up some sort of pleasure.

"Just ask for it and you will have it," he beguiled you, still lightly smacking the crop against untouched skin.

You hate being weak like this, wanting his touch, knowing how desperate your body is for him.

"Please," you pant, not caring that you're begging. "My... My clit."

Loki's fingers withdraw from you and you're humping empty air. The crop stills as well. "You want me to hit you there?" he asks innocently, and you nod before fully realizing what you just agreed to. "Are you going to cum if I do?"

"I-" You are so desperate now, even the idea of getting smacked on your most sensitive parts doesn't sound so horrible. "Y-yes..."

"Then cum, pet." And he hits you.

Your eyes go wide and your fingers curl into the carpet. There's a stinging pain, and then—ecstasy. Your legs tremble as your orgasm crashes down on you, shaking and shaking until the hot waves of pleasure finally subside. You're left with a dull throb, and the burning skin of your ass and legs.

"Wasn't that fun?" Loki asks, pulling your panties up and smoothing down your skirt. You still feel the throb of desire in your core and the burning pain everywhere else. You don't even fully comprehend what just happened, or why, but you know that Loki made you cum. You also know that you want him inside you, need him inside you.

"My king," you mumble, still with your elbows on the floor and your ass in the air. "Please..."

"Please what, little slave?" He asks, and you see him walk around you.

You lift your head to look up at him. "Please fuck me!"

The end of the crop lands under your chin, tilting your head up further so he can gaze at you. "Tsk.
I'm sorry, sweet thing, but you really have to decide." His lips curl into a pitying frown. "Are you trying to hold your head high and lecture me, or do you rather want to be on all fours with my cock inside you? You can only have one; you know that."

Desire throbs through you, but you also realize submitting will gain you nothing. He might still decide he doesn't want you and toss you away. And what you want isn't just his cock, it's all of him. His love, his wit, his kindness. His vulnerability, his pain, his mischief. You want to break down the walls again, and the only time you ever achieved that, was when you fought back.

So, you stand up and yank the riding crop from his grasp. "You know who I am, you know that I care for you, and you know that I will always lecture you about what is best for you. I'm not your sex slave, idiot king. I am someone who has seen you kind, and who has seen you cruel, and who still believe in you. I know you're just pretending most of the time, because it's easier to hate than to love, easier to build walls than to be vulnerable, easier to be the God of Mischief than a broken soul."

Loki stares at you with wide eyes. Then his gaze darkens and his lips turn into a sneer. "Are you expecting such sentiment to affect me?"

"Yes!" you practically shout. "You're not the heartless villain you pretend to be, you're just a weeping child! Mommy and daddy didn't love you enough, did they? –and so you took to hurting people, because that got you the attention you craved!"

Loki actually takes a step away from you as you begin to gesticulate with the crop, his eyes widened in disbelief.

"You hurt people," you shout at him, "and you pretend it doesn't affect you, that it doesn't matter, but really, it does, and you end up hurting yourself along with them! You shouldn't live like this! Eventually, there'll be no one left to hurt, because everyone who loved you will have given up on you, and you'll be alone with your destruction. You'll sit there, and you'll be alone on your pile of gold and carnage, and you'll realize it wasn't worth it. Or maybe they'll make you pay, they'll get you one day, and then you'll never see the sun again, and you'll die alone and forgotten, swimming in your own bitterness. No one will cry for you. No one will hold your hand as you walk to the gallows. Mischief is for children. Grow up!"

You realize you're shaking, your face flushed and stained with tears. Your knuckles are clenched so hard around the crop, it takes you a while to relax them. To catch your breath.

Loki does look like a child in that moment. Eyes wide, head ducked, the pure, unmistakable guilt in his expression. He says your name, and his voice shakes.

"Loki," you whisper back at him, and then you cringe as pain shoots into your neck.

"It's okay," you say. "It's okay."

Loki's eyes move to the collar, then to the crop, the wounds on your chest, and finally, your eyes. His face goes slack.

"Of course it's okay," he agrees, sounding numb. "If it wasn't okay, the collar would have come off. You love me, and really, that's sweet, but you cannot change me. I want to hurt you. I like it. I like seeing you writhe in pain, your eyes wide and full of tears. I like hearing you beg for me to stop, knowing I will not. This is not merely revenge. I like hurting you, and I like comforting you afterwards. You are a sweet, sweet thing, my pet. So sweet when you cry, so sweet when you smile. Hurting you is a delicious pleasure. Even more so knowing you love me despite it. That is why you have the collar. It is a choice, pet. Love me, even as I continue hurting you. Love me, as I am myself.
with you. Or don't. If you cannot bear it, I will let you free. What I want is the truth. Do you love me? Or do you love the idea of saving me from my own darkness?"

Chapter End Notes

These two horny beasts can't keep their hands off each other no matter how much they hate it. Let's see how far this unfulfilled desire will stretch before it snaps. ;)}
Flanked by guards, you walk across the polished marble floor. You're not in chains, but your friends are.

In front of you, Mat, walking with his head held high, defiance in his posture, never once looking at you.

Further down is Lee, back hunched, glancing about nervously, turning his head over his shoulder every ten seconds to give you a wide eyed look full of questions.

Rika is at the front, her red hair tangled, her gaze lowered to the floor in silent resentment. She looked at you once, a look that told you everything at once and nothing at all.

You keep your face blank. The collar around your neck is obvious, the name across your chest even more so. There's no point in denying it was you who betrayed them.

He's practically lounging on his throne. He looks so relaxed and comfortable there. You meet his gaze as the guards line the four of you up in front of him. He looks away first.

Chains clink and you're all pushed down to your knees. There are other people present. Maybe officials and judges, maybe just spectators.

He says your name, and then "Step forth."

You're surprised, but you rise and walk toward him. He avoids your gaze.

"Stand beside me."

You climb up the steps and awkwardly place yourself beside the throne. You turn and look down at your kneeling friends. They're all staring up at you.

"This is a complicated matter," Loki begins. "Four assassins, one of which seems to know not whose side she is on. She is the most dangerous of the group. She has made attempts on my life far more than the others, but she is the one who spared me every time, the one who ran back to me, unarmed, hoping I would give her audience. It seems, the assassin, although being what she is, wishes to serve the crown instead of the rebellion. I've had an influence on her. Changed her mind for the better. Now, although her loyalty is still in question, I suggest this one be exempt from the trial until I've decided she is unsuitable. I do, however, see potential in her service to the crown, and to Asgard. Consider her under my supervision."

There is a murmur of consent among the onlookers. You assume now they are some sort of jury.

You are flattered he's excluding you from consideration toward the dungeons or an execution, but
you're still worried about the fate of your three friends.

Loki looks satisfied and nods to a grey haired man in purple robes.

"Let the trail begin."

Loki holds his hand out and he comes over to hand him a scroll. It's unfurled, and he reads it aloud.

"Frederikke, Leander, Matej, you are all charged with the attempted assassination of my Majesty, treason to Asgard and its King, and the attempt to incite rebellion. I, as the affronted person and Allfather of Asgard, sentence you to...

He looks over at you.

"...under the premise that I have your cooperation, a choice between the dungeons or eternal servitude."

"No execution?" someone from the jury asks. "An attack on your life should be paid for accordingly, your grace!"

"Shush," Loki waves them off. "Although an execution is customary, I feel that their usefulness outweighs the need for punishment. Such loyalty cannot be bought. I am quite sure any one of them would obey my every will for the sake of the others. They may even be willing to die for me, should I spare the others."

There's another murmur in the jury, and you see your friends exchange shocked glances. You, too, are shocked. So Loki isn't sparing you from the goodness of his heart, he simply wants four complacent slaves.

Slowly, Loki rises from the throne and descends the steps toward your friends, his cape trailing behind him. "You may rise."

They all stand up and quickly step back the closer Loki comes.

He zones in on Rika first. He steps in front of her, coming far too close, knowing she can't back away any further due to the guard behind her.

"You have a choice to make, girl," he tells her. "The dungeons, or service. What will it-"

As he talks, he reaches up to touch Rika's face, but she doesn't let it get that far.

"Don't touch me!" she yells so loudly, that Loki is the one who flinches back.

There is a stunned silence, and you are genuinely impressed. Maybe she should have been the one to assassinate Loki.

Loki recovers quickly, stalking closer again, but not making another attempt at contact. "A fiery one, I see, but even you can be tamed. You care dearly for her, do you not?" he speaks in a low, dangerous voice. "You would love to serve me in exchange for being close to her. Would love to soothe her wounds after I've inflicted them on her."

You can't see Rika's face, but you know she is fuming.

"I'll do whatever it takes," she hisses. "Even serving you."

"Good girl," Loki praises mockingly. "Then show me your submission and swear your servitude."
Rika doesn't even hesitate. "I swear my eternal servitude to you, my king," she says and curtsies deeply.

Loki lingers a moment longer before her, no doubt gloating, before moving on to Lee, who visibly ducks his head as soon as Loki's gaze lands on him.

"Now you," Loki continues. "You seem like a sensible boy."

To your surprise, Loki does the same thing he tried with Rika. He reaches up and strokes over Lee's cheek.

"You'll serve me, no?" he murmurs.

"I- I also swear my servitude, your majesty," Lee stammers immediately, trying to bow as best he can with Loki right in front of him.

"Good boy," Loki praises and pats him on the head. As soon as he steps away again, you see that Lee's face is beet red.

He goes over to Mat, who is giving him a death glare.

"You seem... less sensible," he assesses.

"I'll rip your spine out," Mat snarls and spits at him.

Loki stiffens, but the guards are already in the process of dragging Mat several steps away.

"Ah, the dungeons for you, then," Loki says calmly, waving his hand to no doubt clear the spit away. "And perhaps a few... disciplinary measures."

You don't like the sound of that, but Mat isn't exactly helping his case. He continues hurling insults at Loki as the guards drag him away.

As soon as he's out of the room, Loki turns to the jury. "My sentence is proclaimed. You are dismissed."

There is more murmuring, but most look pretty satisfied. Taking their time, they begin to file out of the room.

Now Loki looks back to you, where you're still standing by the throne. Something appears in his hand, and he silently motions you to approach him.

You descend the steps again, and soon you can see what he's holding. Four half-rings of grey steel.

He smiles when he sees the realization on your face. "I thought you should do the honor."

You simply nod and take them from him. He steps aside, and now you are face to face with your friends.

Rika and Lee give you uneasy, questioning looks, glancing between the collars and your face.

"These are necessary..." you hedge. "They are collars that make sure you don't run away or anything. See, I have one of my own."

You are nervous. What if they try to resist?
"Yours is golden," Lee remarks.

"Mine is special," you deflect. "I think these... are just normal?"

You glance over your shoulder at Loki. He's smiling with amusement, but gives you a nod.

You turn back to your friends. "Yeah. I'll just have to put them on you, okay?"

Lee nods.

Rika glances at them doubtfully. "They can be taken back off, right? I've heard of these things."

Again, you shoot Loki a questioning look. He's still smiling, and again simply nods.

"They can," you say with relief. "But, uhm, it is eternal servitude, right?"

Loki's eyes crinkle in amusement and his chest shakes briefly in a silent laugh. You realize he's enjoying your struggle far too much.

Embarrassed, you turn to your friends and step up to Lee. You lift two of the halves to his neck and snap them together. He stays still for you, looking at you out of wide brown eyes. You realize these collars have no ring at the front, which is probably a good sign.

Next, you go to Rika, but she looks far more uneasy. Still, she lets you collar her, despite giving you betrayed and disappointed looks the entire time.

You step away from them, glad there were no further complications. Lee is fiddling with his collar.

"Uhm, I have a question," he says timidly, meeting your eyes. "Can you, uhm, ask him what kind of jobs we'll be doing, because I don't-"

Now Loki laughs audibly, causing Lee to flush with embarrassment and drop his gaze.

"You're afraid of speaking to me directly?" he taunts, taking a step toward him.

Lee flinches backwards, crashing against the chest of the guard behind him, which fuels his fear even further.

As Loki laughs, Rika steps in between them, giving Loki an angry look.

"It doesn't do well for a king to taunt the only person who would serve him out of good will," she hisses. "While I serve you out of necessity alone, Lee is actually trying to please you. He's a better person than any of us, and he's kind to almost everyone, even those who don't deserve it. That means you." She juts her finger out at him. "If you do anything to hurt him, I will make you pay in full, and I think I'll even get help from your little canary."

Loki looks to you, a conceited grin on his face, and you realize you were meant by that.

"Yes, please don't hurt Lee," you agree. "He really doesn't deserve it."

Lee looks even more embarrassed now. "Guys, you don't need to- I can handle myself! I'm not that helpless!"

"You have wonderful friends," Loki purrs. "I think we're going to have a lot of fun over the next few months. I'm glad you three will be serving me."
His gaze wanders over Rika, who is still glaring at him, and Lee, who shrinks under his attention.

"Now, you shall be brought to the servants' quarters, where you will be residing, and I will have a private discussion with each of you," he continues. "Well, two of you. I already know everything about one of you." He flashes you a grin. "Most servants will be out at the moment, but you shall meet them in time. Men and women are housed separately, so I am regretful to inform you two ladies, but your male friend may only see you during work hours. You may catch up during meals. Your other friend, however, will remain in the dungeons until he's decided to be agreeable."

"That could take a while," Rika supplies.

Loki smiles at her. "I can't wait to crack you all open. Now, come along."

He doesn't wait for a response before heading toward the exit. Out of the six remaining guards, three begin to usher you and your friends after him.

***

The servant's chambers are indeed deserted. They consist of a long room with rows of neatly made beds, and a big washroom, as well as little cubbies for every servant's belongings along the wall. The men's quarters look the same, but mirrored on the other side of the hallway. Apparently there is also a big dining hall for the serving staff next to the kitchens, but you aren't shown it. Instead, Rika and you sit down on a random bed as Loki and a guard drag Lee away for their private talk. Two guards remain by the door, making sure you don't try anything while you wait for him to return.

It's awkward being alone with Rika. You haven't had a chance to talk to her since your betrayal. There is so much to say, and so little you can say to make it better.

It turns out, Rika is the one who speaks first. She touches your arm and gives you a gentle look.

"I get now how much you love him," she says. "You'd do anything for him, even running by foot to the palace at night just to see him. Even telling him about us. And I saw the way he looks at you. It's clear he loves you just as much."

Your eyes go wide and you open your mouth to say something, but she continues.

"I accept it, now, mús. I did some thinking in the dungeons, and I guess I can't change your feelings. It's better you be with him, than for him to hurt you and cast you out. It would be selfish of me to wish that. I'm still hoping you will someday realize you deserve so much better than him, but until then, I'll just be glad all of us are alive and somewhat well."

She looks down at your chest, where the slowly healing wounds spell out his name.

"Oh, Rika," you sigh and hug her. "I- I'm so sorry."

She hugs you back and rests her head on your shoulder. "It's okay. We do stupid things for love. And you did convince him to spare us."

"I- I didn't convince him," you contradict, feeling tears well up in your eyes.

She pats your back. "I don't believe that for one second. I know you did this."

She's somewhat right, but... you still feel guilty. It's not like you threw yourself selflessly at his feet and pleaded for their lives.
"Rika, I didn't betray you," you say, your voice more whiny than you would like. "He read my memories and that's how he figured it out. I wouldn't have- I wouldn't have told him. He was acting like a madman and tried to kill me, but I wouldn't have betrayed you."

"It's okay," she assures you, stroking over your back. "I don't care what happened, or who said what. I'm sad he tried to kill you, and I'm sad you still love him, but it's that love that has kept us alive, and so I won't question it. I accept it. But, if he hurts any one of us, I will not only kill him, but I will make him pay for everything he has done to you and the rest of us."

You nod and pull out of her embrace. "That's fair. But maybe you shouldn't rely on me to help you, because this collar forces me to obey him. It's powerful magic."

"Wait, you have to obey him against your will?" she repeats, reaching out to touch your collar. "I thought these things just keep you within bounds and allow the overseer to shock you when you disobey."

You nod. "They do. Mine is like that, except... automatic? He just has to say something like 'sit down' and the collar will immediately begin 'persuading' me to sit down. If he ever says something remotely like an order, even if it's 'kill your friends', my choices are between excruciating pain and obeying. And I don't know how long I'd be able to withstand such pain. What if I black out and really do start to attack you?"

Rika clasps her hands over her mouth in shock. "I... I did not know that. Oh no. S-so, if he said to... to get in bed with him..."

"I would have to do it, yes," you agree glumly. "But, he hasn't so far. He said he wasn't interested in having sex with me. He just wants me to serve him and torment me while I'm at it."

You won't mention the kissing or the whipping, or the fact that you may have liked it.

"I'll hold him to that," Rika decides.

"The most obnoxious thing is actually that he forbade me to speak his name," you add. "If I do it, the collar punishes me, even if he isn't here. Want to see?"

Rika's eyes widen. "No! Don't hurt yourself!"

You laugh. "I'm joking. I've done it enough times that my brain has been conditioned against it."

"That's horrible!" Rika gasps. "Don't joke about that!"

You're about to apologize, when footsteps come down the hall. The both of you get up, watching through the door frame as Lee returns with his guard and a bundle of clothes. He gives you a weak smile and a nod, then walks into the men's quarters.

The guard who accompanied him positions himself by his door, and nods to the two guards at your door. One of them turns to Rika.

"You're next, red," he says, and beckons for her to come.

Rika gives you a weary look, and follows him out.

Now that you're alone, you're a bit more restless. You pace about, trying to get glimpses of Lee, but he's probably busy getting settled. You wish you knew what Loki said to him. What he's telling Rika. You're not used to being left out. Normally, he's paying attention to you.
By the time she comes back, you have gotten so impatient you jump up immediately and assault her with questions.

"What did he say? Did he threaten you? Is it my turn now? Does he want to see me?"

Rika is also carrying a bundle of clothes, and she gives you an exhausted look. "No, he did not threaten me. He said if I don't give him trouble, he won't give me trouble. Then I said if he doesn't give you trouble, I won't give him trouble, and he laughed. That was the gist of it." She looks back at the guards. "And no, he didn't say he wanted to see you."

"What?!" You march up to the guards. "But I want to talk to him! Don't I need clothes as well?"

One of the guards glances at you. "The clothes are in a supply closet down the hall. I can bring you there, but the king did not specifically request that."

"Please, can you take me to him?" you beg. "I also have questions! I don't know what's going on!"

The guard sighs and steps aside, motion for you to follow. "Come along, then."

Rika gives you a doubtful shake of her head, but you follow the guard.

He brings you along the hall, into the nearest parlor, where you see Loki standing by the window, looking out. He turns as you approach, giving you a mildly surprised look.

"Your majesty." The guard bows. "This one requested an audience as well."

Loki sighs and strides over to you. "If she insists."

He waves you in and closes the door behind you.

Your heart is beating a little faster, now that you're alone with him, and you need a moment to find your words.

"What did you talk to them about?" you cut straight to the chase. "They won't have to... you know... serve you the way I served you, right?"

He raises a brow, still standing by the door. "You mean have sex with me? No. Only if they wish it."

You give off a relieved laugh. "Okay, so not at all."

Loki gives you a cryptic look. "Hm, I did not get that impression from one of them."

Your jaw drops open. "What?! Which one...? What? You're not having sex with my friends! Rika would never- Look, just because she's fiery, doesn't mean she's into you. You just think that, because you like to conquer."

"I'm not talking about Frederikke," Loki interrupts calmly. "Perhaps you do not know your friends as well as you thought."

You physically take a step back. "Wha- No! Lee would- No! He- You are not having sex with him! What the Hel?!!"

"Calm yourself," Loki warns. "That is between him and I. I assure you, we had nothing but a civil discussion. It took him a while to overcome his nerves, but then he opened up to me. He assured me he would cause no trouble, and that he'd do all in his power to please me."
"Please you?!!" you splutter, your voice shrill. "You are not going to take advantage of him, alright?!
He might think you're great, but that doesn't count as consent!"

Loki chuckles coldly. "Funny, coming from you, is it not? Did you not go the very same path? And
look at you now. So happy, under my heel. Or could it be, you are simply jealous? My little pet, you
can't stand my attention being on someone else, can you?"

You stare at him, opening your mouth to speak, but no words come out. You close it again, then
open it once more, but still, you don't know what to say. You can't argue with the truth.

He saunters over to you, cupping your cheek in his hand. "Sweet thing, I know you crave me. Your
heart pounds at the sight of me. Your blood heats. You limbs tremble, and you feel as though my
attention is the most intoxicating drug. You are addicted to me. You have been, for a long time, but
you only truly notice when I'm not there to give you that little rush of excitement."

He flicks against your chest, and you take a shaking breath. Your face is hot, your heart is indeed
pounding, and your limbs are trembling with excitement, just as he said. Simply staring into his eyes,
you are lost to the thrill. You breathe it, deeply, let it fill every fiber of your being. It's dizzying. You
wish to drink it, to drink him. To touch him. To feel the smoothness of his skin. To taste his saliva in
your mouth. The saltiness of his skin. Your hormones are going wild. You want him inside you.
Locked there in heat, never apart. You want to press so close to him your skin melts together until it
is inseparable. You want... You want him inside you, forever, a piece of him, you want...

Trembling, you pull away from him and turn to the window. You pull it open, letting the fresh air hit
your skin. You breathe it deeply, let it cool you. You've never experienced a surge of hormones such
as this one, and you are pretty sure you don't like this.

You can still smell him, even against the outside air. His presence is overpowering, and you breathe
it deeply. You feel as though a string is tied around your belly, dragging you toward him. Though
you physically do not move away from the window, you feel as though you're already diving into
him and drowning there.

When he steps up behind you and wraps his arm around your midsection to pull you against him,
you practically scream and try to squirm away. He chuckles lowly in your ear and squishes you
against the windowsill with his body. You fall forward, your fingers clutching at the edge of the sill,
your eye moving to the gravel path right below. Thankfully, you are on the bottom floor, and falling
out would be an insignificant tumble.

"Our ceremony is in a few days," he purrs. "We still have to prepare. Are you willing to kiss me,
now?"

You take a few gasping breaths, trying to stay calm. You can feel your nipples straining against the
fabric of your dress, and are glad Loki can't see them.

"That depends on the kind of kiss," you quip shakily. "I assume it's improper to do anything but a
quick peck on the lips. That, I can do."

"Of course," Loki agrees, wrapping his other arm around you as well.

To your dismay, he seeks out your breasts and pinches at your nipple. You gasp at the pleasurable
ache. The only reprieve you have is that he's merely pressed against you, not grinding against you,
but you doubt it makes a difference at this point.

"What of the dance?" he asks, continuing to fondle your breasts. Why are they so sensitive? Are you
really addicted to him?

"What... about... the dance?" you pant, and now you have to keep yourself from grinding against the windowsill.

"Do you know how to?" He asks calmly, pinching at your nipples with both hands now.

"Ah-! Please stop," you whimper. "Please, I- I can't think like this."

You slump forward, resting on your elbows.

Loki hums with satisfaction, but of course he doesn't stop. "My little randy bitch. It must be frustrating, hm? For your cunt to be empty, unable to fulfill its purpose."

You try to jerk away from him, but he has you pinned. "Gah- Let me go! I'm not an animal!"

"Yes, you are," he contradicts. "An animal in heat. So, so desperate for me. For your master. Too bad I have no interest in fucking your filthy cunt."

"No?" you get out through gritted teeth. "Then why are you hard?" To prove your point, you push yourself back against him, which only serves to send new heat sizzling in your core.

He just laughs. "I bet you really missed it, did you not? But perhaps you can sate yourself with something else. Do you wish to rut yourself against my boot again?"

Finally, you manage to twist free. Gasping and feeling disheveled, you take a few steps away from him. You know he did this just recently—him, pressing you against a window and taunting you about your lust for the sake of hurting your feelings.

"I don't need you, my king," you state, smoothing down your skirts and trying to catch your breath.

"No?" he questions mockingly, strolling casually over to you and herding you into a corner. "None of me?"

He grabs your wrists and pins you to the wall, lodging a knee between your legs and under your skirts. You gasp when he presses it against your throbbing heat, and he smirks arrogantly.

His thumbs stroke over your wrists, and even that is madly arousing. Your knees buckle and you slouch forward, your entire weight resting on his leather clad leg.

"Go on," he purrs. "Take what you need. Rub your sopping cunt against my leg."

You glare up at him, but his infuriating arrogance is even more arousing.

"Fuck... you," you gasp, but your hips are already grinding themselves against his thigh.

"That's what you're doing," he says with a smirk, moving both your wrists into one hand so he can torment your nipples again.

"Fuck- Damn, I hate you... so much," you hiss, rutting yourself against his legs so this torture can finally come to an end.

"I know you don't," Loki taunts, tugging at your collar for emphasis.

You whimper, slumping forward against him. He lets your wrists go, and you wrap your arms around him, still grinding yourself against his muscular thigh.
"That's a good girl," he coos, helping you by rubbing his leg back against you, his hands stroking down your back. "Good slut. Take your pleasure from me. Let me ease the need inside you. Fuck yourself against me. Good girl."

You're gasping, rubbing your entire body against him, feeling the plates of his armor drag over your breasts. Your hands are clutching at his shoulders, his hair, scrabbling down his back and clinging to whichever handhold his armor has to offer.

You look up at him, whishing nothing more than to kiss him, but you are unsure if your wobbly legs will even let you reach his lips.

You must have been staring, because he licks over them and then whispers in a husky voice: "You want me to kiss you?"

You nod with a whimper, craning your neck up and parting your lips.

Finally, he leans down and seals his over yours in a searing kiss, shoving his tongue into your mouth as deeply as possible. You suck on the wet muscle, stroking over it with your own. You are absolutely delirious at this point, and you simply cum against his leg with no warning. The orgasm shutters through you, and Loki pulls away.

You try to pursue him, still clutching at his shoulders and craning up for his lips. He's also breathing heavily, gazing down at you through hooded eyes.

"L... Lo..." You pause, remembering you can't speak his name. "Please..."

Loki is watching you impassively, but he hasn't pushed you away yet, so that's a good sign.

You don't even know what to say.

"Please let me... Why are you so mean to me? I just want to kiss you."

You feel tears well up in your eyes for some reason.

Loki's eyes widen a little, but he's still just watching you, as if he's regarding a strange alien creature.

"Low... key, please." You turn your head and grasp his hand, bringing it to your cheek and pressing yourself against the cool skin. It's so soothing on your heated flesh. You start kissing it, and that's when he jerks away from you, breaking contact.

"I've been too kind to you," he analyzes coldly.

"What?" you protest. "No! You've been really cold, please, Lok-"

"Don't speak my name, slave," he snarls. His eyes are angry. But why? "Don't mispronounce it. If you cannot be trusted not to evade my orders, I shall give you a new one. Call me your master and nothing else. Even when you speak to others. You will say 'my master, the king' if you ever decide to introduce me. Now leave my sight you worthless wench."

You are completely taken aback by this outburst, new tears springing to your eyes. Your heart is beating so fast it hurts.

You back away from him, staring at him in betrayal.

"I said, leave," he snaps, glaring at you. "I cannot stand seeing your sniveling face a moment longer."
Crying, you run out of the room.

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You don't tell Rika what happened, but of course she sees your puffy eyes and deduces the worst.

"He assaulted you," she guesses, pacing about in front of you. "Insulted you? Hit you? Told you he was going to kill you?"

You keep sniffling and shaking your head, holding your bundle of servant clothes against your chest. "No, Rika, I'm just kind of emotional right now. It's nothing."

"Who cares if you're emotional?! Your feelings are still real! He must have done something to set you off! What was it?" She stops her pacing to give you a demanding look.

"We- well," you begin, unsure how much to say. "I... I wanted to kiss him, but he said that I'm a filthy animal and he has been too kind to me."

Rika's fists ball, her teeth clench, her face goes red, and then she screams in anger. "You see this?" she snaps. "He's still trying to manipulate you! He's making you feel worthless so he can shatter your self-esteem and have better control over you!"

"He... He's not trying to control me," you contradict. "He's just trying to hurt my feelings!"

Rika looks like she wants to scream again. "Do you even hear yourself?! Are you making excuses for him? Do you think hurting your feelings is a good thing? Do you not see that withholding affection is one of the best ways to get someone who you're intimate with to do what you want? It's a horrible way to manipulate you! You want to kiss him, and what does he want? He's not going to kiss you until he gets it."

Before you can think of an answer, one of the guards steps into the room.

"Can you two please keep it down? All this shouting is giving me a headache."

Rika takes a breath. "Right. Sorry!"

As soon as the guard is back outside, she zones in on you again, waiting impatiently for you to say something.

"He doesn't want anything," you insist. "He just wants me to hate him."

Rika laughs drily. "But that's not going very well, is it?"

You shake your head. "That's what he thought, too. That's why he wants to be even harsher with me."

Rika reaches up and pulls at her hair. "And you still like him? Knowing that?"

"Well, I can't help it!" you defend yourself. "Whenever he is near, I just-"

Suddenly you hear voices coming from the hallway, and you stop talking.

"There aren't enough beds, your grace! You've filled them all with those street children you took in! We can't add three prisoners, that's-"

"What if we stack the beds? You know I have enough funds to take as many rogue children and
misguided prisoners as I wish. If space is the problem, then we shall simply double it by stacking two beds atop each other and connecting them with a ladder."

"That's ridiculous, sire! How shall we achieve this before nightfall?"

As the voices draw closer, you realize it's some woman arguing with none other than Loki, about beds, apparently.

Rika gives you a look, which pretty much says that as soon as Loki shows his face, she will punch him in it. You give her back a look that's advising her not to do that.

"I shall commission twice the number of beds and we shall have it arranged as soon as possible. Until then, have them sleep on the floor. I'm sure you can procure a few more mattresses."

It seems they have stopped right outside the door, and Rika steps protectively in front of you.

"Alright, your majesty, but if I retire early, it's on you."

A woman strides into the room, followed by Loki. She's middle aged, her dark hair streaked with grey, wearing a brick red linen dress and a half apron with a floral pattern. She eyes up Rika and you, while Loki hangs back, giving you a smirk when he sees the state you're in.

You see Rika's muscles tense and barely manage to grab her arms before she tries to lunge at him.

"That's them, yes?" the woman asks, while Rika struggles against your grip.

"You fucking asshole," she shouts, causing the woman to startle.

"Excuse me?"

"She's referring to me," Loki clarifies. "Very protective of her friend."

At this point, your exhaustion takes over and Rika tears herself from your grip and runs at Loki, her fists balled.

Loki effortlessly catches her punch and uses her momentum to toss her to the ground. Rika sprawls to the floor, cursing, and jumps up again. The woman flinches away, looking startled, and Rika attacks him again.

"Enough." Holding one hand out toward Rika, Loki summons a shield of green light, which she batters uselessly against. The next moment, she falls to the floor with a scream, clutching at her collar.

Loki gazes coldly down at her, impassive to her pain, but that's when you throw yourself at his feet.

"Please stop hurting her!"

Rika's screaming stops and Loki's attention is on you now.

"Hurt me all you like, but don't hurt my friends for protecting me," you say hoarsely. "It's a natural response. They can't help it."

Rika scrambles to her feet and yanks you with her, pulling you away from Loki and behind her.

"Don't hurt her all you like," she hisses. "Don't you dare. I will gouge your eyes out with my nails if I have to."
The corners of Loki's mouth drag down into a scowl. "Unruly beasts. Yield."

This time, both yours and her collar react with pain. You fall to the ground, and so does she, and she's screaming, and you're weeping, and Loki is sneering unaffectedly. The woman who entered with him has gone pale as a ghost, staring horrified at this display of cruelty and punishment. While Rika attempts to claw the collar off her neck, you crawl back over to Loki's feet, looking straight up at him with all your agony and your anger, daring him to feel nothing.

The pain shuts off, and you hear Rika's heavy breaths. Loki holds your gaze, even as you rise. As soon as you're standing straight, he grabs your collar and gives it a sharp tug, causing you to lurch forward.

"Not coming off, hm?" he hisses, just for you to hear.

You clutch at his hand, trying to free yourself from his grip. "I... I can't help it," you rasp. "I hate you so much, but I also..." Your voice drops to a breath of air. "...love you."

You shift your gaze up to his, seeing if that caused a reaction. He just sneers. Well, it was worth a try.

"Then any pain I cause you is your own fault," he says.

"Yes, yes, I get that," you agree. "Stupid me, right? Just a poor little lovesick fool. Oh, yes, master, hurt me more. I know you like it."

You look back to the woman who must be Sigrid, and she still looks extremely frazzled.

"Ah, uh- beds, your grace," she stammers. "We were talking of the lack of beds."

"Ah, yes," Loki remembers, grinning at you and Rika. "You two will have to sleep on the floor until we find more. By the way, this is Sigrid, the head of the female serving staff. You will address her as Ma'am and do as she says. She will introduce you to your tasks, and she will expect you to follow her rules."

Sigrid nods at you, and you go to introduce yourself and Rika, who is still too shocked to speak. Once the acquaintance has been made, Loki looks pleased.

"There we go. Everything's settled."

"Not everything, sire," Sigrid disagrees. "What will you have them do? We have most everything covered with our current serving staff."

"Have them help wherever you feel they could be useful," he decides. "I will call upon them myself on occasion, in which case they are out of your hands. Let them have the rest of the day off, but have them start at the crack of dawn tomorrow. I will take the guards with me—the collars shall prevent them from going anywhere they shouldn't. At night, that means they may not leave these quarters. Now, I shall take my leave, unless there is anything else I've left unclear?"
Sigrid looks doubtful, but she shakes her head. "No, sire."

"No, we would love for you to leave," Rika says sweetly.

Sigrid gasps, but Loki ignores them and glances at you.

You give him a sad look, and he holds it for a moment, before turning and striding from the room.

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It turns out Sigrid is not very happy taking in two random new servants on such short notice. She sends you and Rika to retrieve two mattresses and bedding, which you are forced to set up in the middle aisle between the beds, and then rattles off the basic rules.

"You will be woken before sunrise, at which point you will have a short bit of time to get washed, dressed, and make your bed. You will then be allowed to eat breakfast, after which you will disperse to whatever your task for the morning is. You will get a break around noon to eat again, and then shortly before sunset everyone returns and you will get dinner. If you finish your tasks early, you will be allowed to go back here and socialize or rest, but if at any point a superior requires your services, you must immediately be prepared to serve them. Even if it's the middle of the night, or during a meal, you must always obey your betters. You must curtsy in their presence and address them with their proper title. Anything from 'sir' to 'your exalted majesty.' If the king himself calls upon you, you are even allowed to neglect all your other chores, but you are expected to finish them at a later point. Most servants here have assigned positions, and are trained and knowledgeable in their routines. You two will, as the king said, help out wherever you can be useful. Is that clear?"

You sigh. That sounds incredibly exhausting.

"Yes, very clear, Ma'am," Rika says obediently, before you can express your complaint.

"Good. You have the rest of the day off, as the king commands. I will be returning to my duties, but it is only a matter of time before the first servants return from their last chore. Be polite."

With that, she strides from the room, clearly glad not to have to babysit you.

You sigh again and sit down on your mattress. Rika joins you, and you sit in silence for a moment.

"This sucks," you complain. "Maybe Mat was onto something when he chose the dungeon. He doesn't have to work."

"I'm not letting you sit in a cell and become depressed," Rika states firmly. "Your mind is fragile as is, and such isolation will only make it worse. This is a good thing. I get to look after you, and Loki knows I will even serve him for that opportunity. He's clever. I just wish you were, too."

You snicker. "Thanks, Rika. I'm beginning to think you would be a better match for him."

Rika makes a gagging noise. "Over my dead body. No, wait- I wouldn't even let him near my dead body. Ew. No, I'm happy where I am, protecting you from him as much as I can. I'm hoping that if I'm nice to you, and he continues being mean, that you will realize what a mistake he was."

"Believe me, I'm already realizing that," you agree. "Ancients, I wish I could rip my heart out of my chest and stop feeling all these things. He's so horrible."

"Now you're getting it," Rika praises. "But I don't want you ripping your heart out. If you don't want it, give it to me, and I'll take care of it."
Your give her a confused look.

Just then, the first couple servants arrive, and you are distracted from the conversation for the next couple hours.

Up until dinner, you are busy making new acquaintances and answering curious questions.

What's with the collars?

What did you do to receive this punishment?

Wait, you're the assassin, right?

Oh my stars, you slept with the king!

Oh wow, how is he?

Is he... you know?

I mean, I bet Thor's is bigger, but he must have a few tricks up his sleeve!

Up his pants, more like, hehe.

I passed by his chambers once, and whoever he had in there with him, was shrieking and cursing and screaming his name! I bet she was faking though, right?

By the time Sigrid extinguishes all the lights and tells everyone to shut up and sleep, you are extremely exhausted. Who knew servants gossiped so much? The only one who didn't ask questions was Eala, and she was doing her best to ignore your existence.

Dinner had been only slightly more luxurious than the prison food, and accompanied with even more gossip. You'd seen Lee, then, since the male servants ate in the same room. He had given you and Rika a crooked smile and seemed not too traumatized by Loki.

Now, the lights are out and all you hear is the slight shuffle whenever one of the girls turns over in her bed.

Your eyes are open and you are staring at the dim ceiling. Your body is exhausted, but your mind is active with anxious thoughts. Most of them, you can't do anything about, but one repeating worry is your dreams.

You've only had one since returning to Loki—not that you've had much opportunity to get restful sleep. You wonder why you've dreamt of a baby twice now. You also wonder why you dreamt of him asking you to come back when you were apart from him.

It must have been nothing but wishful thinking, since he had reacted anything but grateful upon your return. Maybe those vivid dreams hadn't meant anything, and you had followed a false lead. You certainly don't think Loki will bestow you with a child at this point.

You shudder. A child would be the last thing you need right now. Pretending to have his will be hard enough.

Anyway, it isn't even guaranteed you'll dream of him again. But if you do, maybe you can test it somehow. See if he'll tell you something you can easily prove or disprove.

With that thought in mind, you turn over to your side and surrender yourself to the tiredness.
You're standing in a field of snow under the moonlight. A very nice scenery for a dream.

A dream. So you are dreaming lucidly. That means Loki must be around her somewhere.

You turn around your axis, surveying your surroundings. And there he is. A few paces away. Standing straight, his black clothes and hair standing out against the snow, his skin and the gold plating shining in the moonlight.

He looks nervous, his eyes traveling you up and down.

You look down at yourself and see that you're wearing a white sundress that's flowing in non-existent wind. Thankfully, dreams have no temperature, for you are barefoot. You also notice that your skin is unmarred by Loki's dagger, and when you reach up to your neck, no metal obstructs the way to your throat.

When you look back toward him, you realize he's taken two steps closer, his footprints behind him in the ankle-deep snow.

Quickly, you take three steps back. Loki's eyes move to your feet, then back to your face. He takes another step closer, and you shift back nervously.

"You're afraid," he says, his voice soft and clear like the winter air that fills with a white puff of his breath.

"Of course I'm afraid," you say. "You've done horrible things to me, most of which I can never forgive you for."

That gets a reaction out of him. He looks as if you struck him with a snowball. "What have I done?" he asks, his voice a tad frailer than before.

You take another step away from him. He doesn't pursue.

"Oh, lots of things," you say nonchalantly. "Tried to kill me, enslaved me, cut your name into my chest, insulted me, used my feelings against me. Do you understand that you can't undo that? That I can't forgive you?"

He jerks back, his eyes going wide. Then he stares at your neck, and it's as if he remembers.

"Another dream then," he mutters, sounding bitter. "You would appear to me such as this, a last shred of conscience. A magnificent dove, free from any and all burdens, when in reality, you lie with broken wings at my feet."

You give him a look of disbelief, but he doesn't notice, too busy monologuing.

"I would step on you and put you out of your misery, but each time I bring my boot down, you still lie there, twitching, and the urge to kill you grows stronger. I don't want you to suffer, you see, little dove? I'm trying to help you. But you refuse to die. I can't undo this. I must finish what I have begun, but you keep fighting. Please. Make this easy and give in."

He holds his hand out toward you. You look at it, but you don't move. This is weird.

"Why?" you question. "So you can step on me?"

"It's best to end this swiftly, no?" he says impatiently, still beckoning. "Let me put an end to your
"I'm not suffering," you argue, taking another step back, just to be sure.

"Yes you are, dove. You suffer at my hand. You will continue suffering. As soon as I wake, I will put plans into motion to hurt you further. I will not stop until your love lies dead at my feet. It is best to play along and end this. Give in to the inevitable."

"Nothing is inevitable," you say firmly. "Please just stop hurting me. Whatever happens then, is up to fate."

"Hurting you?" Loki repeats, taking a step forward. "My darling, I would never hurt you."

Now you're even more confused. "But you just said-"

"I hurt you for your own sake, yes," he concedes, coming another step closer. "But I would never truly hurt you. Come here, and I will prove it. Trust me."

You scramble away as he gets too close. "But you did truly hurt me, Loki," you say, tears springing into your eyes. "You hurt me so much I can never heal from it."

Loki drops his hand, looking heartbroken. "I know. That is why- Please, just come here and let me help you."

You wipe at your eyes. "What will you do?"

"Shh, little one, it's alright," he beckons. "Come here. I will keep you safe. You do trust me, right?"

You contemplate his words, sniffling quietly. "Prove it. Prove that I can trust you."

"Alright," he agrees. "Tomorrow. When I call you to my chambers, you will witness an unpleasant sight. I ask you not to react to it, for it would only encourage me. Act as though everything were going exactly to your liking. Don't, in any way, show that you still love me. Please. It is the only way I will keep from hurting you. I'm so sorry, sweet one, I truly do not want this."

You look at him, wondering what all this means. "Why are you telling me this? You would never turn against yourself, would you? How can I trust you?"

"Because..." He steps toward you again, trying to shorten the distance. "Because I love you. And I can't forgive myself, for what I've done to you. Because I don't want to hurt you. I truly don't. But I know nothing can undo the past, and so I simply continue doing horrible things to you, in hopes that seeing you hate me snuffs out my own love, my pain. My weakness. I am selfish. I wish no longer to suffer, and so I think making you suffer will cure me of it."

As he talks, he continues approaching you, and you continue backing away, letting him get only so close. But it's still close enough to see his eyes glistening in the moonlight.

"But it won't," he continues. "I know that. There is no future for us, so all I am doing now is erasing you from me by overriding joy with pain. Your pain. I take it into me and hope to turn myself bitter against it. To cease these feelings. When you left, I- I thought to kill myself. I thought perhaps this would be the last time I let a loved one betray me. I am so tired, kitten. So weary of all this. Of life."

He's stumbling now, his feet dragging through the snow, but he doesn't stop.

"I wanted to see my mother. I was ready to move on, but then... You came back. And I was mad.
The darkness in me reared up and I wanted to take you with me. I wanted you dead. For I saw all my pain in you, every slight ever made against me. I no longer saw you as the person I loved, for that love was brief and painful. I would have killed you. Truly. But I did not, because... Well, I was reminded that I was king. And you a criminal. And your friends, too. And I would see you all to justice."

The previously unfelt wind picks up, and now snowflakes fly through the air and catch in Loki's hair. You're still backing away, and he is still following you, his footsteps more determined now.

"I would see you all to justice, and then-" He pauses briefly, brushing his windswept hair from his face. "Then I would continue ruling Asgard, by myself. With you and them in the dungeons. I would be alone again, and I would let madness and lust for vengeance seize me. I would rain justice upon all those who would slight me. I would be power hungry, cruel, and happy. Just as I was back then, when going out to Midgard and trying to conquer it. I died, and I was reborn. Out of pain, I rose anew. And so it would be. And so I willed it to be. But you... You still loved me. And forgiveness was not part of my plan. I was angry at you anew for slighting me. So I willed to hurt you. To deliver pain unto both of us so I would be set free of you. And that is how it will be. Unless you find a way to stop me."

Loki stops now, holding his hand in front of his face to shield it from the flurry of snowflakes.

You have stopped, too, staring at him.

"How do I stop you?" you call out, raising your voice above the wind.

"Know that I love you," he calls back. "Know that I do not want to hurt you. You must walk the line between hoping for my redemption, and making me believe you have given up that hope. If you do not want to try, I understand. Shut me from your heart, if you must. Free yourself. But do not, for one moment, stay willingly my captive."
Chapter 31

Chapter Summary

The unpleasant surprise has arrived!

Chapter Notes

Okay so this may not be *exactly* what most of you were dreading/hoping for, but it's pretty much that. You'll see, Loki has a specific angle in mind as to why he's doing this, which he may or may not be successful at

You are very confused when you wake up. The dream you had... There was a lot to take in. You aren't even sure if it was utter nonsense, or if it was answering your every question. Apparently, something unpleasant will happen today. Apparently, Loki will call you to his chambers, and apparently you will have to do your best not to react to whatever is in there. This is probably the best proof you're going to get whether these dreams mean anything or not.

It turns out Loki doesn't call you to his chambers first thing in the morning like you expected. The majority of the day involves even more servant gossip, and a whole lot of floor scrubbing. Sigrid said you can do the least damage crawling over the floor with a brush in your hand, so that is what you are forced to do all morning. Then, during lunch, you almost fall asleep in your soup, and after that you are tasked with replacing every burnt down torch in the palace with new ones. It's late afternoon by the time you are summoned, and at that point, you've almost forgotten about your dream.

"Hey, you," Sigrid calls out to you, coming down the hall. "The king himself request your presence in his chambers. Go there at once and be prepared to serve him for the evening. I hear he has company."

You pause in your torch restocking, wondering what's in store for you. Company... That doesn't sound good.

Dropping the torches on the floor, you hitch up your skirts and begin hurrying to his chambers, assuming he'll punish you if you take too long.

When you reach his doors, you're slightly out of breath, but you manage to compose yourself and knock. Okay, here goes the unpleasant thing.

"Enter," comes the reply, and you slowly open the door.

Loki is sitting on his sofa, which you realize has received a new covering. There is another person there with him, more specifically between his legs. She's in the process of swallowing down his cock, and Loki, of course, fixes you with a completely unashamed gaze.

Okay. "Unpleasant" was an understatement. You feel like the wind was knocked out of you. It
rankles you immensely, not just seeing him with another woman, but because you know this was all orchestrated and that it's a seriously low blow on his part.

You straighten up and meet his gaze, putting on a servile smile. "Good evening, master. How may I serve you and your pleasant company? You look beautiful, by the way, my lady." The last part, you direct at the woman, who briefly lifts her head and looks up at you. She is beautiful, you won't deny that. She's wearing a dress in Loki's color and it contrasts nicely with her dark skin tone. And when she looks at you, you see her big brown eyes and her full lips. Then she smiles, and you have to admit Loki has great taste. You smile back at her, much to Loki's annoyance.

He's scrutinizing you with narrowed eyes to see how sincere you are in your cheerfulness. "Serve me and my pet some wine, slave," he orders curtly.

"Right away, master," you say and saunter over to his alcohol cabinet, noticing that one of its doors seems newer than the other one. You can hear slurping noises from behind you as the new "pet" continues pleasuring him. The fact that he's just doing this to make you jealous, and the fact that he's getting annoyed that it's not working, actually helps you not to be jealous. You fill two goblets with wine and carry them back over to the two.

Loki is now leaning back, watching you with half lidded eyes, his hand buried in the curly hair of the woman.

"My lady, your wine," you say, holding out a goblet to her.

You see Loki sit up in anger, but you ignore him. You are very aware it's incredibly impolite not to serve the king first, but of course, that's exactly what you're going for.

The woman lifts her head up again, looking a little surprised. "Oh, thank you."

She takes the goblet from you, awkwardly glancing at Loki.

You have half a mind to continue ignoring him, but you know that would be overstepping the line you're supposed to walk.

"Master," you say and bow your head as you hand the other goblet to him. His fingers brush yours as he takes it.

The woman sits up beside him on the couch, drinking her own wine. Loki's pants are still open, but you muster enough willpower not to glance down. The woman leans against him, pressing a chaste kiss to his jaw. She seems to know exactly how far she can go without overstepping. Maybe she's a professional.

"Anything else I can do for you, my lady?" you ask.

Again both of them subtly react to your audacity, but neither comment on it.

"Oh, no, I'm fine," she declines. "Thank you, though."

"Oh, but my lady, you must be tired kneeling on the floor for so long," you gently pressure. "Let me massage your legs."

"I-" She looks to Loki, silently asking for permission.

He's staring at you with an unreadable expression, as if he's solving a mathematical problem, or plotting in how many ways he can torture you. "Go on," he permits.
You kneel down in front of her and take one of her slender legs into your hands. You stretch it for her and begin massaging her calf. She immediately sighs in pleasure, leaning back into Loki.

Her attention has now moved from Loki to you, and that is exactly what you wanted.

"Oh, she's good," the woman sighs. "You should let her give you a massage, my king."

You flash a smile at Loki. "I would love to. And you still have that to take care of." You look down at his erection, which has only flagged slightly.

You aren't oblivious to the white knuckled grip he has on his goblet. Jealousy warring with pride. You know he wants you to touch him—he hasn't exactly hidden his desires well—but he would never admit to it in front of her, or you.

You decide to kick things up a notch. You gently slide the woman's skirt up her thigh, moving your massage to the inside of her knee. She's looking at you, sipping at her wine, relaxation and pleasure on her face. One of her hands is still caressing Loki's arm, but you know you almost have her.

You take your time massaging her other leg, knowing Loki is both enjoying this sensual display, and loathing it, unable to take either direction for fear of revealing too much to you.

"Say, my lady, are your shoulders sore as well?" you say conversationally. "You should lie down on the bed and let me give you a back massage."

"Oh yes!" She immediately sits up and removes her hand from Loki, before shyly looking to him. "May I? I mean... would you rather have her? We could both massage you, if you'd like?"

Slowly, Loki pulls his gaze from you, softening his intense stare for her. "No, it's alright, pet. Let her massage you."

"Thank you!" She smiles at him, before eagerly standing up and prancing toward the bed. On the way, she unzips her dress and lets it fall from her shoulders, then throwing herself belly first onto the bed, now wearing nothing but her panties.

You have to suppress a triumphant smile. Who knew seducing Loki's pet away from him was so easy? A far better strategy, you think, than trying to seduce him away from her.

You kneel down beside her on the mattress, kneading at her shoulders. She immediately sighs contently. You know Loki is most definitely watching, but he can't interfere without seeming desperate.

"Your servant is great," the woman says after a minute, her voice heavy with relaxation.

"Indeed, she is," Loki says, much to your surprise. "Maybe I'll gift her to you. Would you like that?"

You wonder if that last question was secretly directed at you.

"Oh, I don't need a servant," the woman declines, lifting her head slightly to look at you. "I'd love to get more massages from you though. What's your name?"

You tell her your name and ask for hers.

"I'm Lady Anise."

"How long have you known my master, the king, Lady Anise?" you ask, hating the new title you are forced to refer to him with, but you do not want a shock from your collar today.
Anise pauses for a moment, probably wondering if she's allowed to converse with you. "Oh, I... I've known his majesty since before he was king. He pays me for companionship, usually enough to feed me for many moons. I haven't been invited to the palace since he became king, but I was called upon a few days ago."

Okay, that makes sense. You like that he has to pay her, but you don't like that they know each other longer than you know him.

"Do you like this occupation?" you ask, moving to her lower back.

She shrugs. "Yes. It is a life of luxury. Spending time with King Loki is always a night of slow sensuality. Drinking wine, lying naked in each other's arms, experiencing slow pleasures. I quite enjoy that, but the gold sure helps."

You almost choke on your own breath. Did she just say the word "Loki" in the same sentence as "slow sensuality?" He has handcuffs in his nightstand drawer! Does she mean to imply he never spanks her or even ties her up? That they simply make love and drink wine, and that's enough to sate him?

Or... Or maybe he *likes* being slow and gentle. Maybe you're the one he deceives. Maybe he actually enjoys Lady Anise's company while using you for nothing but excitement. She certainly behaves more ladylike than you do, and they've known each other for far longer-

"Ow! Not so hard," Lady Anise yelps.

You realize you've been pressing far too hard into her back, and quickly let off.

That's when you hear Loki chuckle softly from his perch on the sofa. "Anise, darling, I think you've had enough massages."

She slowly sits up, yawns, and stretches herself, which means you inevitably get a good look at her bare chest. Before you can stare any longer, you quickly hop off the bed and look to the other person you have to deal with.

Loki is still sitting where he was, watching you, but his pants are back up. Anise saunters over to him, still mostly naked, picking up her goblet again and sprawling herself out beside him. Then they kiss.

You feel all your muscles tense when Loki tilts his head toward her and she leans up to connect their wine stained lips. They kiss slowly and sensually, just as described, and it feels so wrong. Loki would never kiss you like that. He doesn't kiss you very much, period. He either shoves his tongue into your mouth or withholds kisses from you as leverage, or simply to make fun of your desperation.

The kiss doesn't seem to stop, and then Anise reaches into Loki's pants, and Loki plucks the goblet out of her hand and pulls her onto his lap, and then he's inside her, and she's bouncing on his lap, breathy moans pouring into the kiss that is still going on-

You try to leave the room, but the collar shocks you as soon as your foot steps over the threshold. You have to use all your willpower not to scream. You are trapped in here, with Loki and another woman having sex! And now that you're no longer looking, they start making noises.

She's gasping and moaning, and he's saying her name!

"Mm, Anise, that's so good. Yes, just like that. My darling pet- Oh, yes!"
More kissing, and you just run into the bathroom, because that's as far away from them you can get. You don't want to hear all those noises!

You sit down in the bathtub and cover your ears, hoping this will be over soon.

It does end. Eventually. Anise comes buck naked into the bathroom to clean herself up, and you quickly jump to your feet.

"Eh- L-lady Anise, do you require assistance?" you stammer, not because she's naked, but because the last thing you want to do right now is clean Loki's cum from between her legs.

"Oh, no. That's fine." She gives you a gentle smile, sensing your discomfort. "I do this myself all the time."

You nod, relieved. All you have to do now, is decide with whom you want to be alone right now. Anise, or Loki. In the end, the decision is made for you.

"Slave, come here for a moment," Loki calls out from the other room.

You quickly hurry out of the bathroom, no longer having the capacity to smile.

He's standing now, his clothes back in order, though his hair remains tousled.

"Do you like her?" he asks.

"Like her?" you repeat, not sure what he's getting at.

"Does she... please you?" he rephrases, gesturing vaguely with his hand.

"Are you asking if I'm into her?" you ask back, somewhat disbelieving.

He gazes at you for a moment. "Yes."

You shrug. "Why do you care? Do you want a threesome? I hear men are into that."

Loki looks immediately insulted. "That is not what I was insinuating. I am merely wondering... You seem happier. Is it because someone caught your interest? Is it Lady Anise, or is it someone else? A servant? Did you find one of the male servants attractive? Your friend, perhaps? No, someone else? A man, right? I can tell it's a man, because you no longer look at me the way you did just yesterday. Good for you. I am glad you are getting over your infatuation with me. Do you suppose the collar will come off, now that you have someone else? How soon, do you think? Which one is it? Which of the servants has caught your attention? I'm merely curious. I won't do anything, don't worry. I have Lady Anise, now."

You stare at him with an open mouth. "Oh. My. Stars. You are jealous."

His contained expression immediately falls away and he reveals his anger. He grabs you by the shoulders, letting you see just how displeased he is. "You will not fraternize with the male servants," he hisses. "That is an order. Do not talk to them. Do not even look at them. Do you understand?"

"I- Yes, but- No, I don't understand. You don't want me anymore, so why do you care? Can I at least talk to my friend?"

Loki's narrowed eyes search yours, and then he slackens his grip a little. "Yes, you may talk to your friend. But that is it. Tell me who has caught your attention. Tell me."
You suck in a breath. Wow. You were not expecting this. "I don't know!" you exclaim, and it's the truth. "I haven't talked to any of the male servants!"

Loki scrutinizes you, but neither he nor the collar find fault in your statements.

"Then what is going on?" he questions, releasing one of your shoulders to grasp your chin. "Just yesterday, you looked at me as though I was the only thing you wanted in the world. And now, I see only pain in your eyes. What happened?"

"You hurt me," you say firmly. "It's what you wanted."

"So you are losing your love for me?" he questions.

"The collar is still on, isn't it?" you ask back. Walk the line. Walk the line.

"There is a new distance between us," he remarks. "I can feel it."

"Of course there is," you say cryptically. "It's what you want, isn't it?"

He doesn't answer, but he takes both your hands in his. "Even standing so close, I can feel the distance. It doesn't matter how much I touch you. It's there now. Who helped you? Who is helping you shut me out of your heart?"

"You are," you say, and it's twice the truth. With cruelty, and with kindness. Loki before you, and Loki in your dreams. He was right. Everything he said came true. Know that I still love you. And you still love him back. But not the Loki in front of you.

He looks sad now, but he just nods. "Alright. Then let us talk about the ceremony. Sit down."

He moves back to the sofa, the one he just got fucked on. You sit down on the furthest spot. You can still hear Anise rummaging in the bathroom, fixing herself up.

"You know," Loki says, giving you a contemplating look, "If I wanted to, I could make you my obedient little slave, even without the collar. I would torture you for days, locked away in a dark dungeon, drugged up on aphrodisiacs, unable to cum no matter how much you want to, tortured without relief. And then, when your mind has succumbed to insanity, you would be so eager to please me. To do anything at all I asked you to. You would forget about your friends, and I would be the only one who matters to you. You would crawl on the floor behind me and feel proud for even the slightest sliver of attention I grant you. You would be content just snuggling up to my legs, resting your head on my feet, like a dog. You would worship me like the humans do, for I was the one who released you from the mind breaking torture. I could have you, and do whatever I wish to you. Oh, you would adore me. You simply wouldn't be able to help it."

You suddenly feel very, very nervous. "Why..." Your mouth is dry. "Why are you telling me this?"

His gaze is dark, but still contemplative more than anything. "Because I think I'd really like that. Don't you think I would? I think I'd enjoy it. Making you mindless. Oh, love is far behind us. You'd be a pet. A toy. I'd play with you, for a while. Then I'd discard you. I could have a lot of fun killing you. You'd look so pretty, struggling beneath me, fighting to stay conscious. So afraid, not knowing why I'm doing this. Not remembering that I hate you."

Oh, fuck. This is bad. You have to think back to your dream. What are you supposed to do in this situation? Walk the line. Don't stay willingly his captive.

"I don't doubt that you could do all that," you begin, carefully choosing your words. "But I would
never let you do that. If you force me to, there is little I can do, but don't think I'll play along with your twisted games. I'm not infatuated with you anymore."

He gives you a curious look, then nods. "Let's truly talk about the ceremony, then. You know not how to dance? That's alright; we shall only do one, and it will not be all too complicated. As for your dress—I have your measurements, of course, and I have no problem choosing everything for you, but if you want to choose for yourself, I will allow you to."

Your head spins from the easy change in topic.

"Ah... You can choose my dress," you mumble, not really caring about that right now.

"Alright. Now for the vows. I know this is no wedding, but it will do well if we each say a few words about our love for each other. Especially you, seeing a consort has special responsibilities to uphold."

You look up and see him procuring a piece of parchment. That's when Anise returns from the bathroom. She walks over to Loki and gives him a kiss. On the lips, of course.

"I'll be going then," she says. "See you soon, my king."

Loki smiles gently at her. "See you, pet."

She smiles back and gives him a little wave, then you as well. "Bye. I hope to get another massage from you, soon."

Finally, she leaves.

"So that's your new pet," you say. "Good choice."

You don't like her. Well, you have nothing against her, you just don't think she and Loki should be kissing in "slow sensuality." Or having sex. Or looking at each other.

You hate those words now. Loki isn't slow and sensual in the slightest. You don't know what his deal is.

"I agree," Loki says. "Now, here are your vows. I've written them for you, so all you must do is memorize them."

He holds the parchment out to you and you take it. The whole page is filled with sentimental bullshit in Loki's neat handwriting.

...My love for you has blossomed like a constantly nurtured flower, and now it is stronger than ever. I vow to serve you for as long as our happiness lasts, which I hope is an eternity. As subject, as lover, I am yours. I will take your gifts and bring mine own in return... I cannot see myself without you, my king, my sunlight. My love for you runs deeper than the rivers of Asgard...

"You wrote all this?" you ask in disbelief. "Are your vows equally... sappy?"

"No," he answers curtly. "A king cannot seem too emotional, whereas you need to be convincing."

You've already decided you will not be saying these vows, but you fold the paper and tuck it away nonetheless.

"The ceremony will involve a stately dinner and the ball," Loki continues. "Only the gentry is invited, but rumors spread regardless. We'll make the announcement right before the banquet,
then the celebrations will begin. There is no need to exchange anything, such as in a wedding ceremony, but it is customary for me to shower you in riches while you are pregnant with my child. We will kiss after the announcement has been made, and when the dancing begins, we will have the first one. Those are your only obligations. Do you think you can do all this convincingly, or do I have to describe the way I will torture your friends if you do not comply?"

You quickly shake your head. "No, no. I got it. I'll do everything you ask. I can't guarantee I won't step on your feet when we dance, though."

"That is why we'll practice." He stand up and holds his hand out to you.

"What? Now?" You really don't want to do this.

"Why do you think I sent Anise home so soon? Now come. We have not much time."

You take his hand and he helps you up. You expect him to teach you right here in his chambers, but instead he leads you out into the hallway and to another room.

The room is spacious and empty, save for a few chairs that have been moved to the wall. There is a big mirror on one wall, and you see yourself, hunched posture, plain linen dress, golden collar, next to Loki, who looks regal as ever.

There is a young man waiting on one of the chairs, holding a violin. He stands up when you enter and bows.

"Show her a taste of the song," Loki instructs, still holding your hand.

The man nods and lifts the violin to his chin. He begins playing a slow, woeful melody that instantly brings forth strange emotions in you.

"As you can tell," Loki explains, "this is a waltz. It is not a traditional Asgardian song, but I have chosen it for us, for it is simple to dance to, and fairly slow. It is in triple time. See if you can detect the beat."

You have no idea what that means. The music just sounds like one long melody to you.

Loki must see your confusion, for he holds his hand up to get the violinist to pause.

"Ah, just follow my lead. Perhaps you will get the rhythm then."

Loki leads you into the middle of the room, putting your free hand on his shoulder and his own on your waist, while holding out your joined ones. That much you know.

"Now, we will simply step in a square, such as this." He steps backwards in a graceful, dipping step, pulling you with him. Then sideways, forwards, sideways again, until you are back where you started. You feel very clumsy, his steps far too big to keep up with, and it's mostly him pulling and pushing you with him. This is going to be miserable.

"There. Those are the first, basic steps. Now, with the music."

The violinist plays again and Loki follows through the steps again, counting the three beat for you. After a few steps, you actually begin to understand. On "one" he steps with his first leg, on "two" he moves his second leg and his entire body, and on "three" he's standing with both legs together in the new spot. He smiles and stops counting when you fall into rhythm. Soon enough, the two of you move in sync in the square step, and the rhythm of the music makes perfect sense now. You keep
counting in your head, and can't help but smile as well. This is more fun than you thought.

"Good. Now the next part." Suddenly, Loki turns you so you're no longer facing the same direction, and continues the square step that way.

That briefly throws you for a loop, but you catch yourself. He does the square step twice, then turns you again, and continues in the new direction. You almost stumble, but keep up with him. He does it again. Eight individual steps that make up the two square steps, then on the ninth turning and beginning anew. It doesn't take you too long to catch up with that as well.

"Don't stare at the floor," Loki says, and you realize you've been staring at your feet. "Look into my eyes."

You lift your head, and find it extremely awkward to look into his eyes while standing so close.

"Don't let your arm droop, either," he adds, extending his and yours further for emphasis. "I know it starts to get exhausting, but you don't want to seem clumsy and halfhearted."

"Do I really have to stare into your eyes the entire time?" you grumble, still dancing, still trying to count in your head so you don't stumble.

"Yes, of course. Do not disengage from your partner. If I were staring down at the floor, it would give me a nice view down your neckline."

Suddenly, you are glad for the "looking into each other's eyes" rule.

"Okay, I think I got the hang of it," you say, getting a little exhausted. "Are there any more steps?"

"Why, yes," Loki says with a smile, still pulling you along with him to the never ending music. "We can improvise as much as we want. Would you like me to twirl you under my arm? Dip you down and pull you back up? Lift you in the air?"

"Nope, I'm good," you decline. "Can we... take a break? We've been dancing long enough."

Loki nods and you come to a stop. Quickly, you pull out of his arms.

"Take a break, too," he tells the violinist.

He stops playing and bows his head. "May I get a drink of water? I'll be right back."

"Go ahead," Loki permits.

You wander over to the chairs and sit down, your gaze now level with Loki's crotch. For a moment, you are lost in thought, but then you realize exactly what you're staring at. Dancing with you has excited Loki. That realization causes a thought to pop into your head, and before you can hold it back, you've already said it aloud.

"When you sleep with her, do you imagine it's me?"

Immediately, the tension in the room goes thick.

"Pardon?" Loki says, as if really not believing what you just had the audacity to ask.

You don't meet his eyes. "I just- I was wondering why you go slow with her when you were so rough with me," you mumble, your voice getting quieter and quieter. "Do you picture it's me making love to you, or do you simply respect her boundaries?"
Loki lets off an annoyed breath of air. "Oh, dear. And you've been hiding your jealousy so well until
now. Yes, I respect her, which cannot be said about you. You are simply... vermin that needed to be
taken care of."

"Thanks," you say, knowing the insults don't mean anything. "And you just fucked a woman, but
you still get hard dancing with me, the vermin."

Loki strides closer to you, until his crotch really is in front of your face. "We both know how much
you want this," he says in a seductive lilt. "If you beg nicely, I may let you kiss it."

You scoff, staring at the outline of his erection under the leather. "And we both know how much you
want me, but you're too prideful to take me."

Loki clicks his tongue, and you just know he's smirking. "Are you trying to goad me into fucking
you, little one? Do you want my big cock inside you? Do you miss it? Hm? Just admit it, dear. Just
say 'please, master, I'm a hungry slut for your cock, and I have no sense of dignity.' Say it, and you
shall have it."

Despite the obvious tone of mockery, you feel your face grow hot at his words. "Your insults don't
work on me," you say, neglecting to mention that his dirty talk certainly does.

"Oh, but I can see your desperation," he says with false sympathy. Suddenly, you feel his hand on
the back of your head, and that alone has your heart pounding. "You're still a panting animal. So
desperate for a man's cock. Does it have to be mine, I wonder? Should I tie you down and let my
guards take their turns with you? I think that would be enough to sate you, no?"

You know he's just trying to be mean, but his hand is very slowly applying pressure to your head,
bringing your face closer and closer to his crotch.

"Wh- What are you doing?" you stammer, trying to push back, and failing.

"Seeing how flustered you get," he says casually, getting a tighter grip on your hair. "Now, admit
you are a desperate bitch who needs a cock in her mouth to feel useful, and you shall have it."

You continue to struggle against him, but he pulls you forward enough that you instinctually brace
yourself against his thighs. "No, I won't let you pretend you're not just as desperate, if not more," you
declare. "Besides, this really isn't the place to- mph!"

Finally, he has managed to press your face against his crotch, muffling your words. You are
overwhelmed with the scent of leather, and... him. Your breaths shorten as your head spins. You've
stopped struggling, and you can feel him rubbing his clothed length against your parted lips. You
really are panting now, taking in the intoxicating mixture of scents that make up Loki. And the
feeling of his leather covered cock dragging against your lips... You clench your thighs together and
let your tongue poke out of your mouth. You wish none of the bad things had happened. That this is
just fun between the two of you, and that you are free to express your painful desire without being
ridiculed.

Tears spill from your eyes, and of course, Loki notices.

"Oh, oh darling," he croons, his fingers stroking over your scalp. "Are you crying over my cock? It's
alright, dear. It's right there. You can kiss it. Go on."

You take a shuddering breath and try to stay calm, to not let the hormones overwhelm you. You pull
your head away slightly, and he lets you.
"Can't we just... go back to how things were?" you whisper.

"You mean with you as my bed slave, paying for your crimes by giving me your body?" Loki asks gently, still stroking over your head. "We tried that, little one, and it did not work. Now, you're a real slave, and such privileges don't belong to you."

Oh, no. This is bad. This is what happened last time. You, getting emotional, and Loki using that to exert immense power over you. He's being nice now to lure you to him, and then he will hurt you badly.

...But you miss him so much. And his cock is right there in front of you. Not denied to you like last time. Maybe him being nice to you is worth whatever happens after...

"I'm back, sire, we can resume our practice."

"Ah, good." Loki steps away from you and you see that the violinist has returned. "Come, pet."

Wiping your tears with your sleeve, you shakily take Loki's hand. Oh, stars... The feeling of his skin on yours.

He takes you into the middle of the room and pulls you to him. You put your hand on his shoulder and become hyper aware of how close such a dance puts you. And gazing into his eyes... his lips... he could lean down and kiss you.

"I forgot to tell you, pet, when I bring you to the dance floor, it is customary for me to bow to you, then you will curtsy, and only then will you accept my hand."

You nod, clinging to his every word. Neither of you lets the other go to do what he just said. You just stare at each other in silence.

And you keep staring. Neither of you says anything. You look at Loki's lips, and then back to his startling eyes. You're pressed against him by the hand at your waist.

He licks over his lips. Your gaze slips down to them again. Your own lips are parted. He leans a little closer. You tip your chin up. His lips part. He licks over them a second time. You crane your head up and take a few deep breaths. You can feel his own breaths on your face now. Almost imperceptibly slow, his head dips down, closer to yours. You hold your breath. His eyes slide half shut. And then it's there. His lips. On yours.

You let out the breath you were holding in a light *woosh* of air, your eyes fluttering shut, and his lips softly seal over your mouth. He lets your hand go and moves it to your waist as well, pulling you impossibly closer. You've long forgotten the violinist, who is still waiting for his cue.

He's kissing you, and you're kissing him, and slowly your hands move to sling around his neck. There's no tongue involved. Slow. Sensual. Just soft lips and warm breaths and two bodies pressing close together, as if they were trying to become one.

And then he pushes you away. Hard. So hard, that you fall to the floor with a yelp.

"Leave," he says harshly, pointing at the violinist.

The musician scrambles out of the room, carrying his instrument protectively in his arms.

And then he's on you again. Pushing up your skirts and yanking your panties down. Opening his pants and crawling on top of you. Pinning your wrists to the floor and sheathing himself inside of
You gasp out in surprise, but he goes in so easily, as if this were meant to be. He's pinning you down with his weight, staring at you with such aggression that you feel nervous. He hasn't moved yet, but his cock is throbbing inside you, desperate to do so.

You can't believe he's inside you again. After everything. After vowing not to take you again. And he hasn't moved yet, but his face shows just as much need as his cock does.

"We can't do this," he says, but he isn't pulling out.

"I want you," you say, and the lust boils over in his eyes.

Slowly, he draws out and thrusts back into you once. Both of you suck in a breath at the immediate sensation.

"You aren't getting the potion anymore," he says. "If I spill inside you, that's it."

"Oh," is all you can say in return.

He's sheathed to the hilt, not moving, his weight on your wrists. You feel him throbbing inside you.

"I..." you say, and Loki's attention is on you. "...want...
 His pupils dilate. "I don't want that."

His gaze goes cold. He thrusts into you again, staying mainly inside you. You whimper. This is unbearable.

"Please..." You don't know what you're asking for.

"Beg me for it." He seems to know.

"For... what?" you pant.

"For my seed. Inside you. In your womb. For my child." He grinds into you.

"What...?" you gasp.

"You want it, don't you?" he asks, and he seems so sure of himself. "You want me to make you mine. To claim you. Give you my child. Let all of Asgard know who you belong to. You want to be with me. Forever. That's why you came back, isn't it? You got that idea when we visited Helena. I saw it in your eyes. I saw it again when I told you you would be my consort. When you briefly believed I would force you to carry my child. I see it now. You want to be a mother. And you want me to be the father."

"Oh Norns," you sob.

"Don't you?" he insist, bucking into you again, so impossibly deep.

"Oh, please..." You turn your head away, tears again rolling down your cheeks. "Please no."

"You still love me," he continues. "We both know that. How about it, hm? Do you want to be useful? You could be my brood mare. Bear me an heir. More than one, actually. I'm sure your body is useful for that. And you'll get to sleep with me every once in a while. That's what you want, isn't it? Maybe I'll even let you see them on occasion. Perhaps on their birthdays, you'll get to talk to them and see how well I'm raising them."
Oh *Norns*, no. This is it. The hurt, after the niceness.

Before he can say anything more, you scream and thrash beneath him.

He's startled, but then he lets you go. He pulls out of you and sits up, his cock still straining for release.

You sit up as well, and you're crying, covering your face with one hand. You shuffle toward him, and wrap the other hand around his cock.

He makes a hissing noise, but doesn't stop you as you jerk him off. Quickly, his eyes roll back and he shudders as he finds release, spilling over your hand.

You stare at the pearly white essence that could easily be your downfall. You turn your hand over and wipe it on the carpet. Loki stares at it in disbelief, but doesn't stop you.

"Let me," he says, reaching for your leg instead. Your panties are still somewhere around your calves, and he touches your thigh.

"No," you sob, heat flaring up under his touch immediately.

"Come, it will make you feel better." He grabs you and pulls you onto his lap, moving his hand between your legs.

You sob again, but your hips grind into his palm. He slips two fingers inside you and strokes them against that one spot that has you wailing out in pleasure. His palm presses against your clit, and you shameless grab onto his shoulders and begin riding his hand.


You don't hold back. You sob, and your fingers dig deeply into his shoulders, and your hips unashamedly rut against his hand, until you're shaking and gushing and coming undone on him. Your hips slowly still and he draws his fingers out, letting you collapse against him. You dazedly watch him lick his hand clean, and then he pulls you into his arms like a child, gently rocking you and cradling your head against him.

"Shh, that's a good girl," he coos. "Relax. Rest against me; it's alright. You did so well today. I'm sorry. Do you want me to leave you alone before the ceremony? I think you deserve a break."

You nod, weakly. You do need a break. You just want to sleep. And so you do. You fall asleep, and when you wake up, you're back in your bed in the servants' quarters, wondering how you got there.

Chapter End Notes

Here is the piece I imagined they danced to: https://youtu.be/Gi_PV5umdio
I've also added it to the playlist. They'll dance to it again at the ceremony, so you can listen to this song as you read that chapter, if you want :P

And if anyone really wanted to see Loki fuck Lee, I'm informing you now that once this
story is finished, I'll be writing bonus chapters upon request, where I'll gladly give you all the fanservice pairings and Loki pov content you can desire. The reason he didn't do so now is because a) he wanted to make reader jealous more than upset, and b) she probably would have murdered him for that, let's be honest
Loki does leave you alone. You even think he gave Sigrid instructions not to overwork you, because you oftentimes find yourself done with your chores around early afternoon. Usually, you spend that time resting on your mattress, or going over the things you will have to do for the ceremony. Sometimes, you pull up the folded paper and read over the vows he wrote for you, but they make you feel sad for some reason. The closer the ceremony draws, the more hectic things get, but strangely enough, you are never involved in any of the preparations.

You also have those vivid dreams again. Almost every night, in fact.

"You did well, pet," Loki says from behind you.

You turn and take in your surroundings. You're in a small vegetable garden, and on the garden wall crouches Loki.

"Do you trust me now?" he asks.

"Everything you said came true," you concede. "But I still don't know who- what you are, or why I'm having these dreams."

"I'm me," he says, lightheatedly. "Loki. You're the one who keeps appearing in my dreams."

"Yes, but-" You step over a row of cabbages to get closer to him. "Why are you helping me? More specifically, why do you tell me your secrets, and how to handle you when we're awake? Why would you betray yourself?"

"You know how dreams work, right?" he asks patronizingly. "It's our subconscious mind creating bizarre worlds that make little sense in our waking moments. They reflect our thoughts and feelings, especially those we keep hidden. Sometimes, dreams recur again and again until we come to terms with whatever it is they are showing us. But when we wake, we rarely remember any of it.

"It seems something has happened that makes you appear in my dreams again and again. And apparently, you take whatever happens in these dreams back into reality. I told you to come back to me in two of those dreams, and you did. And now I'm telling you other things. Things I would never admit to when awake."

You stare at him in awe. "So... you're Loki's subconscious, and I'm communicating with you somehow?"

He smiles and shakes his head. "No, I am Loki. I simply don't remember much of these dreams when I'm awake, since I don't seem to have whatever gift it is you do. But that is good. You could ask me about any question right now, and I would answer it honestly. I cannot lie to myself, my own..."
mind, even knowing you will hear it, too. I've shown you my honest anger, my heartbreak, my desperation to have you back, and all without meaning to. And now, I am telling you everything else I know. This is me, free from lies."

"Wow," you say. "You would really tell me anything?"

He nods. "Almost anything. There are some things I keep hidden, even in my sleep."

This revelation is mind blowing. Who knew you had such power all this time?

"What's your biggest fear?" you ask immediately.

Loki's eyes widen. "Really? That is the first thing you ask? You wish to experience my nightmares?"

Suddenly, you're not so sure anymore. "Uh..."

He hops off the garden wall and crosses the distance between you, taking your hands in his. "I'd think it was obvious..."

"Huh?"

He leans down and brushes his nose against your cheek. "I have many fears. But at the moment... losing you is the worst pain I can imagine."

"Oh," you say dumbly, your heart taking a leap. "Then why did you want to kill me?"

"Because I wanted to eliminate that fear," he breathes against your ear. "I have had far darker moments in my past. They are, however, in the past."

"Why do you try to hurt me?" you ask the next question.

He chuckles lightly. "I've told you this already. Because I hate you for making me love you."

You nod, feeling your eyes water a little. You move your arms around him and hug him against you.

"I hate seeing you hurt," he adds, hugging you back. "Every night, I lie awake regretting it. Then, the next day, I do it again. That's why you must follow my advice. Don't make it easy for me."

"I won't," you assure him. "But there is one thing that makes this difficult. The way my body still craves yours. You know this, and you use it to exert power over me."

"Hmm, that's right," Loki agrees. "What if we saw to sating your needs at night so you are less susceptible to them during the day?"

"You mean dream sex?" you ask. "Will that even be satisfactory to my real body?"

"You may have to pleasure yourself in the mornings, but I will give you something to go off of."

He pulls out of the hug and caresses your cheek.

You suck in a breath. "What do you have in mind?"

"I would want nothing more than to make love to you right here in the dream garden, but perhaps love making isn't as effective as... whatever cruel seduction techniques I apply in our real life."

You wipe at your eyes. "No, love making sounds good. Please. But not on these cabbages."
He chuckles, and you laugh weakly with him. Then he takes your hand and leads you to a little gate in the wall. Through it, is a grassy lawn with a conveniently placed blanket. It's night time, too, you notice, as if the dream were conveniently adding details as the it develops.

Loki sits down on the blanket and pulls you down with him, pushing you down on your back and crawling over you. He immediately starts kissing you and sliding one hand over your belly. You wonder briefly if you are wearing anything, or if you just arrived in this dream naked again, but then decide it's not important. Loki, of course, is wearing parts of his leather armor, which is highly inconvenient.

"Take your clothes off," you mumble against his lips and sling your arms around him, arching into his touch.

He shimmers in green light and is naked above you. You are so desperate for him, you both try to pull him down and arch up against him. He obliges only a little, too busy kissing you and letting one hand travel over your upper body.

His lips are magical, soft kisses, brief suction, unrelenting love. Your hands clutch into his hair as you try to buck up, and you end up pulling on it to get him to do what you want.

He moans against your mouth, his eyes closing, his hand palming your breast. You tug again, and he moans again, and then he tweaks your nipple and you are the one moaning, and you try to hook your legs over his hips, but he never lets you pull him close enough until you get very, very frustrated.

You don't want to break the kiss, either, so you just make a whining noise, causing Loki to chuckle against your lips. He continues tormenting your breasts, and your legs continue sliding over his in hope of enticing him, and his lips are the best thing you've ever tasted.

He kisses down your neck, over your collarbone, and to the top of your breast. "Stop being so delicious," he growls, and seals his mouth over your nipple.

You wail out, jutting your chest up into his face and seeking purchase in his hair, his back, his muscular shoulders. Loki lets out a low sound of pleasure, and finally, you feel the tip of his hard cock drag against your thigh. You try to buck toward it, but his hands land on your wrists and pin you down.

"Oh, fuck!" you exclaim, truly tortured now. With his mouth alternating between your nipples, and his cock rubbing against your thigh and no further, you are about to go insane. You thrash under him, but he merely chuckles against you.

"Loki, please!" you beg. "Please fuck me! You've proven your point; you're nice and all, but right now I don't mind rutting like animals! Please just shove your cock in me! I need it!"
Finally, he lifts his head, an all too smug grin on his face. "My, my, what crude words come from your innocent lips. Could it be you are not the virgin I was promised?"

Your face flushes in embarrassment, and you pout.

He puts on an expression of exaggerated contemplation. "Well, perhaps I can be convinced to—how did you put it? 'Shove my cock in you?' Yes, I suppose I can do that, but under one condition."

He's still grinding against your thigh, and at this point, you'd do just about anything.

"I'll do it, whatever it is!" you gasp.

"Good." He smirks and sits back. "I want you to—"

Before he can finish, you have also sat up and are trying to reach for his cock.

Giving you a scolding look, Loki snatches up your wrists and holds you back. You make a pleading noise, hoping he might punish you, but he just chuckles.

"Darling, please. Let me finish."

You are shocked. "Darling" and "please?" No mockery? No teasing?

"What I want you to do is let me pleasure you," he continues. "I want you to ride my face."

"What?!" you say, not quite sure if you heard right.

He chuckles again, as if all this greatly amuses him. "Ride my face. I want to pleasure you with my tongue. I know you like that. Now, you can decide; do you want me to lie down with you sitting on my face, or will you stand with me kneeling between your legs, which will end up with you sitting on my face when your knees give out?"

"What?" you say again, your brain too shocked to comprehend.

Loki takes that opportunity to bring your captured hands to his mouth and start kissing them. Somehow even that is highly erotic.

"Sit... on your face?" you repeat. "Won't you die?"

Now he laughs heartily. "You are really too cute, sweet thing. Nothing will happen. I just want to pleasure you."

"Can't you do that with me lying down?" you ask, trying to pull your wrists free as he plants tingling kisses over your palms. "I don't want to crush you."

"You worry too much. I want you to be in control, you see, and then I want you to lose it. You have all these inhibitions now, but soon enough, you will be rutting against my face with not a thought in your mind but the exquisite pleasure I am granting you. You will be begging for more."

You actually feel yourself blush like a schoolgirl at the thought. "You really want me to...?"

He sighs theatrically and pulls you closer to him so he can talk directly into your ear. "Yes, darling. I want your desperate little cunt on my face. I want your sweet nectar flowing into my mouth and down my chin as my tongue drives you mad with pleasure. This is a dream; what are you afraid of? I want you to have something nice to think about when you touch yourself in the morning. I want you to let go of your shame, dearest. This is for you. When else will you get such an opportunity?"
All that, said in his sinful voice, finally breaks your resistance. "Okay," you whisper. "I'll do it."

Loki smiles delightedly and lies back, beckoning you forward. Reluctantly, you straddle his torso and shuffle forward. He grabs your thighs with his powerful hands and yanks you into position, your legs spread right over his face. You yelp, your face heating with embarrassment.

"Go on," he purrs, an all too smug look on his face as he licks over his lips. "Sit down. I can see you dripping. You want this. Need this."

"I hate you," you mumble, steadying yourself with your hands and very gently lowering yourself down, most of your weight still held by you.

Loki makes a pleased sound and licks once up through your glistening folds, immediately finding your clit and applying pressure.

"Oh fuck," you say, and press yourself lower, right against his mouth. You can actually feel him grin.

He keeps stroking you with his tongue, so quick and powerful that your thighs squeeze down around him, your hands fisting into the picnic blanket, and you find your release right against his mouth. He doesn't stop.

With an iron grip on your thighs, he practically drinks up your gushing moisture, and then he teases your entrance with his tongue until you whimper, at which point he pushes it inside you and immediately seeks out your g-spot.

Your arms and legs are trembling, you are very slowly beginning to grind against his face, and he looks so damn smug for some reason!

"Oh fuck," you say again, seeing stars as he presses his tongue repeatedly against your g-spot, going as languorously slow as one would when one is savoring a meal.

"Ah- Loki! Damn you!" you curse, bunching the picnic blanket up in your fists and bucking against him.

He gives you only so much leeway with his hands on your thighs before drawing his tongue out and licking back over your clit.

You whine out and almost collapse on him, and you just know he's greatly amused by all this. It's not like he's staying quiet, either, because he's making obscene slurping noises wherever possible, even groaning in pleasure as he pretty much feasts on you. Thank the Norns he's not talking, too.

He uses the broad side of his tongue to give repeated licks over your clit, then the tip of it to give you direct, agonizing flicks against it, and then he seals his lips around it and sucks on it until you're pretty much crying and humping his face.

"Loki!" you wail. "Damn you, I hate you so much! Fuck- Ah! Fuck, fuck, fuck- Ahhh, Loki!"

He begins to laugh and the vibrations of it send you flying off the edge, at which point all you can do is scream.

"Damn you Loki," you cry when the pleasure finally subsides. You try to pull away, but he keeps you locked to his face, already attacking you again. After tormenting your overstimulated clit for a while, which has you sobbing and ripping chunks of grass out of the ground, he pushes his tongue back inside you and lets you ride his face until you cum again, completely drenching him and you in
the process.

"Oh stars, Loki," you whimper when he finally lets you pull away.

His pupils are completely dilated and brimming over with need as he licks his lips clean and gazes at your flustered face.

"Darling, I've never heard you scream like that," he says, his voice thick with lust. "Your pleasure is the most divine gift in the world. I am tempted to tie you down and force you to cum again and again, until you pass out."

Alarmed, you scramble away from him as he sits up.

"But right now, I just want to fill you with my cock." He wipes his mouth with the back of his hand and crawls over you.

Finally. You quickly lie down, grabbing his shoulders and trying to pull him down so you can hook your legs around him.

Loki leans down and presses his sticky lips over yours before entering you in one, smooth thrust.

You are so wet he manages to get you completely full with that one thrust, and the sensation of him inside you is incredible. You pull him tightly against you, wrapping your legs around him to make sure he's as deep as he possibly can be. His weight is on you now, and you feel as close to him as never before.

He's still kissing you, and he's gently grinding into you, but you don't let him pull out just yet. You would stay like this forever, if you could. Inside a dream, somewhere no one else can reach you, completely filled with him.

You turn your face away from his lips to speak, and he lets his head drop beside yours.

"Can I say that I love you, and you won't remember when you wake up?" you whisper.

He's silent for a moment, but you can feel him take a deep breath. "...I probably won't remember most of this."

"Then..." Your hands stroke lovingly over his back. He's shallowly bucking into you, mostly staying deeply inside you as he's unable to hold back, breathing heavily beside your ear.

"Then I want to say that I love you more than I have ever loved anyone before," you begin. "I love you so much, I don't know what to do with the feelings. You make me upset a lot, but at the end of the day, just thinking about you makes me happy. Especially knowing your cruelty is just a front. I love you, and it's more than just me being your prisoner, or my own lust. I know I'd love you in every reality out there. In every timeline, I would make the decision to run back to you. Being near you, I feel my heart beat so much faster, and it fills me up with these intense feelings I can't even begin to describe. And when I'm alone, it feels like a small candle, warm and bright, is burning in my heart. No matter how hard the storm blows, it stays safe there, and it makes me happy. It's the small bit of love you can never reach, no matter how hard you try to hurt me. I know we can get through this. Even if it hurts now, our candles will keep burning, and they may one day be allowed out of our secret hearts to grow into a fire that rivals the sun itself."

You hear Loki's breath hitch and then he's gripping you tighter and you feel him pulse inside you and fill you with his release.
"Oh..." he gasps, and he sounds so incredibly emotional, you kiss him on the shoulder and keep stroking up and down his back.

In a strange way, your heart is touched by the fact that he came while hearing you talk about how much you love him. You don't mind at all. He gave you so many orgasms earlier.

He lifts up slightly, looking into your face, and his eyes are wet. "I don't want to wake up and forget all this," he whispers hoarsely.

You lean up and kiss the tip of his nose. "Don't worry. I'll just have to remind you."

Chapter End Notes

Wow, who knew I could put this load of fluff in the middle of all the angst and drama? I know this was super short, but next chapter is super long! It's the chapter I really like, with a lot of things happening, so prepare yourselves for the ceremony to begin!
Chapter 33

Chapter Summary

This chapter contains a cup of fluff, two cups of angst, and a bucket full of blood. Like, a lot of blood. Oh, and something that's been a long time coming :P

Chapter Notes

Here is the song again for the dance scene: https://youtu.be/Gi_PV5umdio

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

You are standing in front of a mirror while way too many seamstresses and handmaidens try to dress you in your ceremonial outfit. Loki is there, too, watching like a hawk that everything looks right.

The dress is part armor, part ball gown, which you were initially surprised by, but when you saw that the chest plate inconspicuously covers your wounded chest, you begin to understand the reasons. The collar, however, remains visible.

You were also surprised by the fact that the gown isn't green. It's a lovely shade of blue, like the sky on a rainy day.

The dress itself is made of shimmering silk, the armor of brass. You receive shoulder pads and vambraces, and shoes with a low heel.

When everything is in place, the servants step away to give Loki view of you. You turn to him, gauging his reaction while keeping your own face blank.

He looks you up and down, but never meets your eyes.

"How is it, your majesty?" one of the seamstresses asks eagerly. "Is this how you imagined it?"

"You look like a queen," Loki says, still not meeting your eyes.

A few of the servants squeal.

"Well, then! On to the hair!"

You are whisked away to a dressing table, and once again surrounded by servants.

"I shall take my leave, then," Loki announces. "I must get ready as well. We shall see each other soon."

You give him a nod through the mirror and watch him turn away as the servants attack your hair.

It takes quite a long while for you to be ready. Hours. They style your hair in an intricate pattern of braids, filling it with decorative pins and clips and spraying it with scented oil.
You end up looking like a flower princess, with all the bejeweled flowers clipped into your hair. You are pretty sure you smell like a bouquet of roses as well.

They powder your face, matching your skin tone exactly, and smear rouge over your lips and cheeks. Then they darken your eyelashes and paint your eyelids with a blue that matches your dress, smudging it at the edges so it blends into your skin.

At the end, even you agree that you look like a queen, or at the very least, a princess.

"You look so beautiful!" the servants coo.

"I'm so jealous!"

"Maybe you'll get to be mother, soon!"

"Here, I collected some red clover blossoms for you. Eat them before tonight, and it will help you conceive!"

You take the pink flowers with a weak smile, glad now that this is all fake and you won't actually have to sleep with Loki to conceive a child. You have nowhere to put them, so you push them under one of your vambraces.

"Well, I think we're about done with you, so let's bring you to the king!" the head seamstress declares.

You obediently follow her, glad to leave the giggling servants behind. You are very nervous. More nervous than the day you first tried to kill Loki, or the day he announced you as the failed assassin to all of Asgard.

You are brought to Loki's bedchambers, where the seamstress gives you a knowing grin and knocks on the door.

"King Loki, your darling is here!" she calls out in a singsong voice.

There are footsteps and then the door opens. When you see him, you almost have a heart attack.

He's dressed in exactly the same clothes he wore in two of your dreams. More specifically, the ones about him holding a sleeping baby in his arms. A high collared black doublet, black breeches, black boots, and a black cravat. All that's missing are the coat and the cape. You don't know how that is even possible, because those dreams had been normal dreams, not those weird linked-with-Loki's-psyche dreams. At least, that's what you thought...

"Something the matter, pet?" Loki asks. "You're staring at me."

The seamstress giggles beside you.

"You're... dressed in all black," you state. "Is this ceremony going to involve a funeral?"

He rolls his eyes. "No, of course not. Now, come in. We have things to discuss."

Still very confused, you step inside and he closes the door behind you.

"Are you nervous?" he asks, walking to his own mirror.

"Yes," you admit, trailing after him.
He beckons you to stand beside him and grasps your shoulders. "You look beautiful. Let me just cast an illusion over your collar."

You nod, watching in the mirror as the collar transforms into a thin golden necklace that barely reaches your collarbones. On its end is a teardrop opal.

"Thank you," you say.

He nods and takes your hand, guiding you to his sofa.

"Do you have any questions or doubts about your duties tonight?" he asks as the both of you sit down.

You shake your head.

"Good. Because if you fail to perform convincingly, I will."

"Yes, I know what you will do!" you snap. "No need to say it!"

He pauses a moment, then sighs. "Alright. I trust you with this. I will now withdraw all my previous orders. You may speak my name and behave freely. For tonight, at least. Do not do anything foolish."

You nod. "Yes... Loki."

It feels strange that nothing happens when you speak his name, but it's good to say it again.

There is a long silence, in which you keep staring at his outfit.

"You look good, too, by the way," you say eventually. "But don't you think black will send the wrong message?"

"Thank you," he replies, "but I have chosen our garments with purpose."

"Which is?" you prompt.

"None of your concern."

You glare at him. "You don't have to be rude."

"Pardon me, I am merely concerned that you will mess this up somehow," he says bluntly.

"Good to know you have such faith in me," you huff, straightening out your skirts.

"You haven't practiced the dance enough," he begins to list. "And you are unfamiliar with royal etiquette. I also doubt your acting skills. If I see you truly lost, I will be forced to give you orders, and then you might find yourself in pain when you slip up."

"You really are nervous," you note. "Don't worry, wedding jitters are normal. I was wondering, when I'm your consort, what does that make you? It's not like you'll be my husband. What do I call you?"

"Your king," he replies sharply.

You pull a disappointed face. "Loki, I... Is there anything I can do to make you less nervous? You're not very pleasant to be around when you're stressed."
He raises an eyebrow. "Are you offering to fellate me?"

You feel your face grow hot. "What? N-no!" you splutter. "That's not-! That's not the only thing I could do in this situation!"

"Come now," he coos, a slow smile forming his face. "You've put the idea in my head now… or do you want me to go out there like this?"

He gestures to his crotch. By the ancients, he's getting hard already!

"Get your libido under control!" you gasp.

"What can I say, I had a very pleasant dream last night," he defends himself. "It's still lingering in my mind."

Your heart stutters in your chest and you almost cough. "What... kind of dream?"

Loki's smile turns sinister. "I dreamt of locking you in the stocks and whipping you until your back was bloody while all of Asgard watched. Then I grabbed your hips and-"

"Please stop!" you yelp, covering your ears. "I don't need to hear that!"

Loki just laughs, and you wonder if he really did dream that, or if he's just lying.

You certainly hadn't dreamt of something so horrible. Loki and you did nothing but make love to each other in your dreams, and then you would touch yourself to the memory of it in the morning while showering. It certainly helps now, because you aren't desperate enough to accept his cruel advances.

Loki fidgets on his end of the sofa, tugging at his pants.

You remove your hands from your ears and feel a pang of pity.

"If you ask nicely, I'll leave the room so you can take care of that," you say pointedly.

Loki laughs again. "You say that as if you think I wouldn't do it right in front of you. No, pet, I have enough self-control. Give it a moment."

You scoot closer to him and reach into his hair, dragging your nails over his scalp.

Loki's eyes widen and he hisses in displeasure. "What are you doing?"

"Relieving your stress," you say innocently, tugging on his hair to bring his head closer to you, and then bringing both your hands into it to rub over his scalp.

He groans and tips his head back toward you, his eyes fluttering half shut.

As you comb your fingers through his hair, you lean forward and whisper hotly into his ear. "You can touch yourself, if you want."

Loki snarls like a wild animal and shifts on the sofa, leaning back against you so he's practically on your lap, his hands fumbling to unfasten his pants.

You massage his head and his temples, and he closes his eyes, one hand wrapping around his erection and stroking it slowly. He groans softly, his breathing labored.
You watch him pleasure himself, while you caress his cheeks, and then his neck. You stroke up and down the front of his throat, feeling it bob as he swallow. He thumbs at the weeping tip of his cock, teasing himself. His eyes are open now, and he's gazing at you.

With one hand, you massage over his head, with the other, you trace the sharp lines of his throat, applying pressure here and there that has his breath catching.

He strokes himself faster now, and his mouth falls open. You touch his lips and then stick the tips of his fingers inside. He presses against them with his tongue, licking at them and sucking them into his mouth.

His breath is coming fast and heavy now, and you see his eyes go glazed.

"Stop," you say.

His eyes go wide, and his hand slowly stills. He gives you a questioning look, your fingers still in his mouth. You pull them out and reach for his cock.

"Let me."

He removes his hand and sits up, allowing you access.

You touch your wet fingertips to it, and it jumps at the contact. Slowly, you drag them up its length, and you see Loki's fists clench as he suppresses a sound.

You explore it gently, feeling the pulsing veins, pressing your fingers against the leaking slit at the top, swiping your thumb beneath the ridge of its head.

Loki curses under his breath. "A... As much as I enjoy your worshipful touch," he begins with a shaky inhale. "Would you please get on with it? We do... not have all night. The ceremony is due to begin, and... my hair must be a mess right n-... now."

You ignore him, knowing full well he would just order you to finish him if he truly wanted it. You slide off the sofa and onto your knees in front of him. Then you wrap your hand around the base of his cock and squeeze, while bringing the other up to play with his balls.

"Damn you, pet!" Loki snarls, practically yanking your hand away from his shaft. "Can you not be trusted with anything?"

He wraps his hand around yours and curves it around his cock again, stroking himself using your hand. You lean forward and take the tip of it between your lips, sucking gently and flicking your tongue against it. Loki makes many tortured noises, bucking into your hands and mouth.

You moan, vibrating against him, still fondling his balls with your other hand.

His breathing grows frantic, and finally he pulses and spurts into your mouth. He bucks upward a few more times before stilling, your mouth pumped full of his seed.

You draw away, keeping your lips closed so not a drop runs out. You sit back on your knees, looking up at him. You are very satisfied with his dazed look and his disheveled hair.

He begins to realize you still have his cum in your mouth, waiting expectantly what you will do with it, while you wait for an order which doesn't come.

"Are you waiting for something?" Loki asks eventually, slowly calming his breaths. "Swallow it, if
you want, or spit it out.” He gestures toward his bathroom.

You tilt your head questioningly, really not even sure what you want. You aren’t even sure why you pleasured him in the first place. Maybe that’s love.

"Are you waiting for an order?” Loki asks, looking uncomfortable. "Pet, I... I really am trying to be kind to you today. I don’t want to order you to please me while you wear the collar. I truly do not care if you swallow or not."

You nod. Then you get up and sit back down on the couch, deciding to swallow it down. You lick over your lips, avoiding looking at him as you taste the last remnants of him on your tongue.

You know Loki is looking at you. You can practically feel his gaze.

"Do you... like that?” he finally asks.

"What? Your cum?” you ask back.

You can see him make a face of discomfort from the corner of your eyes. "Not just that. Pleasuring me."


He stands up and pulls back up his pants. "As I said, I am as nervous as you are. And… you look beautiful."

He walks to the bathroom to wash his hands and fix his hair, and you follow him to so the same. "You already told me that."

"Then I said it twice.” He makes eye contact in the mirror, smoothing his hair back.

"I like this,” you say. "Us, being nice to each other."

"A lot rests on us being nice to each other tonight. We best act the part.” He opens a drawer and pulls out a box.

"So the rebels won’t martyr me when you eventually kill me,” you confirm while you check if your lip-rouge has smeared at all.

He stares at you for a moment, holding a golden crown in his hand. "Yes. So the rebels won’t martyr you.” He turns back to the mirror and places it onto his raven locks.

"You said you won’t kill me,” you say, checking your hair now while inconspicuously staring at the beautiful crown on his head. "What will happen if I run into one of them and they figure out you made me your servant and the whole consort thing was a lie?”

"Would you prefer the alternatives?” he asks with a raised brow, shifting the crown around until it is straight. It's taller at the front than at the back—more of a tiara, really—and has no militaristic symbolic at all. It simply consists of delicate golden points with a few royal Asgardian runes and symbols carved out of their centers.

You shrug. "I'm not sure. I definitely don't want to die. And I want my friends to be safe. And I want you to be nice to me."

"And if those conditions are met?” he questions. "Would you then prefer to have my child over being my servant?”
You shrug again. "I didn't get the impression you would want that. You've just recently claimed the throne. You still have time to find someone better."

"Considering the political advantage, I would prefer a child from a member of royalty," he answers calmly. "Perhaps another realm, to strengthen our alliance."

Now you turn to look at him. "What about you? What do you want? Don't you think you're too young for such a burden? If you weren't king, would you even consider it?"

His eyes move up and down your body. "I am young. So are you. But I am not opposed to having a family. Eventually."

He strides out of the bathroom, fetching a black cape and hooking it over his shoulders.

You follow after him. "Is it time?"

"Just about. Take my arm. You will walk and sit to my left." He extends you his left arm and you take it.

"Who sits to your right?" you ask as he opens the bedroom door.

"You are to the right from the view of a spectator," Loki clarifies, striding out into the hallway and toward the banquet room. "Any of my heirs would sit on the left side of me."

"And your queen?" you question.

"She would sit where you sit. Right now, you are most important. A queen is a consort, unless she rules. But a consort is not always a queen. You would simply move down the table, were I to marry."

You pass by a few servants, who all smile and giggle.

"Have you decided yet which realm you're going to marry into?" you ask. You have so many questions.

"Vanaheim is a traditional choice," he ponders. "But our alliance there holds steady. Perhaps I should consider Alfheim."

"You're gonna marry an elf?" you snicker. "Ooh, what about Midgard? No, too primitive, right? Although, I bet there are some mortals there who would love to quite literally get fucked into the mattress by you."

Loki's expression turns to one of severe annoyance, and he walks a little faster. You are glad now your shoes have only small heels, otherwise you would have trouble keeping up.

"The realm that really needs bonding is Jotunheim," you continue. "After you tried to destroy it, and all. Maybe you should marry into that. Wait no, I can't imagine you with one of those monsters. It would be like sticking your dick in an ice box!"

Murderous fury in his eyes, Loki yanks on your arm so hard, you almost sprawl right to the floor.

"Will you shut your mouth?" he hisses. "Stop. Talking."

A little afraid, you quickly straighten up and nod, keeping your mouth closed at the order that was received by the collar.
"Good." Loki pulls you along again, but you can tell he's still angry.

You reach the banquet hall, and two guards pull open the doors for you. Loki smooths over the front of his doublet and takes a deep breath before striding in with you on his arm.

The hall is decked out and welcoming. Torches and braziers deliver warmth and light, golden and green banners hang from the ceiling above the head table, and every table has been set. They are arranged in a U-shape, with generous space in the middle for dancing, and a little stage with a string quartet playing quiet, cheerful music. You recognize the violinist from your dance practice.

Most people are already there, sitting all around the U except at the head table, and a lot of well-dressed servants are lined up along the perimeter of the spacious room. The guests all cease their conversations and stand when Loki and you enter, genuflecting.

Loki leads you to the one empty table at the closed end of the U, where two ornate chairs are waiting, as well as several symbolically empty ones. The left chair is clearly Loki's, with a high back and green velvet upholstery. The right one is smaller and rounder with blue upholstery, looking slightly more comfortable, which you are happy about.

As soon as you and Loki near the chairs, servants scurry forward to pull them out for you.

Loki releases your arm and gestures for you to sit, which you do. He himself remains standing, and so does every single guest. You glance around the room, seeing jewels and fine robes everywhere.

"You may be seated," Loki announces, and there's the scuffling of chairs as everyone sits. You look up at him, see the crown glint in the torchlight. He looks stunning. You can't turn your eyes away.

"Dear friends, members of the court," he begins. "I am glad you all could come to celebrate this occasion. The beginnings of my reign have been a shaky one, but I feel we have made much progress over the last year."

He pauses and a few people express their agreement.

"Although bad luck came to us in the form of an assassin, victory and fortune are, as always, on my side."

A few respectful cheers and claps.

"She was a gift sent by the Norns themselves, or so it would seem, for she is sitting here today, by my side, and she has been a blessing of happiness and a reprieve from the harshness of ruling. Today I announce my very first consort."

The hall erupts into genuine cheers now, and Loki smiles at them, playing his part supremely well. You also force a smile, nodding to the noblemen and women.

Once the hall has quieted down somewhat, Loki introduces you by name.

Then he turns to you, still smiling gently, and gestures for you to stand up by reaching for you. You rise, and he takes your hand in his.

"My darling," he begins, and a few people coo. "Your beauty outshines the moon and the stars. You shed light into my darkest corners, and give me something to return to after a long day of ruling. You may have come with the intent to kill me, but instead you stole my heart."

More people coo in delight, but all you feel is a heaviness pressing down on you.
He smiles wider, actually forcing tears of happiness into his eyes. "My sweet, I have a gift for you. If you would accept it."

He lets your hand go and holds his hand up with splayed fingers. In a shimmer of green light, a box appears there, about as long as your forearm. A few people gasp.

He hands it to you, and you take it, hearing the scooting of chairs as people try to see better. There are a few whispers of guesses among the crowd.

The box is black with a green ribbon tied around it, which you slowly untie. Your hands feel like they're made of lead as you pull open the lid. When you see what's inside, you are unable to mask your true emotions anymore, and sad tears slip from your eyes.

You see a dagger, a beautiful, intricately decorated dagger with a single emerald in its pommel. Its hilt and its sheath are silver with thin golden patterns inlaid in them, and the blade looks sharp and polished.

Slowly, you put the box down on the table and take the dagger and the sheath out, holding them up for everyone to see. You notice a leather strap on the sheath, just long enough so you'll be able to strap it to your thigh.

There are a lot of awed and approving murmurs. Some people are already dabbing at their eyes.

"Speak, dear," Loki says, smoothly releasing his previous order. "Do you like it? It is symbolic of the night you first came to me, with a dagger strapped to your leg. A dagger you were unable to wield against me, for it was love that sparked between us and snuffed out your rage.

Tears are running down your cheeks, no doubt ruining your makeup.

"Thank you," you whisper, still staring at the dagger. Then, louder, "Thank you."

You turn to him, forcing a small smile. You know this is your part of the speech. "My king. My Loki. I... am endlessly touched by this gift, but my love was not won by you through gifts or riches."

You see Loki narrow his eyes, realizing you are deviating from the script.

"No, I love you because you are kind and gentle. Because your heart burns with fiery passion. I believe I came to you for a reason. A reason beyond you and me, beyond king and assassin. I came to you, because I was guided by a thread of fate and a thread of hope."

From the look in his eyes, you see he's guessing correctly you aren't talking about the first time you came to him, but the second.

"It was as if I could feel that fire, the warmth of it, and something in me flickered to life. My own warmth spread through my heart, and that warmth knew your warmth should never go out. It is my duty to you, my king, to make sure you are kind. To make sure you always have love in your heart. A little candle, warm and bright, for you to keep in the winter."

His eyes widen, and he looks as if he just got déjà vu.

"I love you so very, very much, Loki." Now you take his hand, smiling gently at him as he seemingly struggles with his emotions. "Just like you have given me a gift, I will give you one in return." You place your other hand on top of his. "A child."

You hear one of the guests sob loudly.
"If not now, then when you are ready..." You step a little closer, and see that his eyes are wide and glistening. You give him an encouraging smile, ignoring the pain stabbing your heart. "...I shall grant you an heir. A strong daughter."

There is a confused murmurs in the crowd, but Loki doesn't seem to care that you just went against the long set patriarchal law.

"...Or perhaps a son with the wit and the heart of his father," you add. "Either way, you shall have your heirs. That is my gift to you."

There is a moment of silence, in which everyone seems to be holding their breath.

"My love," Loki says, his voice wrought with emotion. Even his tears have spilled by now. "I wish the joy I feel in this moment accompanies us for a lifetime."

And then he leans in and kisses you.

The whole audience erupts into cheers, accompanied by a few touched sobs.

All you can think about are Loki's lips pressing against yours, Loki's hand cradling the back of your head, Loki's breath fanning over your face, Loki's tongue slipping into your mouth and caressing yours.

You hold him tight against you, forgoing the need to breathe until Loki pulls away with a gasp.

Everyone claps again, and the musicians play a cheerful tune.

He gives you one last look before sitting and looking to the guests. You follow suit.

"Let the banquet begin!" he announces, and the servants immediately begin to scurry into action. Everyone cheers again, and the general atmosphere is celebratory and carefree.

When trolley after trolley of food is wheeled into the room, you are really glad the attention is no longer on you.

You fiddle with the dagger, simply trying to compose yourself and calm your pounding heart. Loki's hand lands on your knee, giving it a reassuring squeeze.

"It's alright, dear," he says softly. "You did well. Eat now. Enjoy yourself. The dance is the only thing you must do now, then you may go into the gardens and get some fresh air, if you wish it."

You nod, staring at your empty plate.

"What may I serve you, your majesty, my lady?" a pleasant female voice suddenly asks.

You realize all the food carts have been lined up in front of you. There is so much of it. You don't even recognize most of these things. They're probably imports from other realms. Expensive delicacies. While you stare at everything, Loki has already decided.

"I shall start with the cream of chanterelle," he says.

A servant takes his soup plate and ladles him a creamy yellow soup.

"And for you, my lady?" the female servant who had spoken previously asks you. Maybe she's the chef.
"Can I have...?" Your stomach rumbles. Your mouth waters. "One of everything?"

The woman stiffens. The servants exchange glances. You feel like you did something wrong, but then she smiles.

"Of course, my lady."

The servants begin taking portions of every single dish, piling them up in front of you on plate after plate after plate. You know you're getting stares, but you are now in food heaven, and you don't care.

"Pregnancy cravings," Loki tells one of the servants, which causes you to stiffen.

The servant stares at him. "Oh-!"

Loki smirks and winks, making it entirely unclear whether he was joking or not. Quickly, the servant continues with their task, looking a little flustered.

As soon as the servants have finished, you grab your fork and your knife, staring eagerly at all the food in front of you.

"May I eat?" you ask.

Loki chuckles. "My soup would go cold, were I to wait for everyone to be served, so the same applies to you. Go on."

The servants have begun wheeling the carts around and serving the other guests, which means less attention is on you.

You use your fork to scoop several delicious looking things onto one plate and begin eating.

"Stars, this is good!" you moan, taking a piece of something different.

You realize then, that Loki has been watching you with an amused look, not even touching his soup yet.

"You know," he says, smiling slyly. "It is not customary to eat all five courses at once, but I admire your courage in mixing the desert course with the main course."

You almost choke on your exotic fruit-whatever-this-is. "These were supposed to be courses?" you splutter. So that's why you were getting stares! "Couldn't you have told me?!"

He just laughs at your embarrassment. "It's alright. I forget sometimes you are an innocent peasant unaccustomed to the royal ways. Eat as much as you want. Fill your belly for once."

You give him an angry look, and resume eating pointedly. "You know," you say through a full mouth, "this tastes really good. I don't get why people eat these courses separately."

Loki takes his fork and reaches over, picking up a piece of fruit from your desert plate. He dunks it in his soup, eats it, and makes a face. "I will have to disagree with you on that one."

You beam at him. You almost forgot for a moment that this isn't real and that everything is horrible.

He smiles back and resumes his meal normally, while you experiment with different flavor combinations.
The meal progresses, and you find yourself stuffed full far earlier than you would like it. You keep eating, trying to fit as much food as you possibly can, but that quickly turns out to be a mistake.

"Loki," you whisper, tapping him on the arm right as he gets served one of his next courses.

"Yes, darling?" he asks, his face immediately filling with worry.

"I think I'm gonna throw up," you say weakly. "The longer I see or smell this food, the worse it gets."

The worry in his expression doubles, and he's already taking ahold of your arms to steady you. "Do you think you will make it to a bathroom?"

"Yes, but I need to go now," you get out through clenched teeth, trying to keep breathing. "Just tell me where the closest one is, and I'll make it there alone."

"By the kitchens," Loki informs you. "Go. I'll tell those who ask that you went to put your gift away before the dance."

He hands you the dagger in its sheath and helps you stand up. You take it and quickly walk around the tables to the nearest exit, hoping not too many people notice your departure.

Once in the hallways, you run. You know where the kitchens are, and so you find the bathroom quickly. Thankfully, it's completely empty.

You spend the next twenty minutes kneeling on the cold floor and being absolutely miserable. You throw up everything you just ate, mourning it briefly, and then you just start to cry and reflect all your life choices.

You are pretty sure your face is a mess, and the crying doesn't help, which only makes you cry harder. You look at the dagger that you're gripping tightly, and feel even more sadness wash through you.

Slowly, you lift the skirts of your dress and strap it to your leg. It's much better there, out of sight. You realize you'll have to return soon, to the dance, but that just makes your stomach twist again.

You get off the floor to the washbasin, confirming in the mirror that you look indeed a mess.

You wash your face and pat down your hair while adjusting a few pins, but the makeup is ruined. You hope no one will notice or care that your face is suddenly bare. Especially Loki, but then again, he knows why you ran off.

Your eyes are puffy and red, but there's nothing you can do about that now. You take a deep breath and wander down the halls back to the banquet.

Loki is there waiting for you by the door. He takes you into his arms immediately, and you see why. The tables are being cleared, and most guests are gathering around the dance floor.

"Am I late?" you whisper, still trying to look like you weren't just crying.

"Just in time," Loki says in a low voice. "How are you? Are you ready for the dance? Don't worry about anything. Just remember the steps and let me lead you."

You nod. "Yeah, I... I think I'm ready," you say shakily, hoping you won't mess this up.

"Alright. Wait for our song to start and I shall lead you onto the dance floor. Do you have the
dagger? I assumed you would keep it on you."

You nod, nervously watching the musicians rifle through their sheet music.

"Good. After we've danced, you are free to mingle as you'd like, or stroll into the gardens. I want you to stab anyone whose hands stray where they're not supposed to."

You cough, immediately deciding not to do that. Unless someone actually threatens you, you won't murder them.

That's when the first notes of your song start, and your heart drops into your stomach. You are so nervous, sweat breaks out all over your body and your hand begin to tremble.

"Just breathe," Loki murmurs, squeezing your slippery hand before pulling you into the middle of the dance floor.

Everyone's conversation dies down, and you see a lot of excited faces all staring at you.

Loki lets your hand go and bows to you elegantly, in perfect rhythm with the music, then holds is hand out again.

You remember to count in your head and curtsy, inconspicuously wiping your hands on your skirts as you do so. Then you straighten up and place your hand in his.

He takes you by the waist and you grab his shoulder, and then you're dancing.

You stare into his eyes, which are glittering in the torchlight, and try to remember the steps as everything in the room fades out.

You feel like you're floating, muscle memory taking over, your body being led by Loki's. You take a wrong turn once, and step on his foot, but he just smirks and pulls you in the right direction. You don't even have time to be embarrassed, because you have to keep dancing.

Your heart is pounding loudly in your chest, and slowly, you smile. When the song ends, Loki surprises you by twirling you around, dropping you into a dip, and kissing you, but then applause fills your ears, and you realize you've done it.

Loki pulls away and straightens you up, bowing to the crowd. You curtsy, and then he leads you off the dance floor as other couples begin to fill it. You're breathless, but blissful.

"Well done, pet," Loki praises, grabbing a glass of an expensive looking drink that's been set out. "I expected you to step on my feet far more often."

"Thank... you?" you say, wondering whether that was even a compliment.

You make a reach for a glass of your own, but Loki slaps your hand away.

"Hey!" you protest. "I only drank water all dinner, I deserve a little-

"You're supposed to be pregnant," Loki reminds you, sipping on his own glass.

You glare at him. "Fine. Then I'm going to the gardens. Whereto?"

He points to a smaller set of double doors near the corner of the hall. "Through there. Leave them open; the guests may wish to stroll through there later on."
You nod and make your way to the doors. You pull them open and step outside, glad to feel the chilly night air on your face.

It's cold, but your armored dress offers decent protection against it. You wander out, trying to find a spot to sit and rest where no one will disturb you.

You go along the palace wall, until you round a corner and find a bench, out of sight from the banquet hall. You sit down and look up at the stars.

You can still hear the faint music, and after a while, a bit of conversation and laughter as people find their way into the gardens.

You're a bit startled when someone rounds the corner and spots you, but then you realize you recognize him. It's Lord Nilsen. And that makes you very nervous.

"Ah, there you are, my lady," he says in his usual smooth and seductive voice. "I wanted to offer my congratulations."

"Thank you," you say, shifting nervously on the bench. You hope against hope he doesn't know you're the same person he saw serving Loki in the meeting room.

"May I?" he asks, already sitting down next to you.

You scoot aside, trying to distance yourself.

"I can tell the king is quite smitten with you," he says, giving you a dazzling smile.

He's wearing an ostentatious purple robe, patterned with golden embroidery and lined with snow white fur. His graying hair is slicked back, his beard neatly trimmed as always.

"We are both smitten with each other," you say, weakly smiling.

"Your dress is quite beautiful tonight, my lady," he says, his black eyes wandering you up and down. "And that necklace."

He reaches up and touches your throat, which causes you to flinch. His fingers skim downward and then he reaches through the illusion and grabs your collar firmly in his hand. Before you can react, his other hand has pressed a dagger to your throat.

Your heartbeat stutters, and you feel yourself being filled with adrenaline. You stare at him, wide eyed. He's smirking.

"He can't hide this from me," he purrs, tugging on the collar and pressing you against the knife in the process. "He can't hide you from me, either. Had I known you were more than just a servant, I would have done this sooner."

Slowly, you move your hand to your leg where you know your gifted dagger to be, pulling up your skirt a tiny bit at a time.

"Why are you doing this?" you ask, hoping to distract him so you can pull it out and kill him.

"I want the collar, little flower," he says, still smiling. "And now I want you. How do I remove this thing?"

He moves the dagger so only the point is pressing against your throat, feeling along the collar for an opening mechanism.
"You can't," you breathe. "Only he can."

You've almost reached the dagger; just a little further-

"Ah, well." He removes the knife and yanks on your collar, pulling you to your feet and causing your skirt to slip back down. "I shall simply have to sever your neck to get it. But not now."

He steps behind you, pressing the dagger against your lower back, beneath the armor plate.

"Walk," he orders, still holding your collar, from behind now. "Don't scream or try to run. My carriage is in the courtyard. You will come with me."

"No!" you say, staying firmly in place. "I won't go with you just so you can murder me."

You pull on your skirts again, trying to reach the dagger once more.

Lord Nilsen just laughs and shoves you forward, making you lose your grip again as your arms flail out. "I'm not going to murder you. Only when the king doesn't pay his ransom. You are far more valuable to me than the collar. Don't you think the king would give me hundreds of collars in exchange for your life? Now, hands in the air and walk with me."

You realize now what he's planning, but you also feel a gnawing doubt. Would Loki really give away something like that for you? Or would he love to be rid of you?

Nilsen keeps shoving you forward, keeping you at arm's length so you have no choice but to stumble forward. You doubt you could break his grip, and you really don't want to get stabbed, so you lift your hands and walk with him.

You decide to bide your time and wait for an opportunity to kill him. Maybe in the carriage, or when he tries to shove you in it.

You walk around the outside of the palace until you reach the courtyard where the guests' carriages are lined up. There are also royal guards there, which is why Nilsen stays behind the corner and whistles quietly.

Your heart drops when you see two men climb out of a carriage, look around, spot you and walk casually toward you.

Nilsen pulls you back behind the corner and shoves you toward the men as soon as they arrive.

They each grab one of your arms, painfully holding it in place.

You kick and struggle, but you don't scream, knowing they will use you as a meat shield if the guards come. Nilsen watches you, grinning.

"You're making a mistake," you hiss. "Loki doesn't care for me! He's just doing this because of the rebel-mph!"

One of the men has shoved a rag into your mouth, cutting off your speech.

Nilsen chuckles lowly, then walks toward you, bends down, and picks something up. Your heart almost stops when you realize it's your dagger. It must have slipped out when you were kicking at the two henchmen. Why didn't you secure it enough?!

He inspects it, turning it about in the moonlight.
"Pretty thing," he says. "A gift from the heart. How would King Loki feel, I wonder, when he finds it sticking in yours?"

You shake your head, making muffled noises of protest as tears trek down your cheeks. Not the dagger. It's the only gift Loki ever gave you, and for some reason, it breaks your heart to see Nilsen holding it.

"Drop it," an all too familiar, all too angry voice suddenly says.

"Ah, there you are," Nilsen says with a charming smile, stepping in front of you as the two henchmen drag you a bit further away.

You make eye contact with Loki over his shoulder, and he looks more furious than you have ever seen him. You frantically shake your head at him, screaming through the gag for him to leave.

"That doesn't belong to you," Loki snarls, stepping menacingly toward Nilsen.

You wonder if he's talking about you, or the dagger. Suddenly, one of the henchmen draws a sword and holds it to your throat.

Loki immediately freezes in place.

"Ah, ah," Nilsen scolds, completely unafraid. "None of that. You do as I say, and she doesn't get harmed. I'm sure you understand the rules."

Loki glares at him with murder in his eyes.

"Now, your little consort here says you don't care for her, but I think you do," Nilsen continues. "Show her how much you care for her. Drop all your weapons to the floor and lift your hands beside your head."

You make eye contact with Loki again. There is tension in his eyes. You don't think he's going to do it. He has far too much pride.

Loki takes a step back from Nilsen. You think he's going to leave, but then he grits his teeth and lifts up his hands.

Daggers clatter to the floor in a pile, seemingly out of thin air.


You stare wide eyed and shake your head.

"No?" Lord Nilsen asks. "Still don't believe it?" He turns back to Loki. "Why don't you show her? Go ahead and kneel."

Loki looks absolutely furious, but he doesn't move.

"Ah? You won't kneel for her?" Nilsen asks, walking backwards toward you. "What about this?"

He takes the dagger and holds it right against your lower belly. Loki's eyes go wide and his hands begin trembling. You don't know if it's fear or rage.

"That's right," Lord Nilsen says. "I suspected she was pregnant. Do you want this child? Do you want future children with her? Then kneel."
"Is humiliation what you want from me?" Loki hisses, sinking down to his knees. He's really shaking now, and you think he's crying angry tears. You can't believe this.

Nilsen smirks, still holding the dagger to your belly. "It is one benefit."

He turns to you now, stroking over your cheek with his free hand. "Look at your beloved king. He's kneeling for you. Isn't that nice? What else shall I make him do?"

He yanks the rag from your mouth so you can talk.

You're trembling, and you don't know if you can talk. "Make him leave," you get out.

"Leave?" Nilsen repeats. "But that's not fun."

"Name your ransom," Loki hisses. "What do you want? Gold?"

"I wanted some of those lovely collars," Nilsen answers, caressing your neck as he speaks. "But now I think I could ask for just about anything, and you would give it to me. First, order her to do everything I say."

Your heart lurches. No...

Loki looks at you, then at Nilsen.

"Pet. Obey his commands. It is for the best."

No, no, no!

Nilsen grins. "Finally. Finally I have everything I ever wanted. Now, King Loki, surrender the throne to me or I will order your little flower to impale herself on her own dagger."

You're trembling hard, and then you watch as Loki slowly stands up and lowers his hands, and all hope leaves you.

"No," he says calmly. "I will not give you the throne."

"No?" Nilsen repeats, sounding angry now. "You want her to die?"

Loki looks at you again. "Of course not. But if you think you can make such ridiculous demands, you are a fool. We are done here."

And then he turns and begins to walk away.

"Come back!" Nilsen splutters. "Men, break her fingers! Make her scream!"

You hear a sickening crack, but your fingers are still in place. Instead, the man holding the sword to your throat drops to the ground beside you, his neck at an unusual angle. Before anyone can react, the same thing happens to the other man. Both Nilsen and you whip around to a furious looking Loki, daggers in hand, just as the illusion in front of you disappears.

Nilsen makes a lunge for you, but Loki throws one of his daggers and it sticks right into Nilsen's throat. He makes a horrible gurgling noise, stumbling backward and clutching at his throat.

Loki stalks toward him, his other dagger raised, and kicks his legs out from under him. Loki is on top of him in an instant, lifting the dagger and bringing it down near his stomach.
"You don't get to do this," he hisses, and Nilsen flails and continues making horrible noises.

Loki stabs him again, a different place this time, and twists the dagger around. Nilsen's whole body twitches as he coughs as he tries not to choke on his own blood.

"You don't get to threaten me," Loki snarls, stabbing him again.

You realize he's avoiding any lethal spots, drawing out his death into agonizing length. You feel sick.

"You don't get to touch her!"

He stabs him. Twists the knife. Nilsen makes painful sounds. His body twitches. There's a lot of blood.

"You don't get to look at her!"

He does it again. More blood, more pain.

"You don't get to make her cry!"

And again. Nilsen's eyes are dropping shut. He's ready to give up.

"Listen to me!" Loki slaps him in the face, stabbing him in the shoulder. Nilsen's body writhes.

"Do you feel my rage?!" He stabs him in the other shoulder. Nilsen looks like he might have passed out, but his body still twitches. "Feel. The. Pain!" He stabs him three more times. "Let it guide you to Helheim!" Loki's voice turns raw from the way he's screaming out these words.

He finally stands up, and then he stomps onto Nilsen's chest, causing him to violently cough up blood, and more of it to spurt out of his throat. He stomps down again. And again, with such violent rage, you don't even fully register what is happening anymore.

You hear bones crack, ribs break, the squelching of blood and flesh. You are pretty sure Nilsen is dead, but Loki bashes his face in with his boot heel until there's nothing left.

You are more terrified than you have ever been. Loki turns to you, and he is covered head to toe in blood. His hands, his beautiful black clothes, even his face has gotten splattered. He rushes toward you and hugs you to him, and had you not thrown up earlier, you would have done so now. Instead, you simply gag and nothing comes out.

You remain stiff as he hugs you tightly against him, covering you in blood as well. The beautiful dress...

You spot your dagger lying in the grass, and you try to squirm away to get it, but Loki's arms are like steel. You can hear his ragged breaths, and you wonder if he's even capable of sane thoughts in this moment.

He doesn't look at you or say anything, but he scoops you up in his arms like a bride.

"Loki, the dagger," you say weakly, pointing. He turns his head and spots it. It shimmers in green and disappears, then reappears on your chest. You take it, slinging an arm around Loki's shoulders for support, and let him carry you inside through a servants' entrance.

Loki doesn't answer you, and simply carries you up to his chambers. You pass a few servants, who scream and run out of the way.

Loki drops you onto his bed, and you think of the beautiful bed sheets that are now soiled as well.

He's standing at the foot of his bed, half cast in shadow and half lit by the moon. His room is dark. From what you can see, he looks absolutely deranged.

"Loki?" you whisper, hoping dearly he won't jump on you like an animal.

He begins to crawl onto the bed, and then he simply collapses on top of you, crushing you under his weight.

You squeak and awkwardly put your arms around him, knowing you are not strong enough to push him away.

"I can't let another man touch you," he whispers. "I need to keep you safe."

"It's okay, Loki," you whisper back. "Nothing happened. You didn't have to come. I would have killed him myself sooner or later."

He lifts his head, but you can't see much of his face, obscured in darkness as it is. His eyes look pitch black, barely reflecting the light behind him. His crown glints, his dark hair hangs over his face, illuminated only from the back of his head.

"No," he says firmly. "You keep this dagger on you, do you hear me? It will protect you. It is the only reason I knew to come."

You lift the dagger up to your face, staring at it in awe. "Is it enchanted...?"

He nods. "Put it under your pillow at night and strap it to your leg during the day. This is an order, understood?"

You nod, lowering your arm again.

"I'll kill every man who touches you," Loki breathes against your face, his fingers brushing along your hairline. "Promise you won't let them."

You nod again, shifting beneath him and wrapping your arms tighter around him. "I promise. I should have known Nilsen wasn't there just to chat."

"The only man who gets to hurt you..." Loki takes some of his weight off you, lying halfway beside you and halfway on top of you, propped up on one elbow. "...is me."

Again, you nod, shifting closer and craning toward his lips. He kisses you just barely, a brief brush of his lips, a tickle of his breath.

"The only man who gets to do anything to you, is me," he decides. "I will never let you leave."

You slide one of your legs between his, seeking out his lips again. He lets you kiss him. Short, worshipful kisses planted on his lips again and again as you tangle your limbs with his.

Loki moves again, rolling on top of you and keeping his weight up on both elbows on either side of
You. He begins to return the kisses, slowly grinding himself against your leg.

You've never kissed like this. Soft pecks on your lips, so very gentle. It stirs something inside you that goes beyond desire. You can't get enough of this, arching up against him and kissing him with much more desperation than before.

Loki keeps grinding against you until the both of you are out of breath.

"I wish I could do this," he pants, pulling away from you. "But we can't."

"Why not, Loki?" you whine, trying to keep him pressed against you.

"We talked about this," he says, sitting up and pulling the crown off his head, then smoothing down his hair.

"Just give me the potion," you suggest, propping yourself up on your elbows.

"It isn't just about that." He stands up and puts the crown away, then begins to strip off his blood stained clothing.

"Then what is it about?"

He ignores you. He removes his cape, his doublet, his boots, tossing them all into a pile on the floor. When he strips off his pants, you're already in front of him. You yank off the plating of your dress and the red clover blossoms spill to the floor. You had completely forgotten about them.

Loki stoops down and picks one up, inspecting it. "Red clover? Were you hoping for something?"

Your face grows hot, but you hope he can't tell in the dark. "A servant gave it to me."

With all the armoring removed, you quickly pull off the rest of your dress. Loki's gaze is drawn back to you, especially when you strip off your shoes and underwear to become equally as bare as him.

You step over the pile of clothes and hug him against you. You can feel everything. Every contour of his muscles, every shift of breath, the throbbing of his erection against your belly. He must be able to feel you just as well, squished against him as you are.

You hear him inhale a ragged breath. Then he slowly removes your arms from around him, walks over to his desk, pulls open a drawer, and takes out a small potion bottle.

You feel your heart leap. He just sighs and hands it to you. You quickly uncork it and drink it all down. It has almost no taste, but you wouldn't care if was the bitterest thing you ever drank.

Loki goes over to the window and pulls it open, letting in the frigid night air.

"Well, then," he says, defeated, and beckons you over.

You practically leap over to him. He turns you so your back is to the open window and presses his body against you, his hands on your hips. You put yours on his shoulders.

"Are you ready?" he asks, nuzzling against your neck.

"I've been for weeks," you whisper.

He makes a low noise and hoists you up so you're sitting on the windowsill. You look down behind you, a nervous thrill running through you when you see how far the drop is. Your grip tightens on
Loki’s shoulders and you turn back to him.

He's still holding your hips, looking at you with a mix of resignation and desire. He steps between your legs and your heart beats even faster.

You hook your legs around his hips, shivering from the cold and the excitement.

He drags the head of his cock through your folds a couple of times, still looking as if he isn't quite happy with this.

"This means nothing," he finally says, and slides himself all the way inside you.

You moan and shudder, bucking forward and pressing yourself against him. Stars, this feels wonderful. You feel so perfect and full. You don't ever want to let him go.

He rocks slowly into you, wrapping his arms around you more securely and dropping his head on your shoulder.

You buck back against him, listening to his heavy breaths. He turns his head and you feel his teeth graze over your shoulder beneath the collar.

Neither of you says anything or moves out of the other's embrace. The room is filled with nothing but the night air, the soft grunts and heavy breaths, the sound of skin on skin, and the liquid light of the moon.

As his thrusts get more powerful, his hand moves between you and rubs over your clit. You cling to him for dear life, your back arching and your head falling backwards, the moon right above you. When you spasm around him, he bites down on your shoulder, muffling his grunts, and works himself to completion.

You feel him spill inside you, slowly coming to a stop. You cease rocking your hips, relaxing your grip on him as both of you pull apart.

You stare at each other for a while, simply catching your breath. You notice now just how chilly it's his, and shiver as your skin erupts into goosebumps. Loki lifts you off the sill and puts you back on your feet.

You turn away from him, looking to the bathroom. "What about a hot bath? To wash away all the blood?"

He walks past you into the bathroom and readies the water. Neither of you says anything as you wait for the water to heat and tub to fill. While Loki begins to line up soaps, washcloths, and sponges on the edge of the tub, you dip your foot in, testing the temperature.

It's nice and hot, and you sit down fully in the water, leaning back. Loki pours some of the soap into the water and joins you. He takes a sponge, lathering it up, and leans forward, gently rubbing it over your face and removing the blood that got smeared on your cheeks. You sit still and simply watch him. Once he's done, he moves on to the other parts of your body that got blood on them. Your hands, your neck, your back. His hands had a lot of blood on them, and he seems to have smeared it over most of your naked body.

As soon as he's done, you take the now rust colored sponge from him and put it away, taking a fresh one and soaping it up. Now you lean toward him and begin to clean his body. You wash his face and his hands, his throat and his chest. His clothes had covered most of him, so he isn't as bloody as you, but you wash him everywhere anyway. He touches you while you wash him, caressing your
arms and back. You end up on his lap, your fingers tangled in his hair as his hands slide all over your wet body. They end up between your legs, rubbing you gently until you buck against his hand.

"Turn around," he says, and you sit between his legs with your back to him.

He keeps one arm around you, cupping you between your legs and gently tormenting you while the other begins pulling the pins from your hair.

You squirm in the hot water, reaching behind you to grasp Loki's cock. He groans softly and keeps undoing your hairdo. You clumsily pump your hand up and down, bucking futilely against his palm.

Loki pulls his hand away to gently remove your hand from him.

"Shhh," he breathes against your ear. Then he puts his hand between your legs again and grinds his palm against you.

You whimper, but he just takes his time unraveling each of your braids. He pushes a finger inside you, rubbing against you until you're quivering with need.

Finally, he has removed every pin and undone every braid, and he draws his hand away, lifts you up, and brings you down over his cock.

Your eyes roll back as you're finally filled again. Inside you is the only place he should ever be. You slowly begin rolling your hips and moving up and down, causing the water to slosh. The drag of his thick cock inside you is the most exquisite pleasure you can imagine right now.

Loki’s palm grinds down on your clit again while his other hand torments your nipples. His mouth is on your neck, sucking on your skin just above the collar.

You have to clutch at the edges of the tub to not go delirious with agonizing pleasure, bouncing up and down on him with only one goal in mind.

Soap bottles fall off the edge of the tub, water splashes up and onto the floor, your leg muscles cramp with effort, and your mouth lets out shameless noises. You ride Loki with complete abandon, driven by the primal need to cum and nothing else.

He bites and sucks on your flesh, marking you. His fingers twist and pull on your nipples, his other hand pressed firmly to your clit. He grunts with effort, bucking up into you and hitting you deep.

Finally, you cum, shuddering and squeezing down around him, but you don't want to stop. Panting breathlessly, you lift off him and turn around, shoving him back by his shoulders and sliding down on him again.

He groans, his eyelids fluttering, but you don't give him a moment's breath before you flex your inner muscles and begin riding him again. His fingers twitch uselessly in the air as he tries to reach out for you, but he's desperate and throbbing and unable to do anything but take it.

You fuck yourself on him hard and fast, rolling your hips to reach that one spot inside you. Your fingers dig into his shoulders, pulling on strands of his hair as you work yourself to another orgasm. Loki is groaning and breathing heavily, his voice breaking off more and more the closer he gets. He manages to grab your hips and slam himself up in you repeatedly before finally cumming.

You manage to climax along with him, your hips jerking as he fills you with his release. Your hands clench and then release him as you slump against him, running your hands over his chest and kissing his wet skin.
He softens inside you, but is too exhausted to pull you off him. You keep stroking and kissing him, feeling his rapid breaths slowly calm down. Eventually, his hands find your back and stroke it up and down, playing with the ends of your hair.

You lie like this until the water loses its heat and you begin to shiver. That's when Loki pulls you off him and cradles you in his arms, lifting you up out of the water and carrying you to his bed, wet as you are. He strips away the blood stained covers and brings over several big towels and woolen blankets.

You huddle up in a towel and he dries your hair for you. As he does so, you take another towel and begin to dry his body.

Once both of you are somewhat dry, he lays you down and covers you in three woolen blankets, tucking you in tightly, then joins you underneath them and pulls you close. Despite his cool body temperature, you feel nice and warm and safe against his naked body. His skin is still somewhat heated from the bathwater and you trace over his back muscles with your fingertips.

You don't know how it happens, but a minute later, he's thrusting gently into you while your breaths mix in a warm and loving kiss. There's no hurry this time. The pleasure comes in slow waves and you don't think any climax is worth the feeling of being so closely connected to him. Skin against skin, warm lips softly caressing each other, a part of him inside you, gifting you gentle pleasure. You hook your leg over his, and then simply stay like this.

Your combined breaths become slower, your eyes droop shut. Occasionally, one of you shifts to pull the other closer. His cock stays half hard inside you.

You don't think about what you're feeling in this moment. You just know that you're warm and safe, and that this will probably be the best night's sleep you've ever had.

That's when the nightmares start.

Chapter End Notes

I hope you enjoyed this! If you liked that little bit of Loki whump, next chapter is going to have even more of that. I can't always torture just the reader, now can I?
Chapter 34

Chapter Summary

Nightmares, sex, jealousy. The dangerous battle of love, lust, and desire.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is just as long as the last, woo! It might have to tide you over for a little while.

**WARNING:** Loki is increasingly unstable and cares a lot less about consent as the chapter goes on. There will be quite a lot of bad feelings involved. Read only when you feel ready to get punched in the chest. Maybe you want to divide this chapter into bite sized pieces so it's easier to digest, or, you know, snort up all this delicious pain like the masochist you are.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Loki is sitting on his throne, but he looks different. He's younger, his face a bit softer, his eyes more innocent. His hair is significantly shorter, just barely going halfway down his neck. He looks troubled, rubbing his fingers over his mouth.

Slowly, he stands up, putting his helmet on his head and gripping Gungnir.

"Leave my presence," he says firmly, his eyes trained on something behind you.

You turn and get an immediate jolt of fear. There's a frost giant not three steps away. It's huge and menacing, with blue skin and red eyes and horns, just as monstrous as they were always described.

It laughs, and the sound turns your blood to ice.

"No, little king, I'm not leaving," it says with a devious smile that reveals sharp teeth. "We made a deal. Odin's life. Revenge. After all, you're one of us."

You turn back to Loki, who has descended the steps of his throne.

"Odin's already dead," Loki says. "I killed him. Now I'm king."

"What of his family?" the jotunn asks. "I can kill them as well. His wife and his little prince."

You can see Loki's fingers gripped tightly around the spear as he levels it with the jotunn's chest.

"You won't touch them," he says, and as much determination as there is in his voice, there is also fear.

The giant laughs. "I'd like to see you try, little runt. You're not nearly as powerful as we are. I'm surprised you survived at all."
Loki’s face twists in rage and he shoots a blast of golden energy out of Gungnir. It hits the giant in the chest, who sprawls backwards, grunting out in pain.

Loki advances on it, but when he takes his next step, the ground opens up beneath him. For a moment, Gungnir catches on the edge of the chasm and Loki’s fingers scrabble to keep hold of it.

You run forward, wanting nothing more than to pull him back up, but as soon as you reach the edge, his fingers open and he falls. You have no choice but to jump in after him.

You fall for a while, and then you crash-land on a dusty planet you’ve never seen.

You see a very tall woman with curved horns and blue hair, holding Loki aloft by his own hair. He’s chained up in heavy cuffs around his wrists, ankles, and neck. They seem to do a lot more than just restrain him, because he helplessly hangs there, his toes scraping over the ground as he tries to put his weight down.

"You're so small," she says. "Strange, that master wants to keep such a frail little thing. But I'll have fun breaking you either way. I bet you look real pretty when you cry, asgardian. How long will it take you to beg for mercy, I wonder?"

She contemplates for a moment, then tosses him to the ground. He grunts and slowly heaves himself up, struggling to balance enough to stand. Before he can right himself, the woman kicks him and he sprawls back to the ground. He’s covered in dust now, and when he lifts his head, his expression is full of defiance.

The alien woman smiles down at him, grabbing a spear with three blades at the end. Around the blades, electricity begins to spark.

She stabs it down at Loki, who rolls out of the way. She just laughs and swings at him again.

Loki tries to stand, but she hits him across the shins and stabs the blades into his back. His body convulses against the ground and he screams. His fingers twitch in the dirt, his open mouth leaking saliva.

The woman smiles the entire time, until she finally draws the spear away. You can see the blades glisten with Loki’s blood, his armor cut open in three places.

As soon as the spear has been removed, Loki lifts himself back to his hands and knees, glaring murderously up at the alien.

"I will have your head," he snarls. "You don't know what I am capable of!"

"At the moment, I'd say nothing much." She paces around him as he struggles back to his feet. "We’ve taken your little tricks away, and we’ll take away your armor, your pride, and your sanity in time. I'm just warming up. Let's see how long it takes for you to pass out."

She cracks him over the back of the head with her spear and then stabs it into his leg as soon as he falls flat to the ground. He screams again, his body spasming wildly, causing the blades to tear further into his flesh. She lets the spear go, and it remains upright, pinning his leg into the ground.

She steps back and watches as he claws at the ground, attempting to jerk his leg free but only making it worse for himself.

You can't bear to watch this, but you seem to have no control over this dream.
Wake up. You have to wake up.

You manage to get enough control to make the scene fade, but are met immediately with an equally horrifying one.

You're in a room with metal floors and metal walls. In the corner is Loki, half sitting, half lying. He looks jarringly different from before, and judging by the length of his hair, a lot of time has passed.

He's scrawnier and malnourished. His cheeks are hollow, his eyes closed and sunken. His hair is matted and sticking to his sweaty skin. His lips are cracked and slightly open. His tongue looks dried out. He's still chained up, but this time they seem to be regular rusty manacles, which he normally would have no problem getting out of. His armor is torn to shreds, as if he or someone else had tried to rip it off and failed. Under the scraps of leather, you see festering wounds and burn marks, his skin worryingly reddened. His head is leaning partly against the wall, partly on his shoulder. He seems to be unconscious or sleeping, and his position doesn't look comfortable. Sweat is beading down his face.

A door opens behind you, and someone steps into the room. Loki's eyes don't open. His chest barely moves with his breaths.

It's another woman, smaller with a bald head and startlingly blue and purple skin. You notice that her body and face have several mechanical components. She's carrying a small tin cup.

"I hate babysitting," she says in a metallic voice, taking a step into the room. "At least you don't try to beg me for anything. Has your throat dried out or do you simply not talk?"

There is no response from Loki, though you see his eyelids flutter slightly.

"I brought you water," she says unemotionally, placing the tin cup down and nudging it over to him with her foot. A few drops spill over, and you are shocked to see how quickly they dry on the metallic floor. It must be extremely hot in this room.

Now Loki's eyes crack open, and they look empty and hollow. He looks down at the cup, and slowly, he moves.

He turns slightly and begins to reach down for it, his bony hands shaking visibly. He needs both of them to keep the cup steady, and it takes him a long while before he has lifted it to his lips. You can see his face is strained from the effort.

He tips it back and you see his eyes lose focus, as if he's struggling with consciousness. For a moment, you wonder if he'll drop the cup, but then he finally manages to take a sip. His throat bobs and he tries to tip it back further, drinking more. He looks like he's barely holding on. Then, a tremor runs through him and his hands shake so badly the cup clatters to the floor and spills its contents. Again, the water dries alarmingly quickly.

He looks so dismayed, you'd think he just lost the most precious thing in the world.

"You look like you're going to cry," the woman says, having watched the whole thing. "But I suppose you have nothing left for that. You don't like the heat. And still, you hold onto this form. Your last shred of pride. Your very primal strength is sapped, and you still cling to your lies. You know he won't talk to you until you let go of it. You can end this by just giving in. Bend the knee. You can't escape this. We know you can't die so easily. I know you're hoping to. Your eyes are screaming it. But death won't save you from him. Give in, and you'll be healed. Not too much, but enough. He wants you complacent."

"You look like you're going to cry," the woman says, having watched the whole thing. "But I suppose you have nothing left for that. You don't like the heat. And still, you hold onto this form. Your last shred of pride. Your very primal strength is sapped, and you still cling to your lies. You know he won't talk to you until you let go of it. You can end this by just giving in. Bend the knee. You can't escape this. We know you can't die so easily. I know you're hoping to. Your eyes are screaming it. But death won't save you from him. Give in, and you'll be healed. Not too much, but enough. He wants you complacent."
Loki says nothing, not even looking at her. His eyes are glazed over, slowly drooping shut again.

She steps a bit closer, nudging him with her foot. His eyes open again, but he doesn't respond otherwise.

"Look at you. You've stopped healing. It's only a matter of time before your mask drops. Do you like the torture? You can always give in and end it. You know what you are. A monster, like me. Just accept it. You're a freak. A runt. Unwanted. Thrown away." She leans a little closer, studying him. "I've accepted it. Why can't you?"

Slowly, almost imperceptibly, Loki shakes his head.

"Forget your pride," she insists, her voice harsher, but still very monotonous. "Forget your mother. She won't save you. It's been a long time since you were able to call out her name in your sleep. Your body won't break, but your mind is going to. It's time for you to let go."

Loki's eyes slowly meet hers, and you see a last, defiant blaze of anger in them.

The woman sighs. "That's not good. Now I have to tell them you're still resisting, and you know what that means."

Loki's eyes squeeze tightly shut, and another tremor runs through him.

You are suddenly plunged into blackness, and a few moments later, you wake up with a gasp. You sit up in bed, your heart pounding loudly, your breath coming rapidly. Sweat has broken out all over your skin. You are horrified at what you just saw.

You remember where you are, and look over to Loki, surprised to see him propped up against the headboard, eyes open and glassy, staring into nothingness.

"Loki?" you say softly, but he doesn't react. "Loki, I just had a nightmare, and…"

He's still not moving, and you get a brief shock of panic before noticing that he's breathing and blinking slowly.

You move over to him, gently placing your hand on his arm. He jerks up, suddenly grabbing your wrist and bending it back harshly, immobilizing your arm.

You yelp out in pain, struggling futilely against his grip.

"Loki!" you gasp. "Stop! What are you-?!"

His eyes seem to focus and he releases you. "For...forgive me. I had forgotten you were here."

"Ow!" you complain, rubbing at your aching wrist. "What's the matter with you?"

He slumps back against the pillows. "Nothing. I'm merely a little on edge after what happened yesterday."

You settle in next to him, feeling very concerned. "Is there anything I can do to help?"

He sighs. "We had enough sex for one night, don't you think?"

"That's not what I-!"

His eyes suddenly get a lot darker. "But since you offered…"
Before you can protest, he has pinned you to the bed by your wrists, his lips attacking yours.

He's being a lot rougher than before. Biting at your lips, his tongue practically wrestling yours into submission, his cock already hard and grinding against you. You're surprised he even takes the time to prepare you, albeit very rushed and methodically, before he shoves his length inside you.

He fucks you as roughly as you expected him to, but you find yourself a little disappointed. You had wanted to talk, not have I'm-letting-my-aggression-out-on-you-so-I-can-avoid-my-problems sex. Regardless, it still feels kind of good, so you decide not to say anything and just take it.

"Have I ever told you... what a good fuck you are?" Loki grunts between thrusts.

You feel yourself unwillingly respond to the compliment. "How so?" you ask.

Loki is silent for a moment, contemplating while he keeps fucking you into the mattress. "You're a greedy little slut, for one thing," he answers.

You roll your eyes.

"You feel good," he continues. "You smell good. You taste good. You infuriate me and make me want to force you into submission. You're delicious when you cry out in pain and arousal. I feel like I can do things to you my other women would run away from."

"Anything else?" you ask.

He narrows his eyes slightly. "I suppose the fact that we absolutely loathe each other makes this even better."

"That's exactly what I wanted to hear," you say ironically, freeing one hand from his grasp and stroking over his hair.

He groans and changes the angle of his thrusts. "I'd love to cover you completely in my cum. It is an urge I have only with you."

You lick your lips. "Enticing."

He growls and narrows his eyes at you, clearly not amused at your mocking remarks.

"Inside and outside," he adds. "Everywhere."

He slows down a little, and you don't like the look on his face.

"How about it?" he asks, panting slightly. "I've only fucked your ass once."

"No," you say immediately, your eyes widening slightly.

"You liked it," he insists.

"I didn't!" you protest.

He draws out of you and reaches for his nightstand drawer.

You sit up and scramble away from him. "Loki, no!"

"You wanted to play whore again," he says, rummaging around in it and pulling out two handcuffs and a bottle with clear liquid. "That's what whores do."
"No, no, no," you repeat. "That's not why I wanted this! I- I know you're just doing this because you're trying to ignore your problems. You want to hurt me to deflect your own pain…"

Loki sighs and puts the two items down on top of the nightstand. "If you don't stop trying to analyze everything I do, I will have to gag you like the first time."

Your eyes widen and you grab a blanket, jumping off the bed and backing away, covering yourself with it.

Loki eyes you curiously, then gets off the bed to follow you. "Are you scared of me?"

You quickly shake your head, backing further into the room. "N-no. I just... don't like it."

"But it felt good, did it not?" Loki asks, still stalking after you.

"Yes, but-... You- you aren't supposed to be there," you stammer. "It felt weird. Wrong. Especially with the things you said."

Loki grins like a wolf. "Who knew you had morals about what's 'supposed' to be fucked and what's not? Now, what did I say again? Something about how your worth is directly tied to your ability to take my cock? Was that it?"

You stare at him with shock, finding yourself rooted to the spot. He reaches you and his hands land on your upper arms. Then he leans down and kisses you.

You melt immediately. His lips and tongue are soft and magical.

As soon as he feels you relax, his mouth slides off yours and to your ear.

"Seems we're lacking a little bit of trust, hm?" he whispers.

You jerk away from him. "I thought there was no 'we'? I thought this was nothing? That I'm just your servant and you won't ever take me back?"

Loki is still smiling. "Oops."

You stumble back a few steps. "S-so you want me back just so you can fuck me in the ass?" You don't like at all how dark and demanding Loki is being. How obvious it is that all he cares about getting off right now.

He laughs with amusement. "Didn't you want this? To have sex with me again? That's all you want, too, isn't it?"

You shake your head. "No. No, that's not all I want."

"Then what else?" he asks, coming closer again, a curious twinkle in his eyes.

You turn away from him, sitting down on his sofa. "I want..." You break off, shaking your head. No, you can't just tell him that. He doesn't feel the same way about you. He's put the walls back up.

He sits down on the sofa beside you. "You may not know what you want," he murmurs, "but I know what you need. You need to be fucked nice and hard on my cock. We have a couple of hours ere sunrise. Why don't you get on your hands and knees on the bed and I'll fuck you until your mind goes blank? I promise I won't take your ass until you ask for it, but I can't promise I won't try to entice you."
You simply nod. "Okay," you whisper and stand up, walking back to the bed. You put the blanket down and crawl onto the mattress, staying on your hands and knees.

You hear Loki come up behind you, feel the mattress dip, feel one hand landing on your hip, the other moving between your legs to gently rub over your clit, teasing you until you're gushing for him. His cock rests at your entrance, and then he reaches for the bottle of lubricant, smearing some onto his fingers.

"Relax," he whispers, pushing the head inside you to show you his cock has no intention of taking your ass.

Then you feel his fingers at your other hole, rubbing over it and pressing in just slightly and you moan as his cock fills you.

He's done this before without your permission, but it seems now he wants to prove to you that you can enjoy it more.

As his cock rocks into you in steady thrusts, he pushes his finger ever so slowly into your puckerred hole, causing your hands to grip at the sheets. He doesn't go very far, simply pushing and pulling, stretching your muscles and pressing against the thin wall that divides his finger from his cock.

The sensation has you trembling, your eyes rolling back as you try to piece together any sort of coherent thought.

"That's a good girl," Loki coos. "It feels nice, doesn't it? So much more intense. I could give you a plug again, but I feel like you just want to be fucked by my cock and my fingers right now, yes?"

You're gasping, not trusting yourself to answer. Loki takes that as a yes, pushing his finger further into you and fucking you with it, while he begins snapping his hips harder and deeper.

His other hand grips your hair, tugging it in a firm hold, and you feel a second finger push at you.

Your muscles squeeze down around him and he groans. Your whole body is shuddering when he manages to push the second finger into you. It's a stretch, but the slight sting is kind of good. You begin to fuck yourself back against him, hearing the obscene squelching sounds of the lubricant and your own natural slick.

Loki's grip tightens in your hair. "Tell me now, darling. Do you like this?"

You're gasping, clutching at the sheets and fucking yourself on his fingers and his cock. Of course you like this. You like this, because he wants you to like it. Not like the other times, where he only cared about himself.

"Say it," he commands, slamming harshly into you while being gentle with his fingers.

"Y-yes," you confess. "I like it."

"Do you want another finger?" he asks, still tugging on your hair.

You shake your head. "This... This is good."

"Alright." He doesn't falter in his rhythm, but he does curls his fingers slightly to stretch you wider. "Perhaps I should introduce you to my vibrating toys someday. They're a Midgardian invention. I feel I could make a fortune selling them here. The only bother is that they require batteries, but I've figured out a way to control them with magic."
You have no idea what he's talking about, and you feel like he really should be talking about something sexier.

"Loki," you moan. "Tell me… tell me filthy things."

His fingers stop briefly and he chuckles. "Do you want me to insult you? To call you my little whore as I fuck you everywhere I please? You like being the rebel who ends up dominated and fucked by the man she was supposed to kill, don't you?"

You groan loudly, squeezing his cock as the lust blinds you.

He pushes your head down to the mattress and lets your hair go, reaching down and rubbing over your clit.

"Yes, that's it, darling," he says, watching you helplessly writhe beneath him. "You will always end up beneath me. So powerless. Just a little hole for me to take my pleasure from. You love the humiliation of it. To take the big cock of your tormentor and squeeze it tightly, milking it for all it's got. It makes you so wet, darling, so wet. You like the depravity I introduce you to. Getting fucked in your tight little ass. Getting beaten. Forced to do whatever I wish."

You can feel the pleasure overwhelm you, the coil tightening in your belly.

"Ah- Loki!" you call out. "Oh Norns!"

"Cry out to them all you like, but I'm your only master. I'm your purpose. Your entire reason for being. I command your mind and your body." He reaches down and tugs on your collar, choking you. "And now I order you to cum. Cum for me. Do it now."

You don't need the collar to obey this order. You cry out as control is ripped away from you, the orgasm shredding through you with such intensity that you lose your sight for a few moments. You squeeze down around Loki, desperate for his own release, your body twitching and wanting nothing more than to have his seed inside you.

Loki pulls his fingers out, perhaps a little roughly, his hips snapping harshly until he grabs your waist and holds himself deep inside you, making breathless grunts as he finally coats your insides with his cum.

The pleasure hasn't left your body, little aftershocks causing you to contract around him as he pumps you full. He manages to pull out before collapsing beside you, immediately pulling you in his arms. His magic slides over your and his body, cleaning all the fluids away, and then your tired mind immediately drops off to sleep, your body still pressed against him.

***

You wake up in Loki's bed with the sun high up in the sky. Shit. You were gone all night and half a day! Rika must be worried sick, and Sigrid must be looking for you because you didn't show up to do your chores!

Still, the little ache you feel between your legs kind of makes this worth it. Loki really hadn't been able to keep his hands off you. He even admitted he still wanted you.

You slide out of bed and see a covered tray and a note on the table across the room. Still entirely naked, you wander over to it, picking up the note.
Pet—

This is for you. Feel free to stay in my chambers for as long as you like. If you want to bathe again, go ahead. I've notified Sigrid you are excused from work today. If you decide not to stay until tonight, I invite you to return to my chambers after your evening meal. In case you do not to come, know that I will respect your choice. Remember to keep the dagger on you.

Your One and Only Master,

Loki

You stare at the note for a moment. Loki is inviting you back into his bed. Perhaps he wants you there every night. Perhaps you'll fall in love with him again, this time, with a collar around your neck. Do you want that?

It's clear neither of you are over the lust for each other. But perhaps that's all there is? Maybe you won't fall in love again. Maybe you can do this risk free.

Or maybe you shouldn't let Loki manipulate you with sex anymore. Maybe he just wants to sate his own dirty fantasies and then toss you out and go to the next whore. He still has Lady Anise, after all. Could you demand he stop sleeping with her?

Your stomach growls. This can wait until tonight. You want a bath, and you need to eat.

Being pragmatic, you bring the tray over to the bathtub and eat your breakfast while bathing. It's a moment of luxury you thoroughly enjoy. If there's one benefit of sleeping with Loki, it's the bountiful breakfasts and the hot baths.

You end up deciding to leave and return to Rika. You spot the dagger on his nightstand and strap it to your leg. Then you go to the little cabinet where your clothes used to be, and are surprised to still find them there. You rifle through them to see if any of them look inconspicuous enough for you to wear, but the fancy fabrics and bright colors would immediately stand out amongst the servants. You contemplate taking a bathrobe or wearing a loose tunic, but that would just scream "walk of shame", so you'd rather take some clothes above your pay grade.

You put on a turquoise dress so you aren't immediately associated with Loki, and finally leave the room. Outside the door, several servants are waiting, quickly rushing in to do their chores. If you had known they were waiting for you to leave, you would have hurried it up with that bath.

You return to the servants' quarters, thankfully finding them deserted, and quickly change back into your simple linen uniform. You'll have to return the dress to him at one point. Maybe tonight.

You fold it up and hide it under your blanket for now.

But what to do in the meantime? It'll be a while before Rika is done with her work, and you don't exactly feel like joining her. Maybe you can take a chance and see if the collar allows you to go outside. You would love to see the sun again. The days are turning colder, and you really should make use of it.

You walk through the corridors, holding yourself with purpose so nobody thinks to stop you. You make it to one of the many doors that lead outside and carefully open it.

You are hit with a breath of fresh air and the sound of birds chirping. Praying silently in your head,
you move your foot over the threshold. The collar remains still. Yes!

You step outside and close the door behind you. Maybe Loki forgot to revoke your garden privileges after the ball, or maybe you had them all along.

Feeling elated, you stroll over the grass and gaze at the beautiful flowers. You take a deep breath and feel some tension leave you. Walking deeper into the gardens, you feel at peace.

That is, until you reach the secluded area where you and Loki were once, with the garden swing and the gazebo. As you walk along the outside of the tall hedges, you hear voices. More specifically, Loki's voice. And that of another woman.

The wind doesn't carry their words toward you, but you do hear soft laughter. Carefully, you peer around the hedge and see Lady Anise sitting in the Gazebo, drinking tea with Loki. She's smiling at him, and you can't see Loki's face, but his body language is relaxed.

You can hear bits and pieces of their conversation, which seems to be mainly chit-chat and flirty comments. When Lady Anise reaches for the pot of sugar, Loki's hand lands on hers, his fingers gently stroking over it. She smiles, turning her gaze almost shyly down at where their hands touch.

You feel your mood sour. You feel your bile rise. You feel your fists ball. Okay, so Loki made her pleasure him while you were in the same room to make you jealous. You got that. Loki also feels lust toward you, which he was unable to deny last night. What you don't understand is why, after fucking and making love to you all last night, he is now flirting with her, completely unaware that you are watching, and still expecting you to come to his chambers tonight.

Rage fills you like hot tar. You stare murderously at the two of them, seeming so carefree and easy around each other. Lady Anise leans forward and Loki does, too, and then they kiss tenderly before pulling away again. If you didn't know any better, you'd think they were freshly in love! But you do know better, right? She's a prostitute! He pays her! Apparently to drink tea with him and kiss him tenderly. Apparently.

What if he does love her? What if he does only want your body and nothing more? He certainly never drank tea with you before! What if you are the prostitute and she is... No. No, that can't be!

You realize in your agitation, you've been ripping leaves off the hedge, and now you've accidentally pulled on a sturdy branch that causes the whole hedge to shake. Before you can duck away, Lady Anise's eyes land on you. At first she looks confused, and then she smiles.

"Oh, you're that servant I like!" she says, pointing at you.

Loki turns as well now, his gaze immediately darkening when he spots you.

You gulp, trembling and frozen on the spot. You're so angry and so hurt. You want to scream and run away, but you also want to punch Loki in the face. How does he have the audacity to look guilty right now?

"Come, join us!" Anise calls, beckoning you over.

Fists balled, you march over to the gazebo, going up the wooden steps until you stand in front of their table. Loki nervously shifts in his seat.

"Ah... Hello," he says, not even looking you in the eyes.

Before Lady Anise can say anything, you slam your fists down on the table, causing the teacups to
rattle.

Both of them flinch.

"You...!" You take a shuddering breath, needing to calm yourself enough to even speak. "You took advantage of me! Let me believe you still wanted me! You made me promise not to let another man touch me, and here you are, kissing another woman!"

Your nails dig into the wood of the table. Lady Anise looks astonished, but wisely remains silent.

Loki shifts awkwardly in his seat. "Pet..." he begins, but you interrupt him.

"No! I'm not your pet, am I? I'm just your slave! Last night was just a trick, wasn't it? You don't want me back at all! You just wanted to humiliate me!"

Loki's gaze darkens again, his tone turning to ice. "Don't you dare talk to your king this way. Know your place."

You yank your dagger from its sheath and hold it under Loki's chin. Lady Anise gasps, and Loki's eyes go wide. Slowly, he raises his hands in defeat.

"You...!" Your hand shaking, silent sobs wracking your body. "You made me think... I would never have slept with you if I had known this! How dare you take advantage of me?!"

He sucks in a breath. "Now, now, let's not do anything rash. You are angry. I understand. But ask yourself; who are you angry with?" He pauses, raising a brow. "Me, for telling you truthfully that I still want you? Or you, for ignoring my warning that it wouldn't mean anything, that this was nothing more than sex?"

You stare at him, realizing the truth of his words.

"I think, pet—" Loki places his hand on yours, lowering the dagger. "—that you are betrayed by your very own emotions. Not by me."

Sniffling, you pull your hand away, the dagger loose in your grasp. You look between Lady Anise and Loki, your eyes clouded with tears.

"Do you... Do you love her?" you finally ask, your voice sounding weak.

"Oh, it's- it's not what it looks like!" Lady Anise says, finally stepping into the conversation. "King Loki isn't courting me!"

You look to Loki, waiting for him to confirm this. He looks contemplative, slowly standing up.

"Let me take care of this," he says, taking you by the arms and guiding you out of the gazebo. He leads you behind the hedges, out of earshot, before stopping.

He gazes at you with a detached sort of pity, and you feel small all of a sudden. What happened? Didn't you just have him at the end of your dagger? Why is he holding control again?

"What do you want, hm?" he finally asks, and for some reason, you flinch. "Comfort? I gave you my body, pet. I fucked you just the way you like it. And here you are, crying about me drinking tea with Lady Anise. Do you want to drink tea with me? Is that it? Do you want to hold hands, perhaps? Here, I'll hold your hand."

He reaches down and takes your free hand. You stare dumbly at it.
"Do you want me to kiss you?" he continues, bitterness clearly in his tone. "Alright. Let me kiss you."

He grasps your chin in his other hand and presses his lips to yours. Your heart beats faster in your chest.

He pulls away, staring at you. He looks angry.

"Not enough?" he asks, his voice practically venom at this point. "I suppose you want me to serenade you? To gift you jewels and flowers? To spend every moment of my time with you?"

You realize with a painful jolt that he's trying to make you feel guilty. Guilty for being jealous. Guilty for wanting to sleep with him. He almost makes it sound like you forced him to. Like the very memory repulses him. And you realize he regrets it. He regrets sleeping with you, and yet he still invited you to his chambers for tonight. Well, maybe that invitation is off now.

"I'm sorry," you say quietly. "I'm sorry for yelling at you. You just have to understand how it feels for me. If I had known that you're pursuing Lady Anise romantically, I would never have let you talk me into sleeping with you again!"

Loki scoffs, but doesn't let your hand go. "Last I remember, you were the one begging to be slept with. What I do with Lady Anise is none of your business."

"What is she to you?" you ask cautiously. "What am I to you?"

His gaze is still so cold and a little hurt. "I've known her for a while, as she told you. She is the daughter of a Lord. Politically, marrying her would be a small advantage, but I do enjoy her company as well. That doesn't mean I don't enjoy the company of other whores, so there is no need to feel left out."

You jerk your hand back. "I'm not a whore! I'm a servant! You can't just sleep with me, especially not with what we had!"

"What's the difference, really?" Loki says casually, still looking at you with more emotion than his voice would betray. "Besides, you were never more than a whore to begin with. Why does it matter now?"

"Because-!" You're so frustrated you need to pause a moment. "Because if you don't love me anymore, I don't want to sleep with you!"

An awful little smile finds its way on Loki's lips. "Ah. I see. So you thought I still loved you last night? Oh dear, what gave you that idea?"

You scoff. "Don't pretend it's not at least partially true. We had such a great time during the banquet and the ball. You saved my life. We were gentle and tender. It was good! Then, in the middle of the night, I woke up because of some horrifying nightmares, and suddenly you were all rough and brutal again."

"You like me rough and brutal," he argues.

"I also like you soft and warm and kind!" you add.

He scoffs now. "Those are not exactly my defining personality traits."

You sigh. "Okay, I get it. You regret sleeping with me. That's fine. I'm beginning to feel the same
way. Thanks for talking about it with me."

You're about to turn away when he grabs your arm. "You will go to my chambers tonight," he hisses. "That is an order."

"I- I thought I had a choice in this!" you protest, trying to pull your arm away.

"You don't," he says simply. "But I simply wish to talk."

You glare at him and finally yank your arm free. "I hate you."

"Apparently not enough."

***

Rika finds you sulking on your mattress. She immediately drops what she was carrying and rushes over to you.

"Where were you?!" she exclaims. "You said you would be late due to serving at the ceremony, but you didn't come back at all last night! I stayed up so long waiting for you! I would have gone looking for you, if the collar had allowed it. I was so worried when you didn't even show up for breakfast. What held you up?"

"Loki, as always," you grumble.

"Oh, you're allowed to speak his name again?" she notices immediately. "Wait, you didn't spend the night with him, did you?" Her eyes land on your neck, where you assume he left some sort of mark. "Oh no, you did! No! Did he force you?"

You shake your head.

"Why? Why would you get in bed with him?"

"I don't know!" you answer. "I have no idea why I did that! He was being so nice to me, and... Well, the most important part is that I thoroughly regret it and it won't happen again."

***

You knock on Loki's bedroom door, carrying the borrowed dress under one arm. As soon as you finished dinner, the collar had urged you to comply with his order, and you had had no choice but to follow it.

"Enter," he says, and you step in.

He's sitting in an armchair, a book in his lap and a goblet in his hand.

You close the door behind you and bring the dress back to the cabinet. His eyes follow your movements.

"You wanted to talk?" you prompt, standing awkwardly in the middle of the room.

"Sit," he says, gesturing vaguely.

You go over to the sofa and sit down.

Loki slowly takes the book off his lap and places it on a side table. Then he regards you for a while,
swirling his drink around.

"I don't think I like you wandering about outside," he says. "You are forbidden from leaving the building."

You look at him with dismay. "Is this punishment... for...?"

"No, I just don't like it," he says curtly, giving you no hint as to why he's doing this. "What I do like is you sitting at my feet. Come here, pet. Kneel down before me."

You shiver at the authority in his voice. You'll have to be very careful with whatever move you make. It's not like you can disobey him. Slowly you get off the sofa and sit down on your knees in front of him, eyeing him carefully.

He gazes down at you, looking worryingly possessive.

"Yes, I like this," he concludes, taking a big sip of his drink. You wonder if he's slightly tipsy and that's why he's acting so strangely.

He holds his hand out to you, palm down, as if he's expecting you to crawl forward and let him pet you. When you don't move, he scowls.

"Come here, pet," he says, and you detect the slightest slurring of his words.

You shuffle forward until he is able to touch you, but no further. He looks down at you in contemplation and strokes over your head.

"I think," he says, and suddenly his pupils dilate, "I want to keep you here forever."

Your eyes widen, but you don't dare move away.

"At least until I tire of you," he adds. "My body craves you. How I wish to do unspeakable things to you every single night. I don't love you, no, but I still want you. I want you badly. And I don't want to share you. No, I don't want you dallying with any of the male servants. Any of the guards. That friend of yours, Sven? I'll make sure he never sees you again."

Loki's eyes are wide and full of manic excitement. You feel terrified.

"Please don't kill him," you whisper.

He smiles. "Oh, don't worry. I don't have to. But I will kill him if he ever touches you. If anyone ever touches you. I'll kill them all, do you hear me?! You belong to me! You will be mine until you die! I won't have it any other way!"

You shudder. "Loki..."

He smiles evilly. "I'm sorry, pet, but you brought this upon yourself. You shouldn't have slept with me. I tried to hold back, I really did, but now the damage is done. Now I won't be sated by anyone else. Oh, how I would love to shackle you to my bed day in and day out. Knowing you'd be there every day waiting for me. I'd have the servants take care of you. I'd fuck you every morning and every night. Multiple times. You would have to sleep during the day, for I would take you again and again and again at night."

He smiles and gazes down at you with such fondness your heart leaps in your chest and beats hopefully. His hand slides down to your cheek; then he takes your face in both hands, pulling it up,
and leans down to kiss your forehead. You remain still, trembling both with fear and involuntary excitement.

He kisses you again, giving off a pleased sigh. Little kisses get peppered all over your forehead and along your hairline.

You reach up and grab his wrist. He stops kissing you immediately, a warning look in his eyes. You don't try to pull his hand away, simply caressing it with your own.

"Loki," you say softly. "You don't mean those things. I know you're upset and a little drunk, but you don't really want to lock me up again. There will be consequences."

He gives you a curious look as if trying to decide whether to listen to you or not.

"You're lonely," you continue in a calming tone. "I get that. You want a lot of things. So do I. But that doesn't mean you can just act on those desires. We both regret last night. Let's not repeat it. Don't do anything rash you'll regret in the morning. Because I know you will. Once you sober up, this will all seem like a very bad idea to you."

He smiles again, but then draws his hands away and leans back. "You're right. I would regret doing anything rash. I despise you."

You nod, slowly standing up. "See? You hate me. You don't want me."

He's still smiling, not making a move to stop you.

You take a step away from him. "I should really get going now..."

"No," he says immediately, the smile falling away in an instant. "You don't get to leave me. I order you to stay, pet. Don't anger me. Come here. Sit on my lap."

Feeling a sense of despair, you trudge back over to him, turn around and gingerly sitting down on his lap. His arms wrap around you and he pulls your back against his chest, making sure you're leaning full against him.

You don't like him like this. At least when he's fully drunk, he's too sluggish to cause any harm. Like this, he loses his inhibitions and thinks he can do whatever he wants with you.

Loki starts kissing your neck, one hand caressing your belly. You try not to let it affect you, instead looking around the room for anything to distract you.

"You're mine," he whispers hotly against your ear. "Forever."

You shiver and he chuckles.

His hand slips between your legs and the other begins to play with your breasts. Now you do squirm. You feel like a doll, one that Loki is playing with for his own amusement.

He cups you through your cotton underwear, his fingers rubbing gingerly against you, while his other hand slips below the neckline of your dress to seek out your stiffening nipples.
"Who do you belong to?" he whispers, while you try not to make shameful noises.

"W-well, seeing as I'm involuntarily in your servitude, I s-suppose I belong to you for... a while," you ramble, mainly to distract yourself.

He chuckles again. "That is not the answer I was expecting, even if it is correct. Why don't you get back on your knees and I will teach you to properly worship me?"

You squirm away from his hands, glad to be off his lap again, but you don't kneel back down. "No, Loki, I don't want to do this! I'm not having sex with you again!"

"Oh, I'm not asking you to," he says immediately. "Don't worry, pet. I promise I will only fuck you once you are begging for it. For now, I just want you to worship me. Go on. Kneel."

You sigh and kneel back down. Loki picks his goblet back up, empties it, and puts it back down. He's looking down at you with excitement.

"Now. You are a servant, as you just said," he begins. "And what servants do, is clean. You're going to clean me now. With your tongue. You will start with my boots and lick your way up my legs. You will make sure not to miss a spot. Understood?"

"Loki, no!" you whine. "That's humiliating! I'm not going to slobber all over your legs!"

He smirks. "Yes, you will. Otherwise..." His smile turns sinister. "I will have to clean my boots on you, meaning you will lie down on the floor while I wipe them on you. Would that be better?"

You open your mouth to protest, but can't find the words. You look down at his boots.

"They're not even dirty!" you exclaim. "They don't need cleaning!"

"Well, then," he says, his smile turning triumphant, "that's good for you, isn't it? Then I'm sure you have no problem licking clean their soles."

You gasp in sheer shock. Just because they look clean, doesn't mean you want to lick up all the tiny dust particles he must have treaded on by now!

Loki looks seriously deranged. Alcohol, heartbreak, and a slave collar don't seem to be the best combination.

"What will it be, pet?" he prompts. "Will you lick them clean, or shall I order you to stick your tongue out so that I may wipe them clean myself?"

"Alright, fine, I'll have sex with you!" you give in. "Just stop!"

Loki smiles and leans forward. "Oh, but I don't want to have sex. I want my boots cleaned."

You flush in anger. "No, you don't! You want to humiliate me!"

"That, too," he admits, grinning menacingly. "Alright, I'll be lenient. Lick at the soles of my boots like a good little pet and then I shall allow you to have sex with me."

"That! That's not what I-!" You're at a loss for words, your whole face hot. You know Loki is trying to anger and embarrass you, but that doesn't make it any less effective.

Loki juts one of his feet out to you, prompting you to take it. You suddenly feel all energy drain out of you and you simply accept your fate. How bad can it be?
You grasp his ankle and bring the rubbery sole closer to your face. It's pretty clean, all things considered. Another servant probably had to polish them for him. Well, what's a bit of carpet dust?

You stick your tongue out and give it a lick, prompting Loki to laugh in delight and amusement.

"You're actually doing it," he says, mad glee in his eyes. "No, don't stop! Keep licking, pet. I merely thought... I didn't think you would go through with this."

He laughs again and you shoot him the most murderous of glares.

Well, now it's too late. Keep licking, pet, is a direct order, and you can't disobey unless you want serious pain. Maybe if you get this over with quickly...

You lick over the sole again, feeling the grooves slide over your tongue. You also taste the tiny bits of dirt and dust, but it's not like you haven't tried to eat sand as a toddler before, so what harm can it do?

As long as Loki never mentions this to anyone, you can live through this.

You lick his sole clean, making it shine wetly with your saliva. Loki is watching you with blown pupils, palming at his crotch.

"I like this," he breathes. "So... humbled. Reverent. Obeisant. Do the other one."

You let his foot drop and grab the other one, repeating the process. As you lick at the sole, you watch Loki slowly undo his pants and free his leaking cock, stroking it to the sight of you.

"Enjoying this?" you ask.

His eyes are glassy and needy. "Mm. Take your clothes off."

You draw away from his boots and unlace the back of your dress, pulling it over your head. Then you remove your underwear, socks, and shoes, until you are kneeling naked in front of him.

His eyes rove over you with eagerness. "Spread your legs. Let me look at you."

You shift and part your knees, his gaze immediately drawn between them.


You roll your eyes and look away, trying not to die of humiliation.

From the corner of your eye, you see a shimmer of green light, and Loki is suddenly naked as you are. Your gaze is drawn back to him, traveling over the lithe and muscular form that you so love. It's not often that he's naked when doing anything sexual with you.

"Like what you see, darling?" he mocks.

You glare at him.

"I think I know what I want to do with you. Get on the bed."

You quickly stand up, glad to be able to put some distance between the two of you.

"Alright, but I'm not having sex with you!" you remind him, though your words don't even convince yourself. "You have to understand that!"
He just chuckles. "Don't worry, I haven't forgotten."

As you lie down on the bed, Loki gets up, too, once again going over to his drawers and pulling out a small vial with a clear liquid inside. He brings it over to you and wordlessly holds it out.

You take it, but you don't immediately drink it.

"If we're not having sex, why do I need this?" you question.

"I could have sex with you even without you drinking it," he reminds you impatiently.

You scoff, but uncork it and drink it. It tastes a little sweeter than last time, but you decide not to question it. You hand the empty bottle back to Loki, who simply puts it on his nightstand. Then he snaps his fingers, and suddenly your wrists are pinned to the bed beside your head, your legs forced apart and just as immobile.

You give him a slightly panicked look. "I'm not begging, yet!"

He smiles, slowly. "Oh, but you will be soon. Of that, I just made sure."

With that ominous string of words, he simply walks away and sits back down on his armchair, picking up his book and resuming his reading.

You are scared. What did he do? Why are you restrained to his bed if he isn't even going to touch you?

You watch him read, just sitting there naked. He doesn't even glance at you once.

You feel warm. It's kind of nice, because you're on top of the blankets, and it might be a bit chilly otherwise.

The longer you stare at Loki, the stranger you feel. You become more aware of the texture of the blanket beneath you. Of the magical restraints around your wrists and ankles. Of your own hair, tickling against your skin. You shift uncomfortably.

It is really warm. Hot, even. You're sweating. Your eyes slip away from Loki and up to the ceiling. The room spins a little. You keep squirming in your restraints, unable to do what you want. Oh, no. You feel the heat gather in one specific place. You can't rub your thighs together. You need... You need something...

Your eyes move back to Loki, panic setting in.

"Loki?" you squeak, your voice high pitched with fear. "Did you- did you drug me?"

He grins at you. "Why, yes, I did. Are you enjoying yourself?"

You shake your head. "No! This... This doesn't count! This isn't fair!"

Slowly, he puts his book down and stands up. He grabs a chair and carries it over to the side of the bed, where he sits down.

Oh, he's still naked. Oh, how badly you want him on top of you.

"Don't worry, pet," he says, leaning forward to gaze at you. "You'll remain lucid the entire time. This drug merely gets your blood running. It exposes desires that have already been in your head the entire time. If I brought a stranger in here, you would only feel the way you do now in regards to me,
whereas you would most likely ignore them. So, you see, I haven't taken your free will away."

That's only a mild comfort. You keep squirming, straining against your bonds.

"S-so the way I feel now, I secretly feel all the time?" you stammer.

He smiles softly. "In a way. You normally control these emotions. It wouldn't do to jump me like a wild dog every time you saw me, now would it? I have taken away that control and now they are running free. This is your purest, most primal self. I'm quite flattered you've become so hot and bothered already. Tell me, what do you desire most?"

Immediately, your brain comes up with an answer. Touch me! Fuck me! Put your babies in me!

Wait, what?! No. No, no, no! You can't want that! You just can't! But...

You look at him, and you can't stop looking at him, and the longer you look at him, the more your heart aches. Tears begin to spill down your cheeks.

Loki begins to look concerned. "What is it? What's wrong? Did I get the dosage wrong? You shouldn't be crying. You should be trembling with desire."

You shake your head, looking away from him, and suddenly you're just sobbing. Wow. Way to embarrass yourself.

Oh, you hate Loki. You hate him so much. He's absolutely horrible, and you shouldn't want this.

You flinch when you feel his hand on yours. A tremor runs through you at the contact, your body immediately responding.

You glance at it, see his fingers stroking over your skin. It's maddeningly arousing due to the drug.

"S-stop!" you whimper.

"Pet..." Loki says, not stopping. "Just tell me what you want. How can I make you feel better?"

You tug at your magical restraints, and they immediately come off. Shaking, you sit up and grab at his hand. Then you simply throw yourself onto his lap, sobbing against his shoulder.

He embraces you, stroking over your back.

"I'm sorry, pet," he says. "I didn't know it would have this effect on you. Let's just wait for it to pass, alright?"

"Loki..." you breathe, halfway aware that you're grinding against his leg, your hands sliding all over him. "I want you."

"I know you do, darling," he replies, drawing away slightly so he can look at you. "But this was supposed to be a harmless experience. I used it in a… special party once. Everyone knew what it was, and they willingly took it to get things going. It merely made them less shy, such as alcohol has the tendency to. I also made sure to mix it with the infertility potion, so no one would have any unpleasant surprises. Just like yours, pet. I thought it was safe, but you seem to particularly respond to it. It's best we let it wear off."

You wail out when he mentions mixing it with the potion that prevents conception. Then you punch him against the shoulder. He grunts slightly, but doesn't say anything.
"Loki," you say, staring into his eyes. They're so green.

"Yes?"

"Loki, I love you."

He tenses. For some reason, he looks sad. "Do you, now?"

"Yes, I love you a lot." Your hands slide up and down his chest. "I want your babies."

His eyes widen, then his cheeks go red, and then he turns his face away, coughing loudly.

You kiss him on the cheek, slinging your arms around him. You keep grinding against him, wanting him inside you.

Loki takes a moment to stop coughing and to compose himself. "What... What else do you want?" he finally asks.

You contemplate, your chest rubbing against his. "Hm, I want to marry you. And I want to have a bunch of children. So many. I want you to fuck me every day. Really hard. We could play pretend. I'm a naughty thief and you have to punish me. Oh yes! And the rest of the time, I want you to be nice to me. I want you to love me back. You're a good king, but you're always so busy. Oh, what if you teach our daughter sword fighting? You wanted to teach me, right? You could teach me first, and then when she's old enough, she could learn! And magic. You can teach them your magic! That would-"


You stop, looking at him in confusion.

He takes a deep breath, his hands pushing you a little away from him.

"As much as I want that," he begins, panting slightly, "it would be entirely irresponsible. I can't have you falling back in love with me while you are still wearing the collar. If I marry you, if I have a child with you, it will never come off. You can't possibly want that. No, we will have to remove it, and soon. Darling, I- I arranged it so we can never be together. I regret it now, but there is nothing we can do. I need to get you to hate me. So you can be free. Even more so than before. That is the only way." He pauses a moment, taking a deep breath. "I- I still love you, too. I want what you want."

Your heart beats faster. He loves you! Loki loves you. You're so happy!

"If... If for some reason you still want to be near me after the collar comes off, I'll do everything in my power to win you back. If you don't, then... then that's how things are. I'm sorry. I ruined everything."

What's he talking about? He loves you! That's all that matters. Why does he look so sad?

"I'll have to erase your memory of the last hour. You have to believe I despise you, or else you won't stop loving me. I'll have to hurt you, pet. Really, really hurt you. Enough so you can no longer forgive me. But don't worry. I'll still take care of you. You won't ever be alone, even when you may feel like it."

He looks at you, his eyes shining wetly. You stare back at him, your drugged mind slow to comprehend what he's saying.
"Don't...!" you gasp. "I love you! Please don't erase my memories!"

He shakes his head. "I'm sorry."

He lifts his hand, and when it makes contact with your head, everything goes black.

***

You're drowsy. You hear voices. They call your name. Someone is touching you.

"Come on, wake up!"

"What happened to her?"

"I can see her eyelids fluttering!"

"She's moving! Wake up!"

"Hey, can you hear me?"

Groggily, you force your eyes open, realizing you're surrounded by the female serving staff. Rika is by your side, gently shaking you.

Something must have happened. You sit up on your elbows, blinking at everyone.

"Wha... Wassgoin'on?" you slurr. Your mouth feels dry.

"Yay, she's awake!"

"Someone tell Sigrid!"

"Mús, can you hear me?" Rika asks gently. You turn to her.

"What happened?" you ask, still trying to shake the drowsiness. "Why am I here?"

"You fainted. One of the healers brought you in, saying someone found you passed out on the floor and brought you to her. She said she did a check on you and that you must have fainted due to stress. Do you remember anything?"

You wrack your brain, trying to remember anything. You ate dinner. Then you got up, to go and find Loki, and then... You must have passed out. Maybe the collar malfunctioned? It certainly isn't hurting you now, so maybe the order was called off. Did you try to resist it and passed out?

"I just remember eating dinner, and then nothing," you say. "Maybe it was stress."

She nods.

"Alright everyone, back to your beds!" you hear Sigrid call. The servant girls reluctantly shuffle away from you. Rika stays, of course.

"How are you feeling?" Sigrid asks.

"Pretty good, Ma'am," you say. "I'll probably be fine tomorrow."

"That is good to hear." She sounds relieved. "If you need a day off, be sure to tell me. I don't want you fainting again."
You give her a reassuring smile. "Okay, Ma'am. But I think I'm fine."

She nods. "Alright everyone, have a good night. Be sure to get your sleep! No talking!"

She moves away, making sure everyone is bed ready.

"I'll sleep in your bed tonight," Rika whispers, getting under your blanket.

"Oh, uh... sure," you stammer, not expecting this, but not minding it either.

Sigrid doesn't say anything as she passes the two of you, simply blows out the last candle and leaves. Rika immediately snuggles up to you, and you relax in her embrace.

You hope the next day will bring answers to your strange black out experience. At the very least, Loki will seek you out and ask you why you didn't show up at his chambers like he ordered you to, and you can ask him some questions.

Chapter End Notes

Oof am I right?
Chapter 35

Chapter Summary

Loki tries to make good on his unremembered promise, and comfort comes from an unexpected place. Ngl, this chapter gets pretty brutal at one point, so proceed with caution.

Chapter Notes

We've reached over a 1000 kudos!! Thank you so much everyone <3 <3

A special thanks to jasmine_tea for actually drawing some fanart of chapter 33!! Here it is, and it is amazing: https://i.imgur.com/6jEkyLi.jpg
If you want to see more of their "18+ smutty art and fics" ;P, check out their twitter @jasmineandstars

Seriously, getting fanart was a huge joy for me, so if anyone else feels inclined to put their pen to paper, feel free to gimme that ;) ;) ;) <3 <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It turns out you don’t get answers to your questions, and neither does Loki seem to want to talk to you. It's been over a week, and all you’ve seen are glimpses of him walking through the gardens, sometimes with Lady Anise on his arm.

You just do as Sigrid tells you, waiting for him to summon you, but he doesn't. At night, in your dreams, you try to ask him what's going on, but all he says is that he cares for you, that he doesn't want to hurt you, and that it's for the best if you stay out of his way. Then he makes love to you, and you are forced to touch yourself every morning in the shower to relive yourself of that ache.

Rika is a great distraction. She oftentimes works on the same job as you, and then you talk about light things like you used to. What you think of this servant girl and how outrageous it was what she did yesterday. How you think Mat is doing, sitting in the dungeons. You hypothesize he has already founded a rebellion and that it's only a matter of time before the prisoners revolt.

During meals you catch up with Lee. He seems to be faring well, getting along with the other servants. Apparently Loki calls on him sometimes to handle or brush Myrkr, which makes Lee very happy, since he loves animals.

Some mornings, you feel a little queasy, but it usually quickly passes. You don't tell anyone, not wanting Rika to worry. It's probably just stress again, you tell yourself, but you do hope you haven't caught a parasite or anything.

Around that time is when Loki summons you again. To your surprise, you are brought to the stables. Your heart pounds when you see him.
He's wearing riding gloves and is petting a saddled Myrkr, looking like he's just about to go out. Thankfully, Anise isn't here. He barely gives you a glance as you approach.

"Hello, Loki," you say quietly, curtsying so none of the stable boys get suspicious. "How are you?"

"I want you to muck out Myrkr's stable," he says, not even looking at you now.

"Why?" you ask, a little confused.

"Because I said so. I'm going out. I expect you to be done by the time I get back. I ordered the stable boys to stay away from you because this is your job, and I don't want them to think you are beholden to them if they help you."

You look around, and do notice the stable boys are busying themselves in the far corners or even outside the stables. You also see one stall that stands open, which must be Myrkr's.

"How... How do I clean it?" you ask, trying not to let your disappointment show.

"Figure it out," Loki says, swinging up on Myrkr's back.

You stare up at him, taken aback. "Why are you being like this? Why do I have to do this? Simply for your amusement?"

He stares down at you with cold impassivity. "You are a servant. Don't flatter yourself."

And then he rides out of the stables without a second glance.

You can't believe this! Angrily, you stomp over to the open stall, and see the floor covered in straw and horse dung. This definitely needs cleaning. Maybe it's even a little overdue.

Surely Loki doesn't really want you to do this. Surely this is just something to make you miserable. You walk away from the stall again and sit down on an upturned bucket.

You think about how rude and distant Loki is being. How you're not feeling well, but how you don't trust him enough to tell him now. How he seems to be getting along with Anise. How you must have overstepped a line and are now being kept at arm's length instead of being let in. You are incredibly angry at him. You suffer every day, and now you have to scoop up horse dung without any assistance! You don't even know what to do!

Determined to get revenge, you get up and take the bucket, bringing it over to a pump and filling it halfway with water. Then you lug it over to Myrkr's stall and take a shovel. You scoop some of the horse droppings into the bucket and mash them all together with the water, until it turns into a muddy broth. Satisfied, you bring the bucket to the stall across the aisle. A light brown horse is in there, watching you curiously, and you open its door and hide the bucket in the corner. The horse sniffs on you and on the bucket, but thankfully doesn't decide to drink from it. Then you close the door again, planning how best to dump this bucket on Loki when he returns with Myrkr.

You end up cleaning the stable after all. You have no idea how to do it, so you just grab a pitchfork and a wheelbarrow and scoop all the old straw into a big pile outside the stables. The other servants can take care of that. Then you take a fresh hay bale and drag it over to the now empty stall, plucking it apart and spreading the hay everywhere. It is all very strenuous work, and your arms and back ache by the end of it. In addition to that, you are pretty sure your dress and your face are covered in dirt and sweat.

Loki is gone quite a long time, but then again, you also take a long time, so you barely get to catch a
breather before he returns. You see him riding through the palace gates and quickly get up from the hay bale you were sitting on. You hope you did everything right, because you don't want Myrkr to be uncomfortable. You do, however, want Loki to be uncomfortable, which is why you prepared the bucket.

He dismounts Myrkr in the stable and ties him to an iron ring by his lead. Then he gives you an imperious look.

"Let's see if you've done sufficient work," he says and strides to his horse's stall.

You follow him inconspicuously, waiting until he steps inside and has his back turned. That's when you turn to the stall across the aisle, open the door, and lug out the bucket.

Loki has stepped further onto Myrkr's fresh bedding, looking around to see if he can find any fault. You go as close as you dare before calling out to him.

"Hey, Loki!"

He turns around. "Hm?"

Then you swing the bucket at him and cover him with its contents. Well, not cover exactly. The bucket is quite heavy, so you mainly hit his legs. A bit of his chest, too.

Loki is staring at you, completely shocked, as the dirty water drips off him, as well as chunks of horse droppings that slide down his armor and splatter onto his boots. All in all, you're pretty satisfied.

Loki looks... betrayed. Like a wet puppy. A very wet and dirty puppy. You feel your eyes watering, but you also feel your lips twist into a grin, so you just clasp your hands over your face and try to hide the flood of emotions.

Slowly, Loki walks out of the stall, leaving a wet trail behind him. He quickly waves his hand and dries himself, until he is clean again. He grabs your arm and yanks you with him. Past Myrkr, out of the stables, and to the pile of manure you left outside. Then he shoves you face first onto it.

You scream, feeling your nose assaulted by less than pleasant smells and quickly scramble up. You look down at yourself and see that you are very much covered in horse dung right now. Loki, on the other hand, looks perfectly clean, smirking arrogantly at you. It just isn't fair.

"I don't know why you did that, pet," he says, "but I found it rather daring and amusing. I hope you are ready to face your punishment."

"Punishment?" you splutter. "Pushing me into the manure pile wasn't punishment enough?!"

Loki's gaze darkens. "Not by far."

Then he whistles and a stable boy comes running. He glances at you briefly before bowing to Loki.

"What do you require, your-"

"Clean the wet spot out of Myrkr's stall and make sure he is comfortably settled for the night," Loki orders snappily. "Then stay out of my way."

"Y-yes, of course."

The boy hurries back into the stables, and Loki turns to you.
"Wait here."

Then Loki, too, goes into the stables. When he returns, he's grinning deviously and carrying a whip. A real whip. A horse's whip with a knotted end that trails on the ground beside him.

You squeak in fear. "You... You're going to whip me?"

"Why, yes," Loki says casually. "That is exactly what I will do. I will whip you until your back bleeds."

You take a few steps back, but you know making a run for it would be a bad idea.

"No, please," you beg. "I- I'm sorry! I wasn't thinking straight, please! I... I haven't been feeling well and I don't know if I..." You begin sobbing, tears running down your face. Loki watches you with mild interest, as if he's seeing how far you'll go in begging him.

You feel so overwhelmed with emotions and everything you've had to deal with, you just sink down to your knees, place your hands against the cobblestoned ground and begin sobbing.

"You are disgusting," Loki says coldly, cracking the whip down right in front of you, which causes you to jerk back. "You think throwing yourself to the ground and whimpering like a little child will sway my mind? I thought you could take your punishment in stride. Have some pride."

Angry again, you jump up to your feet. "Alright, fine," you snap. "Whip me then. I don't care. You've hurt me enough anyway, so what difference will this make?"

He just sneers at you and grabs your wrist roughly. He pulls you to the stable wall and places your hands on either side of a tie ring. The space between them shimmers and you suddenly have manacles around your wrists, the chain between them going through the ring.

You gasp and tug on it, but now you are completely helpless.

Loki suddenly leans in beside your ear. "Let's open that dress up, shall we?" he breathes.

You shiver. "Please no! Not here where people could see!"

"Shh. No one will see." He draws back and trails his hand down your back, undoing the laces one by one until it falls open and reveals your bare back to him. His hand smoothes over your skin, pushing the dress further aside so it slips down your shoulders and partly reveals your breasts. With your hands chained, you can't pull it back up.

"Beautiful," Loki says. "And now, I will make it even more beautiful."

You whimper and squeeze your eyes shut when he trails part of the whip over your skin.

"Darling, don't be afraid," he lulls. "It will hurt, but it will also feel so good. You will like this. And it will leave so many pretty marks on your pretty skin."

"Please," you whimper, balling your fists and bracing yourself.

You hear Loki's footsteps as he backs away from you, the whip dragging along the floor. He cracks it through the air a couple of times and then pauses, trying to intimidate you. You think he hasn't hit you yet, but then a searing pain erupts on your back and you choke on your scream. It feels as though a knife has been slashed across you, and it's the most intense pain you can ever remember feeling. It feels so hot, and you can't even tell if you're bleeding or not because of it.
You are gasping in air, unsure how to even respond to such pain. Loki seems to be waiting for you to calm down a little, because you don't hear the crack of the whip for a while.

When you hear it again, you flinch, but feel no pain. He must have hit it through the air again. He makes it crack again and again, five times, and by the time he stops he must have already hit you because you feel the delayed lick of the whip sear across your back in another spot.

You slump forward, crying and choking on sobs, your whole body trembling.

"Please," you rasp. "Please stop!"

The whip cracks again, and you realize the delayed pain is a blessing, because by the time you know you've been hit, it's already over.

You scream and pull frantically on the tie ring, sure by now you must be bleeding because of the sheer heat this pain emits.

"Calm down, darling," Loki says, but you just keep screaming and yanking at the chains.

"If you calm down, I'll only hit you once more," he adds.

That makes you shut up. You take a few deep breaths and go still.

"You have to stay absolutely still and quiet for this one, alright?" he asks. "If you so much as flinch, you'll get another one. I want you to close your eyes and keep focusing on your breath. I want you to realize that you are completely helpless and that nothing you do can spare you from the pain. I want you to know that the pain is inevitable. It will come, and flinching or tensing up will not make it hurt less. And now, I want you to welcome it."

You do as he says, trying to stay calm and focus on the inevitability. To not flinch at it, but welcome it. Just one more. One more. You can do it.

The whip cracks, louder and harder than ever before, and you lurch forward from the impact. And then the pain of a hot knife's blade slashes across your back, and you realize you weren't actually bleeding before, because you are definitely bleeding now. The pain is so intense you lose focus on reality for a moment, practically going limp and slumping against the wall. You breathe slowly as your brain is overwhelmed with the pain. It's so intense you feel shockingly calm, your mind focused on this one thing with absolute clarity.

Loki waits until the pain has receded to an intense throbbing, but one that is no longer overwhelming. In fact, the spots on your back that are throbbing in pain are far more distracting and unpleasant than the intense and overloading burst you had just experienced.

"I can see you're trying your best," Loki says, "but it isn't yet good enough. One more."

"No!" you wail, but then you hear the crack and you feel it. Once again, such intense pain that you almost black out. A pain that makes everything else fade out of existence.

You groan, leaning against the wall for support.

"Do you want me to stop?" Loki asks.

"Yes, please!" you beg.

The whip cracks and you are hit again. You can no longer discern the individual lashes. Your entire
back is full of heat and pain.

"Do you want me to stop?" Loki asks again, his tone merciless.

"Yes," you sob, practically hanging by the chains now as you slump to your knees.

Again, you are lashed, and you no longer know why or how you got here. You just know that the pain is hot and intense and that it feels better than the other kind of pain that is insistent and throbbing.

"Do you want me to stop?"

You drag in a breath and try to focus on your thoughts, but find it extremely difficult. "I... I don't want to feel pain," you say.

"But do you want me to stop?" Loki insists.

"I... I don't know!" You wail. "I don't know!"

You are whipped again and feel the cuffs dig into your skin as you briefly let go of weight. Stars, it feels strangely good. The heat on your back has reached an intensity that overpowers all your other thoughts and feelings.

"Do you want me to stop?" Loki asks again.

You hiss, trying to figure out your answer. You didn't want this, right? But it feels so good. It feels so, so good, and you want more.

"No!" you say. "No, please don't stop!"

And then the cuffs disappear and you fall sideways to the ground and begin crying because you didn't want him to stop.

A shadow falls over you and Loki crouches down beside you. "Rest now, darling. Just sleep. You may stay here, but I recommend choosing a nice spot in the stables. It might rain tonight."

And then he walks off.

***

You realize a while later that the clouds have darkened, but you can't bring yourself to stand up. Even the slightest movement sends searing pain over your back. The cold wind on your back is both soothing and biting, and occasionally, you feel a tiny drop of rain.

You begin to get enough presence of mind to realize that Loki whipped you into a state of delirium and then simply left you lying outside on the ground. You don't even have enough left in you to feel something at the thought, but you know this is the worst thing he has ever done to you.

You trusted him. Even when he was swinging his dagger at you, choking the life out of you, you knew his anger came from pain and heartbreak, and that part of you deserved it. This time, you had done nothing wrong. In fact, the last time you had seen him, you had made yourself completely vulnerable by showing him how much his relationship with Lady Anise had affected you. You let him know you couldn't just sleep with him and pretend nothing was different. You even would have accepted it if he chose her over you.

But now, after more than a week of ignoring you, he orders you to do an unpleasant job—which you
completed, by the way—and reacted with severe punishment after you took a rather harmless revenge? None of the stable boys had even been there to witness it, and his magic undid it in a second! And yet he physically harmed you in a way he had never done before, despite you doing nothing to deserve this. Making sure you knew the entire time how much he enjoyed it, and how little he cared for your wellbeing. And then he simply left you. Outside. On the ground. Bleeding and covered in horse dung. In the cold autumn air with the prospect of rain. He just left. And he must have told the stable boys to leave you, too, because you haven't heard anyone in quite a while.

You can't even imagine why he wanted this. Why he asked you to muck out the stall knowing you had no idea how to do it. Knowing you would probably make a mistake which he could punish.

Maybe he had planned to whip you from the beginning. Completely unprovoked.

You don't know how much time passes. It could be an hour. Two. Maybe it has only been twenty minutes since Loki left, but eventually, you hear footsteps approaching and someone's hands grab you under the arms, pulling you up.

You blink up into the face of a woman. The first thing you notice are her beautiful green eyes. You don't think you've ever seen her before, but her face instantly makes you feel safe.

She helps you to your feet, and you see that she's dressed like royalty. She has long, wavy black hair and is wearing a flowing green dress. So much green. Anise wears green sometimes, but her dresses aren't this extravagant. You doubt this woman is anything less than a princess, and you also doubt she would be one of Loki's concubines. Just the jewelry on her looks like something only her own treasure chests could have paid for.

"Who... are you?" you whisper, staring at her as she hooks your arm over her shoulder and helps you walk back to the palace.

"A friend," she says, looking straight ahead.

Her voice is beautiful, too. Smooth and silky. Her accent is definitely one of the upper class, like Loki's.

"Did King Loki send you?" you ask, finding that staring at her helps distract you from your pain. There's a familiarity to her, but you know you've never seen her before.

"No," she says curtly, still focused on bringing you through the hallways. You don't even care where you're going, you'd go anywhere with her at this point.

"Are you a princess?"

You can't stop looking at her or asking her questions. She has high cheekbones and pale skin.

"In a way."

"What's your name?"

"Just say 'my lady.'"

"Okay, my lady. Where are you bringing me?"

"To get you better."

You finally reach a room with a small white bed, a few cabinets, and a washing station. You
immediately assume this is for patients to rest in.

She brings you to the bed and closes the door before helping you removes your dress. You quite enjoy feeling her long and slender fingers slide over your skin, though she does so in a professional manner.

"Are you a healer?" you ask, lying down on your stomach.

"No, I'm not." She turns away to get something from a cabinet. "I just want to help you."

"Why?" you ask immediately.

"Shh. No more questions." She comes back over with a pot of salve and sits down beside on the edge of the bed. "This may sting at first, but it will help you feel better."

She dips her fingers into the pot and begins spreading the contents over your back. It does sting at first, but it's cool and very soothing. Soon enough, your pain lessens significantly.

"Thank you," you say, feeling a lot better. "I still don't know why you're helping me, though. You seem like a princess, but I've never seen you nor heard of you. Are you visiting? And if so, why are you bothering with me?"

She stays silent, simply spreading out the salve in slow circles. You stare at her as she works.

"You know," you say. "You look a lot like Loki. I'd say you are related. Are you his cousin?"

She glances at you. "Ah... yes. You could say that."

You nod. "I thought so, princess. So you know him well? Did he invite you to visit?"

"I do know him," she says, still tending to your back. "But he didn't invite me. I came on my own. Because I saw he has a consort, and I want to try to get you away from him."

"What?" you ask, taken aback. "How do you even know it's me? How did you know he made me his servant?"

She gets a sad look. "Because I know a lie when I see one. That touching speech was nothing but empty air. He doesn't love you. I assumed he would do something like this. Make his consort serve him. I hoped not to see a collar, but there it is."

She glances at it. You feel a twinge in your heart.

"Yeah, that whole consort thing was just for show," you inform her. "But we have a history. He does care me, it's just very complicated. At least, I think he cares..."

Her piercing green eyes hold yours. "No, he doesn't."

You furrow your brows. "No, you don't understand. This kind of came out of the blue. He doesn't usually whip me."

She narrows her eyes, her hands stilling on your back. "He doesn't love you. He hates you. He absolutely loathes you and cannot stand to be around you."

Now you narrow your eyes. "Well, yeah. He hates me because he has feelings for me. He can't stand being weak. I don't see why that concerns you, though."
"It concerns me because I want to help you," she says firmly. "What Loki did to you today... It's not going to be the last time something like this happens. He doesn't love you. He's toying with you. He does this a lot. He hurts people. Women. For fun. He fucks them. Makes them cry. And if he can, he makes them fall in love with him. And then he plays with them. Keeps them hoping, just enough to keep coming back. You're not the first to wear such a collar. He gives them an ultimatum. Stop loving me in the next few months or I will kill you. And then he does his best to keep them on the edge. They want to hate him, but they can't because he gives them little pieces of hope. He gets off on that. Seeing the women struggle to hate him. Seeing them love him even in the face of death. And then he kills them. He's sick like that. Gets off on it as well. He loves that they love him even as he snuffs out their life. He's probably tried to kill you before, hm?"

You stare at her with such horror you can feel it in every part of your body. Quickly, you sit up, not caring that you're in nothing but your underwear. "That... can't be true."

She clenches her jaw, shaking her head slowly. "It is. You need to get that collar off before he kills you. And you need to stop trusting him. Everything he says, everything he does is a lie. He's going to murder you. But I will help you."

She dips her hand into the pot again and spreads it over the top of your chest where Loki's name is written in fine red lines of fresh scars.

"You... can't be serious," you stammer. "He would never... How would he even get away with that? No, no, no. I don't know you. I don't trust you. For all I know, you're after him yourself. He's the king now. People are after power like that."

"Trust me," she says, gazing into your eyes and placing a hand on your cheek. "I don't want him."

Your skin heats under her touch. Her other hand is still stroking over the top of your chest.

"Wha- what?" you stammer, suddenly unsure about everything you've ever known. Then you shake your head.

"Look, I know Loki," you say firmly. "He wouldn't do that. He's malicious and cruel, but he has his limits. He has kindness as well, and compassion. He cares for people. Maybe not for me, but take Lady Anise, for example. He pays her well and treats her with respect."

The princess looks at you with sad eyes. "Oh, darling. You don't know, do you?"

Your heart stutters in your chest. "Know... Know what?"

She places her hand on yours, stroking over it with her thumb. "He's going to ask Lady Anise to marry him. She's going to be queen."

Chapter End Notes

I know this was probably pretty hard to bear, but I hope you all know who this "mystery princess" really is, and that things aren't as bad as they seem. Well, relatively....
You hardly sleep that night. You are terrified of the truth. You know you have to ask Loki about it. The real Loki.

Your dreams are sugar floss. He keeps insisting he loves you, but you aren't sure at all anymore. Maybe your dreams were never real. How can someone who loves you do such things to you?

He says it's not real, that he's just pretending to be indifferent, but you know he wouldn't be able to fake it this well.

He says he's being eaten by guilt for all he has done to you, but you don't believe him. Why would he keep doing it, then?

He holds you tightly to him, weeping in remorse, begging for you to comfort him. You don't. How can he expect comfort from the person he keeps hurting?

He apologizes again and again, telling you he is a fool for putting you in this situation, but that it's the only way out. You tell him there is never only one way, and that hurting you only serves to benefit him.

When the dream ends, you are left feeling bitter and remorseless.

***

You manage to get through breakfast without attracting any unwanted attention from Rika or the other servants. As soon as Sigrid gives you your chores, you rush to Loki's room, knowing he's probably just getting dressed.

The guards at his door don't even spare you a glance. You're a servant, after all. You don't bother knocking and walk straight in.

Loki is already dressed, standing in front of a bookshelf and turning to you with a surprised look when you shut the door behind you.

You suddenly feel very afraid, nervously staying by the door.

"Is... Is it true?" you ask, your voice far too quiet and frail.
Loki steps away from the bookshelf, sauntering toward you. "Is what true?"

"Ah... Anise." You try to hold his gaze, but fail miserably. "Will you marry her?"

He smiles. "Why, yes. Is it that obvious? Don't tell her, though! I'm waiting for the right moment. I'm sure she'll say yes, don't you think?"

You nod, staring at the floor. "I... I'm happy for you."

"Thank you," Loki says, nothing but friendliness in his words. "Do you want to see the ring?"

He doesn't even wait for you to answer before procuring a ring box and opening it.

You barely glance at it. Of course it's an emerald. You nod. "Very nice."

"Do you think she'll like it?" he asks.

You nod again. You don't feel very good.

"I think so, too," he agrees. "Do you want to hear the names I've come up with for our first child?"

You shake your head. You really don't feel good.

"No?" he chuckles. "Well, it'll be a surprise then. How are you, by the way?"

"Splendid," you get out, and are suddenly overwhelmed with nausea. You rush to his bathroom and throw up your breakfast.

You feel Loki's hands stroking gently over your back, brushing your hair out of your face, but there is little you can do about that. As soon as you've calmed down, he gets a wet washcloth and cleans your face for you. You numbly let him do it, still kneeling on his bathroom floor even when he straightens up and puts the washcloth away. You realize now that if the thing about Anise is true, the rest of it is probably true as well.

"You know," you say, your voice still small and weak, "you should just get it over with. I... I don't want to play your game. I haven't been feeling well for a while now, and I don't have the strength to go on."

You take a shaking breath, tears slipping down your face.

"Just do it now, please. I know you want to, and I want it, too. I... I'm not going to pretend that I never loved you, because I did. I do. The collar isn't coming off. You won, Loki. Uhm... If I- If I can ask one thing, is that you make it quick and painless. I don't want you to stab me or choke me. Just... poison me. Like the first time we met. I asked you then to poison me with love, and you did. It went deep into my heart and it hurts so much. Now you can finish it. You won, my king. You got me. You got the assassin. I'm giving up. I can't do this anymore. Just... make it swift."

You stop talking, hunched forward and trying to stay calm as more and more tears fall down your face. You hear Loki move. Something clinks and then you hear water being poured. Then he holds something out to you.

You look up. It's a glass of water. You take it in shaking fingers, gazing up at him. "Is it poison?"

He looks down at you, his face betraying no emotion. "It's water. Rinse out your mouth. Drink something."
You nod, slowly getting up to wash the harsh taste from your mouth and wet your dry throat. Once you're done, you turn around to look at him.

"You know, if you don't want to do it now, you can always slip it in my food," you suggest. "I wouldn't even know."

"I'm not killing you," he says firmly. "Not before the nine months are over. You still have time left. Use it."

You shake your head. "No. I give up. I'm not playing. You should murder me now and marry Lady Anise. You'll be a good father, Loki. I wish you all the best, but I can't do this. I can't be there."

"Just say it," he suggests, narrowing his eyes slightly as he tries to read you. "Say 'I hate you,' and maybe the collar will come off now. You'll be free."

You shake your head again. "No. I won't. I'm not playing this game. I don't hate you. It's fair, what you did to me. I get it. You did exactly what you told me you would do. You would lie to me and kill me with the sweetest of poisons. This was the best execution I could have hoped for."

You smile weakly at him. "Thank you. Thank you for giving me love. Making me feel so many things. I would have run across the universe to get back to you. You're incredible, Loki. So easy to love, and yet so hard at the same time."

You reach out for his hand, pressing it against your cheek and nuzzling against it.

"Even now," you breathe, "I can't help but be weak for you. Thank you, my king. But I'm done now."

He cups your cheek in his hand, gazing at you with such fondness it's almost startling.

"Get the collar off, sweet thing," he says. "You still have many months to do so."

And then he pulls away and walks out of the bathroom, then out of his chambers altogether.

You realize then that he may not love you, but he certainly wants you to live.
Over the next few weeks, you feel lonely and lost. At night, your dreams turn less and less lucid and more and more into nightmares. They are never your nightmares, however, always involving situations you've never even thought about before. You see the strange alien planet a lot and there's always a lot of fire, and sometimes a huge man with purple skin. Sometimes you dream of Prince Thor and Queen Frigga. Sometimes you dream of yourself. You have to watch yourself die about a dozen different times, which is both traumatizing and so bizarre it's humorous.

During the day, you struggle with your stress. You continue feeling sick in the mornings, are pretty much tired at all times, and find yourself in very unstable moods, switching from exhausted to horny at any given time. You usually touch yourself under the morning shower, but sometimes have to do so at night as well, just to calm down a little. On occasion, a certain smell will make you feel really sick, and then you have to find an inconspicuous excuse so you can go and throw up. You seriously begin to wonder, if you've caught some sort of disease after all.

Every couple of days or so, Loki will call you to him, just to make your life Hel. It always seems like he's trying to prove to you that you mean less than nothing to him, which you really have begun to understand a long time ago.

He'll ask you to bring him soup and then trip you with his magic and force you to lick it all off the floor. He'll make you roll up his carpets and scrub the entire floors of his chambers, all while forbidding you to get up off your hands and knees. Then, when you are sore and tired, he'll make you crawl over to him so he can rest his feet on your back and sip his wine. You've made an art of planning different ways to murder him.

Just as certain as Loki's cruelty has become, so has the nameless princess's kindness. Every single time Loki torments you, she shows up sitting on your bed afterward, treating all your wounds and aches and holding you in her arms. She has also given you herbs to chew against your nausea, which surprised you, since you didn't inform her about that. She gets a little handsy sometimes, but the comfort is very much appreciated, especially since she respects you every time you move her hand back off your thigh.

You don't tell Rika any of this. Not about being Loki's consort, not about the way he's treating you, not about your dreams, and not about the princess.

She finds out when she walks into the servants' rooms while you are lying half naked on your bed getting a massage from the princess.

You hear her gasp your name, shock on her face.

You sit up abruptly, barely remembering to cover your chest. Your scars have completely faded at
this point, thanks to the princess, who is now smiling smugly.

"Hi, Rika," you say. "This is... uh... Loki's cousin. She's been helping me with my health."

Rika's eyes narrow sharply. "Yeah, I don't think so. Get away from her."

"Now, now," the princess scolds, putting her hand right on top of your thigh and giving it a squeeze. "I know you're in love with her, but if you really wanted her, you would have done something by now."

Rika's eyes widen and your mouth drops open.

"Rika?" you ask. "What's she talking about? Do you two know each other?"

Rika shakes her head, looking between you and the princess. She looks... hurt.

"Oh, come on," the princess says, her hand stroking up and down your bare thigh. "It's painfully obvious. The way you look at her. It doesn't take a genius to figure it out. You, the poor girl in love with her best friend, but your best friend love another. A man, at that. And so you stay silent, not wanting to scare her away. You carry this burden inside you, watching her get hurt and trying to be there to comfort her. Hoping beyond hope she'll finally see you. But she doesn't, does she? Didn't even realize."

You stare at Rika, aghast, but her expression says everything. She can't even meet your eyes, and you realize she's crying. You've never seen her cry.

"But that's not all," the princess adds, turning to you. "By the time she realizes, she's already in the arms of another woman."

And then she grabs your chin and kisses you. You are so startled you don't move, simply staring into her beautiful green eyes. Her lips are soft and cool, but... she's a woman. You can't...


The princess pulls back with a smirk. "Jealous, are we? Well, if you insist, perhaps I could share her." She winks.

"Woah, stop it," you cut in. "I'm not interested in... in women. Sorry, Rika, but you knew that. It's nothing against you."

Rika nods, but the princess strokes you under the chin like a cat.

"Mm, I bet I could change that," she purrs. "I'm sure you will enjoy it, and I'm sure I'm better than Loki."

You don't know what it is about this woman, but you feel yourself get flustered at her words.

"I don't trust you one bit," Rika snaps. "Something about your face makes me want to punch it. Whoever you are, you have no business taking advantage of my friend, and if you don't back away, I will hurt you!"

The princess licks her lips and looks to Rika, still holding your chin. "Mm, feisty. Now, why don't you leave us alone and maybe later on I'll invite you back in so you can have a piece?"

That's when Rika lunges at the princess. She doesn't get far, however, since the princess simply holds out her hand and shoots out a beam of green energy that smashes Rika backwards against the
You let out a yelp, covering your mouth with your hands in shock. The princess uses the opportunity to sneak a glance at your uncovered breasts. Rika seems fine, however, since she gets up immediately.

"You use magic?" she challenges. "Just like that snake! I knew you two were the same! You have that same sort of way about you. I don't trust you, whoever you are. His cousin or something. Regardless, you're in leagues with him!"

"Me? In leagues with Loki?" The princess chuckles and shakes her head. "No, I'm far better than him. While he doesn't care about your friend, I do. I have been nursing her wounds for several weeks now. It's only natural it would spark between us."

"Spark?" you splutter. "Nothing spa-"

The princess silences you by pressing her finger to your lips. "It's adorable when you're flustered, darling. Just admit it. Tell your fiery friend she has no chances with you."

You shake your head. "Neither of you have a chance with me! I... I mean, I love you, Rika, as a friend, but... Maybe the two of you should...?"

"Never!" Rika snaps immediately. "No, not my type," the princess says.

"Okay, forget it," you say, reaching for your dress and pulling it back on. "I like both of you a lot. Please stop fighting. I won't pick a side."

"And I'm not asking you to, darling," the princess purrs. "Frederikke here is your friend, whereas I am clearly someone who has piqued your interest. Give me a shot, hm? You won't even have to touch me. You can just close your eyes and pretend I'm the man of your dreams."

"You are not sleeping with her!" Rika insists. "Leave!"

"I'm sorry, my lady," you apologize, "but Loki would... He might kill you if he finds out."

Rika gasps. The princess just smiles. "No, no. Loki would only kill me if I were a man. Besides, he doesn't have to find out. Unless you want him to watch?"

You hide your face in your hands to keep her from seeing your flustered look.

"Stop it!" Rika scolds. "You're making her uncomfortable!"

"No, I'm not," the princess insists. "A good fuck has healed many a broken heart. And I don't see you jumping at the opportunity, so I'll just have to take care of her myself."

"That's called taking advantage!" Rika argues.

You keep hiding your face.

"I'm not taking advantage darling, am I?" The princess's hand lands on your thigh again. "I've been more than innocent. I'm offering this as a friend."
You look at her, a bit put on the spot. "Ah- Yes, I know you just want to help me. Look, can we not talk about this?"

"Yes, let's not talk," she agrees, looking back to Rika. "Why don't you go back to doing your chores? Bye-bye now."

"Only if you come with me," Rika says, looking at you expectantly.

"I'm tired, Rika," you say apologetically. "I like staying in bed and getting massages. I kind of feel like I'm carrying around a whole lot of burdens recently. But we'll talk later, alright? There's no need to be jealous of Loki, or of his cousin. You're my best friend forever and always, but you should live your own life, too. I'm sure there is a girl out there for you."

Rika clenches her jaw, looking between you and the princess. "Fine." And then she walks back out of the room.

The second she's out of sight, the princess has shoved you onto your back and has pinned your wrists beside your head, staring down at you with such an intense hunger you are completely taken aback.

"What are you doing?" you breathe.

"Shh," she says. "I promise to make you feel good. Please. Will you let me?"

"I... I don't even know who you are," you stammer, very unsure about this. Strangely enough, you feel something for her, you just aren't sure what.

"Is it because you still love Loki?" she asks, her eyes searching yours.

You feel uncomfortable at his mention. "No... I don't think I love him anymore. I just... Don't think sex can help me."

She stares at you for a while longer, then pulls away. "Good. That's good. Do you think you're ready for the collar to come off?"

You sit up as well. "I don't want to give him the satisfaction. If he wants to kill me, fine, but I'm not playing his game."

The princess looks saddened, hearing that, and puts a hand on your arm. "Darling, that isn't wise. What are you afraid of? That he won't actually let you go?"

You shake your head. "No, I... What if I say the words, and nothing happens? What if I still love him without even knowing it? I'm just... I can't be certain. I don't want to humiliate myself."

"Why don't you practice saying it?" she suggests, stroking up and down your arm. "Pretend I'm Loki and say the words. See if they feel right."

You shake your head again. "I'm scared of that, too. What if the collar does come off? What if he really did take my love away? I cared for him so much. Always gave him the benefit of the doubt. But he doesn't want it anymore. Doesn't care about me. He just wants to tie up loose ends with me and settle down with Lady Anise. The worst part is, I think it's totally fair. I can't force him to accept my love. If he chose her over me, what am I supposed to do?"

You look down at your lap, at your shaking hands. The princess scoots closer and pulls you against her, wrapping you in her arms.
"I've never felt the way I did when I was with him," you continue in a whisper. "I thought for once my life was going somewhere. That I could serve him at court. That we could be happy together. The power couple between the king and the assassin. I would have given my life to protect him."

You feel the princess nuzzle against your cheek, softly touching her lips to it. You don't move away this time.

"And I think," you add, "I would have wanted to marry him. Not to be a queen, but so no one else would take him. It would have put me out of commission for a few moons, but I would have wanted to have children one day. A daughter. I would have wanted him to have one. I think that would have been good. I think he would have wanted that, too, one day. I still think he'd be a great father. I doubt he'd ever raise a hand against his children, no matter how brutal he is with everyone else, don't you think?"

You laugh numbly, realizing that your eyes are spilling tears and that the princess is kissing them away.

"I think Loki is an awful man," she says, moving your legs so you're halfway on her lap. She kisses your cheek again, and you simply relax against her.

You giggle again. "I think so, too. But he's also wonderful. He certainly turned my life upside down. He's the one person who can keep the mundanity out of life. For each bit of darkness he has, he has a whole lot of light. And he doesn't even realize it, but every broken piece he has lets out his radiance and basks those around him. He is chaos, but in a good way."

"Don't say that," the princess whispers. "Don't fall for him again."

"I'm not," you argue. "I'm not in love with him. I just think he can make a lot of people really happy, just like he can easily ruin their lives. I'm glad I met him, is all I'm saying. I don't regret it, as much as it hurts. But I guess it's about time for the two of us to drift apart."

"You can do this," the princess breathes, taking your hand and squeezing it. "You can let him go."

***

"I don't trust that woman one bit," Rika says when you sit down next to her during dinner. "She's too much like Loki. She's just trying to get into your pants like he was."

You shake your head. "No, she respects my rejections. She's been an immense help, actually. Both physically and emotionally."

Rika makes a face when you say "physically."

"That's supposed to be my job!" she says. "I'm your best friend!"

"You are," you assure her. "But she has actual salves and medicines she gives me whenever I have an ache, and she helps me relax when I'm exhausted. She's like a healer."

"A healer who starts a cat fight as soon as I enter the room," she grumbles, picking around on her plate. "She somehow knew with a single glance something you've been oblivious to as long as we knew each other."

You feel a little flustered when she brings that up again. "We-ell, I... I guess since we are best friends, I never questioned it."
"That's not my point," Rika says. "My point is that Loki also knew. He looked at me once and just... knew. After the trial, when we had that private talk, he told me he would separate us if I ever caused trouble. He knew exactly where to apply leverage. He also said he respects me as a rival for your affections, and that if I managed to snatch you away from him, he would accept that. Of course, I didn't want to take advantage of you! I didn't make any moves! But maybe I should have, because now that stupid princess has swooped in and is saying she's almost gotten you in bed with her!"

You cough loudly. "I... That's not true, alright? She's really charming, but I can still keep my pants on around her, okay?"

"But apparently not your dress," Rika mutters. "She was fucking you with her eyes the entire time, and you just let her."

You cough again, quickly reaching for your cup to drink some water.

"Have you even thought about it?" Rika asks. "Having sex with a woman? Because if you're suddenly interested in that, I might as well shoot my shot. Or is it just the fact that she's related to Loki? Are you so desperate for another taste of him, that you go on to his first cousins, then his second cousins, then his-"

You kick Rika under the table, severely flustered now. "Alright, enough! I'm not talking with you about this."

She huffs, but returns to her food.

"Hey," someone suddenly says from behind you.

You turn around and see Eala standing there, holding her empty tray.

"I've been watching you for a while now, and it seems you've finally realized what you really are to Loki," she says. "A victim. You're no longer at his heels like a puppy anymore. In fact, from what I can tell, you are severely done with him."

You are a bit startled that Eala is suddenly talking to you again. Even more so that she's been watching you.

"Yeah, you could say that," you admit. "I just want to forget about him. Just... do my chores, eat my food, go to bed. The less contact I have with him, the better."

Eala smiles. "That's great! Then we're friends again?"

You give her back a weak smile. "I guess so. I'm sorry. You got hurt because of something I did, and then you had to watch me fall in love with the man who hurt you. I get why you must have hated me."

"It's all good now," she assures you. "In fact, I have something that might cheer you up."

"Oh?" You look her over, but see nothing she might be referring to.

"Yeah! But it's a surprise, so you'll have to be patient. It shouldn't take me more than a couple days to set up."

"I'll be... eagerly awaiting it." You give her another smile and she nods before walking off to put her tray away.
Rika gives her a doubtful look, but says nothing.

You sigh, feeling rather indifferent about this surprise. You just hope it isn't anything that involves loud noises, bright lights, or worse yet, a shirtless stable boy.

Chapter End Notes

Two more chapters to go for Act 2!
By the time the day of Eala's "surprise" rolls around, you've already completely forgotten about it. You are too busy following the routine you've set up for yourself:

Wake up from a weird dream, usually involving Loki holding you in his arms and begging for forgiveness, get up, shower, get dressed, eat breakfast, try not to throw up that breakfast, do your chores, eat lunch, take a nap, eat dinner, and sleep.

If anyone disrupts your routine, you are usually put into a foul mood, or you just become so frustrated, you start crying. The nap and the few self-induced orgasms are your favorite parts of the day. Your least favorite, are Loki.

"Put the wine down, then change my sheets."

"Yes, my king!"

He doesn't even glance up at Eala when she puts the tray on the end of his desk.

You're sitting in front of his wardrobe, polishing the brass pieces of his armor. Loki is at his desk, brow furrowed, his quill traveling quickly across a page. Eala is walking over to his bed, giving you a wink, before she begins to strip the sheets off. You don't want to think about what he did on that bed to require it being changed at this hour of the night. It's late. The only light in the room comes from a candle flame on his desk and the light of the moon.

You should be sleeping right now. Of course, Loki doesn't care one bit about your comfort, as was evident when he called you and another servant in to bring him a drink and clean some things up. Eala had immediately volunteered, sparing Rika the trouble of going with you. Now you're stuck scrubbing blood off his armor while Eala changes his sheets.

You are tired. Your eyes glaze over, and the brush you're using to clean away the blood has been scrubbing at the same spot for over a minute now. You're just too exhausted to move it.

You glance over at Eala, and see that she's watching Loki. Loki is still writing furiously, occasionally dipping the quill into the ink pot or leaning back to wipe at his brow and stretch his fingers. He still hasn't even touched his wine. It must be important work.

You turn back to the piece of armor you're supposed to be cleaning. Okay, just power through. The quicker you get done, the sooner you can go to bed. If Loki lets you, that is.

The minutes pass, and you make slow, but steady progress. It's hard to stay awake, and soon you are close to nodding off, when a loud snap startles you awake.
You look to Loki and hear him cursing, holding up his broken quill. He must have pressed too hard and broken the nib. Maybe he is getting tired, too.

In his anger, he throws the broken quill against the wall, causing ink to splatter everywhere. You hope you don't have to clean that up. Then he begins rummaging through his drawers, cursing again when he comes back empty handed. He leans back in his chair, pressing the palms of his hands to his eyes. In the dual light of the warm candle and the cold moon, you make out ink stains on his right hand. He really must be tired.

He sighs, and finally takes the goblet, pouring it full. You glance back to Eala, and notice with confusion that she still hasn't fully stripped the bed. She should be halfway done putting on new sheets by now. Why is she staring at Loki with such a deranged smile on her face?

You glance back over to him, wondering in your tired mind what's so interesting that it would distract Eala from her work.

Loki's just swirling around his wine, staring out the window. Nothing unusual.

And then, in a hot flash of panic, everything clicks into place. The promise Eala had made, back when everything was still good between you and Loki. The surprise she spoke of a few days ago. The crazy smile she's wearing.

"Stop!" you scream, causing both Loki and Eala to flinch. "Don't drink that! It's poisoned!"

Loki is staring at you in shock, still not reacting yet, and so you just rush over and knock the goblet from his hand, causing it to spill onto the floor.

You're gasping from the pure adrenaline rushing through your system, still clutching a piece of armor in one hand.

Loki looks down at the goblet, then back at you, and only then does he manage to speak.

"Poisoned?" he asks, his voice soft.

"Yes," you breathe, nodding hard. You wouldn't even be able to explain why you just did that, you just knew in the moment it was the only thing you could do. You glance over at Eala, who is clutching Loki's bed sheet very tightly, an expression of shock, anger, and fear on her face. That same expression is on Loki's face when you look back to him.

"Poisoned," he repeats, slowly rising from his chair to tower over you. His eyes narrow in pure suspicion. "And how would you know that, pet, hm? Were you the one who put it there?"

You take a step back, hastily shaking your head. Your heart is pounding very hard. "No, I... I didn't."

"Then who, pray tell, did?" Loki asks, sounding and looking very menacing as he takes a step toward you.

"I... I don't know," you stammer while backing further away. You don't want Eala to die for this.

"Do you have any proof, then, that there is poison in my drink?" Loki continues interrogating you, sneering now. "Because I don't take kindly to servants spilling my wine onto the floor."

"I... I don't," you admit. "But better safe than sorry, right?"

Loki scoffs and turns back to his desk. He picks the goblet off the floor and pours more wine into it.
"No, don't!" you exclaim, moving forward again.

Loki holds up a single finger to stop you.

"There is a way you could prove your claim," he says. His gaze is compassionless. "Drink it."

You feel a shock of dizziness. "Ah- I..."

Loki's eyes narrow. "Do you want to be punished?" he threatens, holding the goblet out to you.

"N-no," you squeak. You know you can't technically disobey.

"Then drink," he snaps, pushing the cold metal of the goblet to your lips. "If you ever loved me, you will drink this."

You stare into his cruel, green eyes, the eyes you loved so much. The collar is already warning you to obey. Slowly, you nod, reaching up with shaking hands to take the goblet from him.

He pulls away, watching with bitter satisfaction as you hold it to your lips. It feels heavy and cold. The smell of wine fills your nose. Slowly, you begin to tilt it back, until you feel the liquid touch your lips.

"No!" Eala suddenly shrieks, running over at full sprint and knocking both you and the goblet to the floor. Wine splashes onto your face and you cough from the impact.

"I did it!" she confesses, scrambling to her feet. She grabs the pitcher and hurls it at the wall, causing it to shatter in a loud crash, wine running down the wall. "I poisoned it!"

You continue coughing, wiping the lethal drink off your face and getting to your feet. Loki looks surprisingly not surprised.

"Interesting," he says. "What sort of a poison did you use?"

Eala is visibly trembling in fear. "H-Hemlock, my king."

"Hemlock," he repeats. "Interesting."

He walks over to the broken pitcher and slowly, the shards rise off the floor and knit themselves back together. The wine spill disappears, both from the wall and the carpet. You stand next to the terrified Eala, wondering what will happen next.

Finally, Loki turns back to the two of you.

"Were you hoping I die a slow death?" he asks, still perfectly calm. "I must have truly wronged you. Or perhaps you gave me a high dosage to make it quicker? Do you even know what hemlock does, my dear?"

He walks up to Eala and places a hand to her shoulder, talking to her like a teacher talks to his prize pupil. She gulps and squeezes her eyes shut, still shaking.

"I- I read that only a few leaves could kill someone," she stammers. "Of course, I'm not part of the kitchen staff, so I couldn't have ground them into your food, my king. All I could hope for is that I would be able to bring you a drink. I spent months gathering enough of these pesky plants, squeezing out their roots for the most potent poison. I dumped all of it into that pitcher. Surely only a few sips would have been lethal!"
"Indeed," Loki agrees, still sounding strangely friendly. "It would have been. Do you want to know what would have happened to me, had I drunk it?"

Eala forces her eyes open. "I- I'm so sorry, I-"

Loki interrupts her, pulling his arm away.

"My body would have attempted to expel the poison by causing me to vomit under intense pain," he begins, looking at both you and Eala now, as if you both were his students. "At the dosage I assume you put in that wine, that wouldn't have been enough, of course, and the poison would already be taking effect. I would, however, have noticed I was most likely poisoned and called the healers. Not knowing the exact poison, they would then begin to go through the standard procedures of emptying my stomach, but since it can take several hours for someone to die of this, they would have easily saved me once they figured out what it was. Of course, it would have caused me a lot of agony, which I hope would have been enough to sate your lust for vengeance.

"Now, let's pretend I wouldn't have called the healers. Do you know what would have happened then? Namely, how I would have died?"

He pauses, but neither of you say anything. The way he's talking so casually about his murder attempt is extremely unnerving.

"No?" He smiles. "Then let me tell you. Poison hemlock contains a neurotoxin that paralyzes the muscles of the victim. What's fascinating, is that it begins at the very tips of your toes, slowly making its way up your body over the course of several hours, finally reaching your lungs and suffocating you while you lie helpless and paralyzed on the floor. Imagine being all alone somewhere with no one to call for help. A truly terrifying and agonizing death, don't you think?

"The amusing part is that all one must do to survive this, is to find a way to keep breathing until the toxin passes. Artificial respiration is a simple matter for any healer, just as flushing out the digestive tract is.

"Nonetheless, had this worked, I would have lain immobile in bed, increasingly becoming aware of my own demise until I would have eventually drowned, surrounded by the very air that would keep me alive, yet unable to breathe it."

You stare at him, astounded by the fascination he holds for the very poison that could have endangered him. Eala looks guiltier than you could imagine someone looking.

He smiles at her, then, putting his hand back on her shoulder. "If you would like, I could have someone teach you about the chemical in the hemlock plant responsible for paralysis, and how it affects the neural receptors in the muscles. Are you interested in other such poisons? I certainly was, as a child. Chemistry and biology were some of the most interesting subjects I studied. Perhaps you would enjoy them, too?"

Eala still looks terrified, not trusting this kindness. "P-please don't kill me," she begs.

Loki looks taken aback for a moment, then grins like a shark. "Oh, right. You did try to kill me, didn't you?"

Eala squeaks and closes her eyes again. "I'm s-sorry!!"

"Hush, now. I know you are. And you will be punished. But not with death. You will empty bed pans, muck out stables, tend to the compost, and then you will be given a private tutor to teach you what you wish to know about chemistry and other poisons. Who knows; perhaps you have potential."
What do you think?"
"Th- Thank you, your majesty!" Eala gasps, grabbing his hand and kissing it.
Loki smiles at her. "Off you go now, devious girl. I wish to talk to my heroic savior in private."
Eala nods and hurries from the room.
"You really won't kill her?" you ask, hoping this isn't a trick.
"No," Loki confirms, still smiling. "No harm was done, she regrets it, and I was in desperate need of some entertainment. Besides, I have learned that guilt makes for loyal servants. If she indeed has talent in poison making, perhaps it will pay back to me in the future."
"So that's what you do, huh?" you ask, slightly impressed. "I try to assassinate you, you train me to be your personal assassin. She tries to poison you, you train her to make you poisons. Clever."
"I do seem to attract murderous women," Loki notes with a smile. "Why not make use of them?"
You smile back at him, momentarily forgetting that nothing is right between the two of you, and that he almost made you drink the poisoned wine.
"You saved my life," he says. "I'm not surprised, seeing as you still wear my collar. Regardless, I should thank you. What do you wish for?"
Everything comes crashing back down around you.
"I don't want anything, Loki!" you snap. "Maybe a little break would be great! You almost made me drink that poison! I can't believe it! No, actually, I can. I'm not surprised in the slightest that's how you thank me. You know what? Just leave me alone! You're a horrible, horrible person! That's all I have to say."
You finally drop the piece of armor you've been holding this entire time, and march out of the room.
When you get back to the servants' quarters, where everyone is already sleeping, you just throw yourself on your bed and sob silently into your pillow.
***
The next morning, while trying to put on your uniform, you finally snap.
"I've had it!" you yell, startling a few of the girls. They quickly give you space, whereas Rika comes over to comfort you.
You're tangled in your dress, trying in vain to put it on the rest of the way.
"Look at me!" you wail. "All this stress has made me gain weight! I hate this dress! Absolutely hate it! It's so uncomfortable and now I can't even get it on!"
Rika's eyes move over your body. "Where... Where exactly do you notice the dress being uncomfortable?" she asks.
"I don't know!" you exclaim, throwing your hands up. "Here, I guess." You gesture vaguely over your breasts. They've been awfully sensitive recently. "And here!" The dress has been uncomfortably tight around your hips and abdomen in the recent weeks. Nothing a size up wouldn't fix, but right now, you'll take any opportunity to complain.
"Leave the dress off," Rika says, speaking a little too quickly. "Get back in bed. I'll tell Sigrid you're sick."

You frown. "Why? I'm not sick. Okay, fine, I was overreacting. I'm not actually having a breakdown over my dress. Don't girls normally complain about gaining a little weight?"

Rika's eyes dip down your body again, then back to your face. "Just... sit down. I'll be right back." Before you can say anything, she hurries off.

Alright, then. Whatever.

Sighing, you sit down on your bed, leaving the dress in its half-on half-off state.

You watch the servants one by one leaving the room to eat breakfast, some giving you passing glances, but all too involved in their chatter to linger. You see Rika talking to Sigrid, until the head servant nods and leaves as well. The two of you are alone now.

Your best friend comes over, takes your hand, and sits down next to you.

"Have you... Have you been feeling nauseated lately? Throwing up, even?" she asks carefully.

"Well, yeah," you say with a shrug. "For a while now. I think it's getting better, though. It's just the stress, really."

"How... How long?" Rika asks.

"I don't know." You shrug again. "A month? Maybe longer? Really, I haven't thrown up in quite a while. I'm not sick."

Rika grimaces as if she has a pebble in her shoe. She takes your other hand in hers, too.

"No, you're not sick," she begins, breaking off to grimace again. "Sweetie, I don't know how to tell you this... but-"

You see her lips moving, but the blood rushes so loudly in your ears you can't hear what she's saying. A part of you already seems to know. Already knew the entire time. A part you've done your very best to keep locked away behind thick, thick walls of denial. Because truly, the two words she says to you in that moment, are the worst ones you could have heard right now.

Chapter End Notes

You can all thank me (or Eala) for that divine intervention when Loki held the goblet to your lips, or else a lot of things would have been fucked up x_x (Also, can you tell I'm a big nerd when it comes to hemlock? I seriously want to kill someone with that one day... What? No, I didn't say anything haha)

I forgot to ask last chapter: How many of you would be interested in having some Lady Loki/Reader smut in act 3? Since this is an F/M story, I thought I'd ask before putting explicit F/F. If only a few people are interested, I can always write it as a bonus chapter instead of in the actual story, but I'm totally up for making it canon
Chapter 39

Chapter Notes

I've counted up your votes for the Lady Loki/Reader scene, and you are pretty divided, though the majority of you do want it, and some of you nice no voters have said you would still read it. I think I'll include it, and it will be soft and romantic and a tribute of the bond between Loki and the reader, rather than an uncomfortable power play. Maybe that way, we can all enjoy it. I dislike when same sex relationships are just used as a power dynamic to make a straight character uncomfortable, so it won't be like that :) Anyway, on to the last chapter of act 2! Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

You're lying in bed, blanket drawn up to your nose, staring at the grey sky through the window, and asking yourself a lot of questions. Primarily:
Why did I ever think going out to kill the God of Mischief was a good idea?
Other things you ask yourself are: How the Hel could this have happened?

After a bit of thinking, you come up with an answer that makes you wish you never asked that question in the first place.
Before running away, you were receiving the potion in your food. After the consort ceremony, Loki also gave you the potion. The only time he fucked you without it, was the very night you came back. You had passed out before his climax, and when you woke up, you had never wanted to think about that moment again, but right now, you are pretty sure Loki came inside your unconscious body and impregnated you, all while contemplating whether to let you wake up again, or to kill you for good. It seems he himself doesn't know what he did that night, because surely he would have made some sort of comment about impregnating you, had he known. Well, maybe you can just never tell him.

...Yeah, right. It's almost been three months, you think. Your belly isn't getting any slimmer anytime soon.
You slide your hand under your blanket and under your nightgown and let it rest on your naked stomach. It's the first time you're feeling for something, and now that you are, you can find it. A small bump. You let your hand lie there, and focus your gaze back outside. White specks are drifting from the sky. The first snow of the season. How poetic.

Feeling miserable, you roll over to your side and almost have a heart attack. Standing in the doorway to the female servants' room, staring at you as if trying to read your very thoughts, is Loki.

The two of you stare at each other for a long while. You inconspicuously move your hand off your belly, slowly sitting up while keeping your blanket pulled up to your neck.

"Sigrid tells me you're sick," Loki finally speaks, his eyes following your every movement.

You nod. "Yep."
He steps into the room, his eyes roving over your blanketed body. Of course, he can't see anything with your knees angled up.

"What ails you?" he eventually asks. The tension is thick in the room.

"Nothing specific," you lie easily. "Faintness, coughing, that sort of stuff." You pause for a moment, but you just can't resist throwing him some bait. "Nausea as well."

"Ah," he says, stepping a little closer again. "Do you feel queasy now? Have you eaten anything?"

You look back out the window. "Yes, I've eaten. Almost threw up, but I've kind of gotten used to it over the last few weeks."

You hear Loki clear his throat. "May I... May I see?"

You look back at him, feigning confusion. "See what?"

His eyes flicker between your face and your midsection. You still keep your knees up, stretching the blanket enough he won't see any contours.

"Check you for illness," he corrects himself.

"No," you say nonchalantly. "I think I just need rest. Why are you here anyway? You're not a healer. Send your cousin. I'd rather talk to her."

"My... cousin?" Loki asks.

You wonder briefly if he is even aware she is here. Well, now he knows.

"Please, may I look at you?" he asks, sounding just a tad desperate now. "I merely wish to confirm something."

"Confirm what?" you ask immediately. Oh, how you love torturing him.

"I..." Loki looks helpless for a moment, his hands hovering in the air, not quite daring to reach for you. "I think we both know what is going on. May I ask... Is it... Is it mine?"

You look him dead in the eyes for a moment, anger boiling up inside you. "No."

The look of hurt on his face is totally worth it. "No?" he repeats. "Who...?"

You keep staring at him, narrowing your eyes. "Some idiot asshole thought it was a good idea to fuck me while trying to murder me, only he didn't fucking go through with it, so of course his stupid sperm stayed in my womb and now I have his stupid baby!"

"Oh," Loki says, and you can see his wide eyes getting moist. He crouches down in front of your bed, staring at where your belly is hidden from view. Slowly, he reaches out toward it, until you smack his hand away and pull the blanket up higher.

"Please," he whispers, looking at you with absolute desperation. "This is all I ever wanted. To be a father."

"I bet you didn't anticipate these circumstances," you huff.

He shakes his head. "I'm so sorry. I should have known. I would have never-"
"Get up," you growl. "Don't think groveling will get you anywhere. You've ruined my life! I want nothing to do with you, and you probably want nothing to do with me."

He does get up, but he doesn't leave. Instead he shakes his head. "You don't understand, I -"

"Yes, yes I do understand!" you snap. "You told me you don't want a child from me because I'm some whore, and you know what? I don't want a child from you either! In fact, that's the worst thing I can imagine right now, and I don't even have to imagine it! You have Lady Anise to give you much more beautiful children! Don't pretend you want some bastard from me!"

Loki looks taken aback. "I... It's not a bastard. You're my consort. This child is first heir to the throne."

That has you cackling in delight. "Oh, this is great! My kid is your heir! Well then, it seems we have a common interest! I don't want it, you don't want it, so how about we just get rid of it? A miscarriage shouldn't be too difficult to induce, right?"

Loki's eyes go wide and then he starts trembling, his fingers flexing into fists. His jaw clenches and his face contracts in pure rage.

"A miscarriage?!" he repeats, his voice rising both in pitch and in volume. "Of MY CHILD?!"

The temperature in the room drops so suddenly, you wonder if one of the windows has burst open. Glancing over, they all appear to be closed. Then why is it so cold? You look back at Loki and you let out a piercing scream.

Standing there, where Loki just stood, is an actual frost giant.

You scramble out from under the blanket, bolting into the furthest corner of the room. Maybe it'll go away if you try to look non-threatening. You press yourself against the wall and squeeze your eyes shut, shivering slightly from the cold.

You hear its footsteps drawing nearer.

"Look at me," it hisses.

You open your eyes again, and you are immediately struck by its beauty. It's so small, for a giant. And it has hair. You didn't know they could have hair. Its skin is strikingly blue, painted with swirling lines, its eyes a piercing red. As monstrous as the creature is, it's also strangely delicate. It gazes at you with such raw emotion, you can't help but feel a pang of sympathy.

"Now you know," it says, hatred and bitterness in its voice. "Your king is jotunn. I've tricked you all! Explains a lot, doesn't it? Why my skin is so cool. Why my heart is a block of ice. You've called me a monster before. Oh, how right you were, darling. You fell in love with a monster, and now you have a monster's child in your belly!"

You are suddenly snapped out of your stupor. "No!" you scream, scrambling further away and landing backwards on a bed. "Get away from me!"

He just laughs coldly and continues advancing on you. "See, this is why I would never have given anyone my children. It's always been a wish of mine. To have a family who loved me. To undo the mistakes of my father by raising my son not with pressure to succeed, but with kindness and warmth. Of course, being who I am, I would have ruined anyone's chance at happiness by giving them a child. But now it's happened. And I won't have you undo it. I want nothing more than that child. And I want it from you. You don't know how I suffered knowing I could never grant you the gift of
my seed in your fertile womb. Whenever you so much as mentioned a child, it took everything in me not to break all my vows. Well, now I don't have to hold back."

He grins viciously and you see how pointy his teeth are. His hand snatches up your wrist before you can move away.

You scream again, the touch like ice on your skin. You see that he has claws now, pointy and black, which dig into your skin.

"Let me go!" you squeak. "It hurts!"

"Good," he says. "I want it to hurt."

Suddenly, there is another scream. A servant has walked in, staring horrified at the two of you. Before anything else can happen, Loki has frozen her in a solid block of ice.

Yes, this creature is Loki. A murderous monster who has cursed you with his monstrous offspring. This is who he truly was, all this time. The man you once loved.

He turns back to you now, causing you to cower in the furthest corner of the bed.

"Please don't," you beg. "Don't touch me! It hurts!"

"Don't you think it hurts me as well?" he retorts, stepping so close his shins touch the bedframe. "Your skin is hot as coals. But this is meant to be, darling. You are mine. The Norns have brought us together, have put us through the tests of love, and now here we are, moments away from happiness."

He smiles, but it looks like he's just baring his vicious fangs.

"What do you mean, happiness?!" you screech. "You've cursed me with your child! To think, I had the chance to get rid of this parasite all this time, and I completely wasted the opportunity!"

Loki's hands begin trembling again, his face contracted in anger and fear and hurt.

"Don't you dare say things like that!" he roars. "Do not dare!"

He lunges at you, grabbing your wrists and pinning them to the bed with his bodyweight. You scream and try to get away, but he puts his knees on your thighs and immobilizes you. Suddenly his eyes go wide in horror.

"No..." he whispers. "I almost poisoned my child! The lethal wine was at your lips because of my doing! Unknowingly, that servant girl saved what is most precious to me. I shall reward her with gold!"

He looks up at the ceiling now, shouting. "Was this to be my fate?! To kill mine own offspring in a fit of malice? To be my own undoing? What a fitting punishment! I, the monster, hurting my happiness and destroying my future with my murdering hands! But you gave me mercy! Why? Why this? What did I do to deserve another chance?"

Of course, the ceiling doesn't answer.

You can feel your skin going numb, your deeper tissue screaming in pain as it, too, is assaulted by the cold.

Finally, Loki lets your wrists go and looks back down at you. He blows ice onto his palms while you
rub warmth into yours. It seems he is indeed hurt by touching you just as much as you are by touching him.

"Oh, I'm so happy," he whispers, but he looks more like he's painfully sad. "I'm going to be a father."

He looks down your body, shifting away so he can tenderly pull back your nightgown. You are shivering hard, your teeth chattering.

"Don't touch it!" you whimper. "Don't hurt it!"

Loki heeds your words and simply stares at the little bump in your belly.

"I never dared dream... But here it is. So close to death, but I was shown mercy. Finally, I am to receive happiness. After all I've done..."

He tugs your nightgown back down, looking into your eyes again. "Oh darling, I couldn't be happier."

Your teeth are still chattering, but Loki presses his lips on yours and pushes his icy tongue into your mouth. Your shivers instantly stop.

Your arms wrap around him, fingers digging into his hair, and you fall into the kiss. Loki groans in satisfaction, no doubt from the heat of your tongue on his. He begins to grind against you, one hand reaching under your neckline to tweak at your nipple.

The icy contact has you whimpering into his mouth, a heat suddenly spreading through your body. You arch up against him, pressing close to get more of those sensations.

He finally pulls away from the kiss, sitting back to push your nightgown over your thighs and slowly pull down your panties. You lie still, shivering whenever his fingers brush against your leg.

"This is all I ever wanted," he breathes. "To heed my instincts and flood your womb with my fertile seed. I know I've already done it, but I can't help but want to do it again."

His icy fingers press against your clit and you scream out at the intense pleasure, your thighs clamping shut around his hand.

He groans again, his fingers lightly rubbing against you.

"Oh darling... I want nothing more than to breed you. I cannot wait for our child to grow, for your body to swell with it. For it to be born, your breasts plump with milk. And then I want to breed you again. And again. I want as many children as you can possibly take. I want you full of my seed at all times. Full of my child."

You are squirming and trashing beneath him, unable to decide if you want more or less of this icy torture. It is an unbearably intense sensation that is met with an equally unbearable heat inside you. A heat that needs desperately to be cooled.

"Loki," you gasp. "Please!"

His gaze turns predatory. "You want that, too, don't you? You want me sheathed in your heat where I belong. Well then, I won't keep you waiting."

He waves his hand, and in a green shimmer, he's naked.
You gasp in awe. The swirling lines continue all over his body, all the way down to... Great ancients, has it always been this big?!

You stare at the huge blue cock before you, turning a deep purple toward the tip. It does indeed seem to be larger, and it is not exempt from being covered in ridges.

"Do you like it, darling?" Loki asks, slowly stroking it. "Do you think you can take it?"

The heat inside you has grown to unbearable heights.

"Please..." you whisper, spreading your legs.

Loki positions himself over you, almost whimpering when the head of his cock makes contact with your slick folds. He rubs it over your clit a couple of times, causing both of you to hiss and moan out.

"Ah- Loki!" you get out.

"I can't wait a moment longer," he says, and then you feel it press against your entrance.

In an agonizing drag, the raised ridges sliding against your inner walls, he pushes it inside you. Both of you cry out immediately at the temperature difference. It feels like a huge icicle has been pushed inside you, except this icicle isn't melting.

Loki shudders above you, his cock twitching inside you.

"So... Hot!" he gasps, his eyes scrunched up as the sensation overwhelms him.

"F-fuck me, Loki," you stammer.

He groans loudly as he pulls partway back out, only to thrust back into you. You moan out in deep pleasure. Even though it hurts, it also scratches a deep itch inside you.

Loki gasps and whimpers as he keeps thrusting into you, eventually picking up the pace when he's adjusted to the temperature. That's when he kisses you again, his fangs sliding against your lips.

You let yourself succumb to the carnal pleasure, bucking your hips up and wrapping your legs around him.

That's when he gets brutal. He fucks you hard, chasing his pleasure. His teeth drag along your jaw until they reach your neck, where they sink into your flesh and draw blood.

You are squirming beneath him, digging your nails into his back as you cry out in pleasure. It's rough and painful and good.

It's what your body wants, and your brain is wisely shutting up about all the bad things this situation entails.

Loki grunts above you, pistoning forcefully into you. Fabric tears as his claws shred the mattress. His red eyes are unfocused, his mouth hanging open in a snarl. You can see a little bit of your blood on his fangs.

Your hand moves to caress his jaw, and he immediately relaxes, slowing his pace and gazing down at you.

"I... I don't know how long I can..." he tries to inform you between choppy breaths.
"It's okay," you say. You're beginning to feel a little numb down there.

He reaches down to rub over your clit, slowing his pace even further. He seems intent on making you climax, so you grind your hips against his fingers until you squeeze and shudder around him in a silent orgasm.

That's when Loki thrusts deeply into you a couple of times and finally releases his ice cold load with a groan. His muscles quiver as he holds himself up above you, his eyes squeezed shut in his pleasure. His cock pulses inside you for a rather long time, shooting rope after rope of icy sperm into you, until some of it begins to drizzle out.

You experience this with a sort of detached fascination, wonder if it's a frost giant thing, or if Loki was just very built up.

Finally, Loki pulls out of you, looking absolutely wrecked. He barely manages to roll off of you before his weight crashes down on the bed.

You shift around a little, pulling back down your nightgown. Slowly, Loki's skin bleeds back into the pale hue you're used to. His eyes are closed, and he seems to need a moment to catch his breath.

"Loki," you say, trying to get his attention.

"Mm?" he responds, slowly opening his eyes and lifting his head.

"I hate you."

The collar breaks off your neck and shatters into a million tiny pieces.

Chapter End Notes

:)  
I might need a little while to get act 3 all sorted, but I've already written and edited the first few chapters, so no worries. If you guys want, I can post the first one pretty soon, since it picks up almost right where this one leaves off.
You're sitting on the floor, in the corner of Loki's bedchambers, your knees hugged to your chest, still wearing only your nightgown. In front of you, Loki is pacing back and forth, running his hands through his hair repeatedly.

After the collar fell off, Loki simply stared at you like you just shot an arrow into his heart. When he didn't move or blink for a minute straight, you went to the bathroom and began cleaning yourself up as best you could. Upon returning, you found him clothed again, lying on his back with his hands covering his eyes.

You looked over to the servant, still encased in a slowly melting chunk of ice.

"Is she still alive?" you asked. "Because if she is, we need to take her to a healer."

That got Loki out of the bed. "Let's get both of you to the healer. Help me carry the girl."

He grabbed her by the stiff arms, leaving you to lift the feet. You silently made your way to the healers' station, getting many stares along the way, but no one dared question the king.

The healers immediately jumped to attention when you entered, wordlessly taking the frozen girl from you and placing her on a stretcher before wheeling her away. The head healer, Eir, Goddess of Healing, stayed behind, curtsying deeply to her king.

"Don't worry, sire, we'll take care of the poor girl," she said, not even asking why she was frozen.

"May I ask something else of you, Eir?" Loki asked. "A private evaluation."

She looked between you and Loki, then nodded. "Of course, my king. Come this way."

She led you into a private side chamber, in the center of which was a neatly made a bed.

"This woman carries my child," Loki announced bluntly. "Evaluate its condition and tell me if there might be any complications due to my heritage."

You were surprised Eir knows about his other form, but when you looked at her elderly face again, you assumed she had been around when Loki was still a child, and must have been entrusted with this information by the former Allfather.

"Of course. Lie down," she said to you.

You complied silently, lying down on the bed. Magical symbols lit up above you as Eir began her evaluation.
Loki stood impatiently by as she worked. Soon, she moved most of the floating symbols over your belly, and a quick heartbeat was suddenly projected throughout the room.

Loki immediately leaned forward, staring intensely at the symbols. You watched impassively with half lidded eyes.

"The child is developing normally," Eir finally said. "It seems to be healthy, and as of yet, I see no physical indication of its other heritage. I could test how your shape altering properties might have affected its DNA. In the same breath, I could also determine its sex, despite it not having developed genitalia yet."

She looked questioningly up at Loki. He was standing close now, gripping the edges of your bed.

"Yes, do so," he decided, his voice just a tad tense. "I want to know if it may be at risk to harm its mother at any point."

Eir nodded, altering the symbols again. "Speaking of the mother," she said, briefly looking at you to indicate she was speaking to you now. "You should work on reducing stress. It's not good for the baby, or you. I suggest you rest more often and refrain from any stressful activities. Stay hydrated, and try following some calming rituals. I can have one of my nurses give you a book on the topic."

While she said this, you shot Loki the dirtiest of glares, which he quickly looked away from.

"Ah, here we go," Eir continued. "There is definitely jotunn DNA present, though it appears to be aligning itself smoothly with the æsir DNA. I wouldn't be surprised if the child remained with the physicality of an æsir throughout pregnancy and birth. My guess is, it'll reveal that side once it's at least half a year of age, or even later. You may have to encourage it to change its shape by bringing it into contact with your jotunn form, your majesty. But don't be disappointed if it does not inherit all your abilities. Now, what else was I checking? Ah, yes, the sex of the baby. Its æsir genes tell me it's a boy, but of course the jotunn genes may complicate even that. Only time will tell."

"I... have a son?" Loki breathed, looking every bit the emotional father.

You weren't having any of it.

"Fuck you!" you shouted, causing him to startle. "I wanted a daughter!"

Then you threw your pillow at him.

That was probably the gist of what happened. After that, you merely sulked and refused to make eye contact with anyone. Eir attempted to give you a book about meditation techniques, which you also threw at Loki, and then he dragged you back to his chambers where you are now.

"You don't love me anymore?" Loki asks for the tenth time, still pacing back and forth. Or maybe he's not asking it, but saying it over and over to himself. "You don't love me anymore."

"By the Norns!" you finally snap. "No! I don't love you! Deal with it!"

Loki finally stops, looking at you. "But do you want the baby?"

"No," you say firmly, glaring at him. "Fuck the baby."

You delight in seeing his hands shake in anger, his composure hanging by a thread. He takes a moment, but he manages to calm down.
"Will you let me have the baby?" he asks, fixing you with a hard stare.

You scoff. "As if. You're a terrible person. Why should I let you be his father?"

You expect him to get angry again. Instead, he looks shocked and hurt.

"I- Please, pet- darling." He fumbles for the right word, eventually just settling for your name. "I promise I won't let my past mistakes affect this child. I will do everything in my power to-"

"This isn't about the child!" you snap. "This is about me!"

He hesitates, looking sheepishly off to the side. "Yes. I understand you have every reason to hate me. But please don't use this child to exact vengeance on me. You... You know I would do anything for it."

You scoff. He's certainly laying it on thick. You don't buy it.

"Oh, yeah?" you challenge. "What will you give me for it?"

Loki looks back to you, and you can see the desperation in his eyes.

"I'll buy you a house..." he offers, pausing to see if you react to this. You don't. "I'll pay all your expenses for the remainder of your life. You wouldn't have to work. I- I'll do the same for your friends. I'll give you sword fighting lessons. You could come to court any time you like. Have great feasts. Ride out on the horses. Is... is that not enough?"

You narrow your eyes. "I don't want any of that."

"What do you want?" Loki asks hoarsely.

You keep glaring at him. "For you to suffer."

For a moment, Loki just stands there. Then he takes a deep, shaking breath and turns away from you. You see him wipe at his eyes, see his shoulders trembling, hear the sharp breaths he takes as he tries to contain his emotions. Is he... crying?

You lean forward a bit, feeling a pang of guilt. Loki's head turns back to you, his eyes wide and bloodshot. Then he turns fully and literally gets down on his knees, his mouth open and his eyes moving over the floor as he tries to find the right words. His fingers clench and unclench at his sides.

"Please," he begins. "Please don't hurt it." He says your name again. "I merely want- I want to be his father. Whether you let me see this child or not, I beg of you to let it live. Do not harm it to hurt me! Please." He wipes at his face again, trying to dry his eyes. "I understand you do not want it. I will take it! I will support you! Please, just let me... Let me be its father."

He slumps forward, his fingers digging into the carpet as his hair obscures his face. You can see his shoulders shaking from the force with which he grips the carpet. You suddenly realize what he thought you were trying to do.

"Loki, I- I won't bargain for this baby like it's some object," you say, shocked and guilty.

He lifts his head, his expression bitter. "No? You'll simply kill it?"

"No!" you splutter. "I won't hurt the baby! You don't... You don't have to buy me anything! I would never! The child will be safe, alright? I didn't want it, but now I'm going to carry it to term. I'll make sure no harm comes to it while I have it in me. What happens then, I have yet to decide. But we still
have a few months' time to figure things out. Did you really think I would blackmail you over its life?"

Slowly, Loki sits up, and now he just looks tired. He looks to the side and runs his hand up his face and through his hair. "It... It was a possibility. As king, such things can easily happen. Usually, I might not care, but this child... You really demand nothing?"

You shake your head. "No. Well, I can't raise this child. I just don't have the means to. And I'm not sure if I want it to grow up here with you. I mean, I know you won't harm it, but this kind of life... it can't be good for a child. You're busy all the time as king. You'd be absent from its life. And it's so dangerous at court. There's so much violence here. I don't want that for him. I want him to have a normal life, and I certainly don't want him to grow up being groomed for the throne like you were."

"Then what... What will you have us do?" he asks, crossing his legs on the floor.

"I... I don't know, Loki. I guess, prove to me that you are worthy of him and of me. We don't have to get back together. I don't expect that. Just try to convince me you'd benefit this child by being in his life."

Loki nods, swallowing heavily. "I will. I will heed your every wish. Whatever you need, I shall have it delivered to you. I love this child. And I love..." His shoulders sag in defeat. "I love you. I admit this now. I love you. I always have. Even... Even in our darkest moments. My love for you was always there. No matter how much I tried to be rid of it. I... I am your slave. A slave of my heart. I will do anything to prove to you how much I mean those words."

You nod, trying hard to swallow down your own emotions.

"Okay," you whisper. "Okay. You have until the baby is born to convince me of your worthiness."

Loki seems to steel himself, because when he speaks next, his voice is steady. "May I start now?" he asks, holding his hand out to you.

"I... I guess," you say, using his hand to help you stand up, then letting it go again.

He stands up as well, looking you once over. "I'll have a guest room prepared for you. You'll have everything you need, including a proper meal. You'll relax there. I'll free your friends and send them to you. They will receive rooms as well. You needn't see me again for a while. I will, however, be at your beck and call all hours of the day and night. So will my healers. I'll put an enchanted bell at your bedside. Ring it, and I will go to you to assist with whatever you may need. Does that sound amicable?"

That does sound really, really good right now. "Yes, thank you."

"I am happy to hear that," he says, placing a hand on your shoulder and steering you toward his bed. "It may take a few hours to have it all set up, so why don't you stay in my rooms and continue to rest? Feel free to take a bath or call upon my servants."

Looking at the big, soft bed, you do feel immensely tired. You don't hesitate to walk over to it and snuggle up under the blankets.

"Can I ask you something?" you mumble, before Loki has a chance to leave.

"Of course."

"Is this going to complicate your marriage to Lady Anise?"
Loki stares at you for a moment. "Darling, I never intended to marry her. I love only you. I can explain everything at a later point, but that was all to make you fall out of love with me. She is not to have my children."

"Oh," you say, feeling strangely happy. "Was your cousin in on it, too, then?"

Loki grimaces. "I shall explain that, too, at a later point."

"Okay. I want to know what you planned to name your first child, though." You give him an expectant look. "You said you had names prepared for her and your first child."

His brows go up. "You wish to know... what I would name my first child? Wouldn't you rather name him?"

"I think we should wait to name him until we see what he looks like," you decide. "But I want to know what name you have in mind."

He walks over to the side of the bed, sitting down on it. "May I?" he asks carefully.

You contemplate briefly, then sit up against the headboard. You draw the blanket down to your waist and the nightgown up above your belly, showing him the little bump.

Loki looks at it for a moment, then reaches out and lays his hand over it. You stare at his face while he stares at his hand. There is silence for a moment.

"Fridi Lokison," he finally gets out, saying it quickly as to get it over with.

A smile tugs at your lips. "Fridi. That's a cute name. I really wasn't expecting that. It means peace, doesn't it? And it has certain similarities to your mother's name. You want your son to be named Fridi?"

Loki's eyes move up to yours, glaring at you.

You put your hand on his, pulling it off your belly and pushing your nightgown back down.

"You really love him, don't you?" you ask, staring at him in wonder.

"I do," he says, his gaze challenging yours.

"And you love me?" you confirm.

He grits his teeth, his eyes narrowing. "I do."

Your heart flutters. Whether you feel triumph, warmth, or longing, you don't know. "Okay. You may go set up my room now. But I want to be there when you free my friends. Then, we can all go to our rooms together."

He nods and gets off the bed. "You should get some sleep." Then he walks from the room, closing the door gently behind him.

You curl up on your side, trying to pretend that everything is fine so you can calm down. You don't think you'll manage to fall asleep, too preoccupied thinking about the tiny life inside you. Something that undeniably connects you to Loki, much like your dreams. Maybe it was all leading up to this. Maybe you were meant for this.
"Darling?" Loki asks, quietly entering the room so as not to wake you, should you be asleep. You lift your head up from the pillow, blinking drowsily at him. You weren't asleep, but you did drift off into a mindless state of relaxation.

"The rooms have been prepared now. Would you like something to eat before we gather your friends?" He's standing at the foot of the bed, looking at you kindly. You sit up and rub over your face, brushing your hair aside. "Yes. I'd like to eat."

"What would you like?" he asks, and you wonder how much effort it takes him to sound so caring.

You shrug. "I don't know… Do you have any more of that exotic fruit we had at the banquet? That was really good."

"You mean the one from Alfheim?" Loki asks, and it looks like he's trying to suppress a smile. "Are you craving it?"

You are taken aback for a moment, then realize that you are craving some of that sweet fruit, maybe with a savory sauce, like the one that was supposed to go with the meat. Oh no. The more you think about it, the more your mouth waters. You give Loki a desperate look.

"Please tell me you can get it for me."

Now he does smile. "That is what I am here for. There will be no leftovers from the banquet, since it does not keep so long, but I shall see what I can do. Perhaps you should get dressed while I ask a servant to obtain some, and then we can free your friends while we wait. Is there anything else you wish for?"

You're practically drooling as you describe to him the exact sauce you want, and a little cake, and maybe some nice, warm soup. Loki nods and listens attentively, but there's still a small smile on his lips.

When you're done, he leaves to tell a servant. You get out of bed and walk over to the dresser where you know your clothes to still be after all this time. You feel emotional about this fact now, but dismiss it as being hormonal. You select the loosest dress you can find, a light green flowing one, and some socks and shoes, and then go to the bathroom to change, not wanting Loki to walk in while you're naked.

You hear him return while you are still struggling with the laces of your dress, but he politely remains in the other room.

"Do you have a jacket or something I could borrow?" you ask, stepping out of the bathroom. "It's kind of cold in this dress, especially since it shows so much skin."

You don't fail to notice Loki's eyes roving over your body.

"Yes, of course," he says after a second of staring. He reaches into his wardrobe and pulls out a cloak made of an animal pelt. He brings it to you and places it around your shoulders. It's quite heavy, but it's also warm.

"Thank you," say, snuggling into it.

"The food shall be delivered to your new room, once it has been prepared," Loki informs you, walking over to the door and opening it for you. "Your friends shall get some, too, though less of
such an… adventurous mix. Now, which of them shall we free first?"

"Rika," you decide immediately, marching out of the bedroom.

Loki lets you take the lead, walking a step behind you as you find your way to the servants' quarters. It's early afternoon, judging by the sun, so Rika must still be busy working. You wonder if she tried to check up on you and found the aftermath of the tangle between you and Loki. She must be worried sick, regardless, with you being pregnant and all.

You reach the servants' quarters and find them empty, as expected.

"Is there a way to find Rika without searching the whole palace?" you ask, turning to Loki.

He nods slowly. "I know the locations of the collars at any time."

"Oh." That does make sense. "Where is she?"

"Follow me," Loki says, striding forward. This time, you're the one walking after him, trying to keep up with his speedy gait.

Servants genuflect to Loki as you pass them, which is nothing unusual. What's unusual is where Loki ends up stopping.

He pulls open the door to a supply closet, and there is Rika, standing red faced and teary eyed in a corner.

Her expression becomes one of pure fear as soon as the door is opened. It doesn't help that Loki is wearing a rather serious expression, or that you are dressed in his colors again.

"Rika!" you gasp, rushing forward and taking her in your arms. "I'm so sorry! I should have known how much this would affect you! I should have been there for you instead of letting you feel like you needed to take care of me!"

Rika doesn't say anything, still completely shocked. She takes a few choppy breaths, resting her forehead on your shoulder.

Suddenly, her head jerks up.

"Your collar!" she exclaims, staring at your neck. "Where is it? Did... did it come off? Do you not love him anymore?"

"It did," you confirm. "And I don't. I don't love him."

"Oh," Rika breathes, and you can see the relief in her wet eyes. "Is it because you found out that you're…"

She breaks off, glancing at Loki.

"It's okay," you say, pulling back slightly. "He knows. We actually came here to take your collar off. Loki will allow us to live in his guest rooms while we decide how to handle this."

"Oh," Rika says again, staring at Loki.

Loki clears his throat. "If you would allow me... I will remove your collar now."

He reaches out toward her, and Rika visibly tenses up, but she doesn't move away. Loki's fingertips
glow green, and when he touches her collar, it splits into two pieces.

Rika reaches up and touches her neck, taking a few relieved breaths, while Loki makes the two pieces vanish.

"So... we're free now?" she asks, as if she doesn't quite believe it.

"Yes-" you begin, but Loki interrupts you.

"Not quite," he says to Rika. "You are still criminals. I cannot simply let you go. Negotiations need to be made. A lot depends on the fate of this child." He puts a hand on your shoulder and pulls you to his side in a symbolic gesture. "None of you will leave until we have all come to an agreement."

Rika looks between Loki and you, then decides to ignore him and focus solely on you.

"I'll help you with the baby," she says. "Anything you want to do with it, I'll help you! I'll even raise it with you, if you want to keep it! Please, let's just get out of here as soon as possible, alright? You don't owe him anything."

You squirm when you feel Loki's grip on your shoulder tighten. You open your mouth to say something, but Loki has already begun responding.

"You wish to raise the child of her tormentor with her?" he challenges, his voice tense. "Love it and nurture it and watch it grow up to be me? Live with your best friend, knowing she will never love you the way she loved me?"

Rika turns to Loki with the fury of a raging bull. You barely manage to step in front of him before she lunges forward, looking like she's about to claw his throat open.

You hold her at arm's length away from Loki while he takes a step back into the hallway. She struggles against you, trying to get to him, but you push your weight against her.

"You don't know anything of love!" she shouts. "I'd love to put the stupid runt up for adoption, but if my best friend wants to keep it for some reason, I'll be there to support her! Something you would not understand, because you can't even grasp the concept of unconditional love! She doesn't have to love me as anything more than a friend, and I'd still do all in my power to make her happy!"

Rika finally stops trying to get past you, but now Loki is the one boiling over with anger. You turn around when you hear him growl, and see his posture poised for an attack.

"Do not speak of my child this way!" he snarls. "It is mine, and I will not let you near it!"

You want to step in, but Rika is already snapping back at him.

"As if you care about some bastard child, or its mother! I bet you have dozens of those running around already! Don't pretend this was anything other than an accident. You should be happy I'm willing to take care of it for you!"

"Rika, no-" you begin, but now Loki is taking a step toward her, balling his fists, and you have to put yourself between them again.

"Little chit, you know nothing of this child," he snarls. "You speak of the crown prince of Asgard, and I will not let you take him!"

Rika is so shocked by this statement, you finally get the chance to say something.
"Loki. Shhh. Calm down." You put your hands on his arms, getting his attention. "This amount of anger can't be good for you. Please, take a deep breath. Nothing will happen to him, I promise."

Your head is spinning and you can't stand all the shouting. Loki stares down at you, not exactly relaxing, but not getting any angrier either.

"Crown prince?" Rika finally says from behind you. "How? You're not royalty, are you, mús? You didn't... marry him, did you?"

You turn to her, trusting Loki won't try to attack her.

"No, I'm not and I didn't," you comfort her. "But I am his consort. Do you remember that big party a while back where I was gone the entire night? Yeah, I wasn't just serving there. I was the reason for the party. I was basically announced as Loki's breeding stock, and since I'm the first person to conceive Loki's child, this one is the first in line. It doesn't make me royalty or anything, but the boy certainly is."

Rika stares at you with wide eyes. "Wait, so... was this even an accident? You didn't know, right? Did Loki...?" She looks to him, her eyes narrowing sharply. "Did you do this to her on purpose?"

"That is still King Loki to you," he corrects snidely. "I assure you, I did not trick anyone into carrying my child. Now that it has happened, however..." He suddenly grabs you and pulls you to his side, placing his hand protectively over your belly. "...I will not shirk my responsibilities to the child or the mother. Let this be between her and me, hm?"

Rika looks visibly disgusted that Loki is touching you like this, but she does her best to keep her composure. You kind of just stand there, pulled against Loki with his hand on your belly, your mind going blank.

"I don't trust you," Rika says bluntly. "You'll try to trick her into wanting this child, and then you'll convince her that it's best for the child to have both parents, and then you'll ask her to stay here with you, and as soon as the child is born you'll begin abusing her again, but at that point, you'll have the child as leverage and will doom her into an unhappy life under your thumb because she'll put the child's happiness before her own and try to protect it from you."

Loki notices you stiffen in his arms and pulls you tighter against him, practically squishing you to his side.

"Do not dare accuse me of such a thing," he hisses. "You do not know."

"Yes, I do!" Rika snaps, grabbing your arm and forcing you out of Loki's grasp by yanking on it. "You may be nice to her some of the time, but that doesn't matter, because you're an abusive piece of garbage and you don't deserve her or the child."

You cling to Rika, glancing dubiously at Loki. What she just predicted might very well come true. You don't know what he'll be like once he has the prince in his arms. What if he simply discards you?

Loki regards you and Rika for a moment, then finally takes a deep breath and relaxes his posture.

"Come, kitten. Let us free your other friends." He steps back out into the hallway, waiting for you to follow.

Rika is still clutching your arm.
"Are you going to come with us, Rika?" you ask.

She nods. "Yes. Definitely."

Loki grits his teeth. "Then come. Let us get this over with."

Before waiting for a response, he simply turns and begins walking toward the next destination. Rika and you follow, though she keeps you a few steps behind him.

***

You find Lee cleaning out a fireplace in some parlor. He jumps up when he hears the three of you enter, and then bows when he spots Loki.

"Hi, Lee," you say, still arm in arm with Rika.

"Hi," he says, looking with surprise between the three of you. "What's the meaning of this? Are we... Are we being set free?"

"Yes," you say.

"Yes," Rika says.

"For the last time, you are still under my supervision," Loki growls. "You will not leave the palace. Now come here, boy, and let me get this over with."

Lee shuffles over to Loki, who roughly grabs his collar, splits it apart, and makes it vanish.

"Thank you, my king!" Lee gasps, also touching his neck like Rika did.

"You don't have to call him that," Rika says.

"Yes, you do," Loki growls. "And you do as well, chit."

"Loki..." you say placatingly, placing your hand on his arm again.

He looks at you, showing you just how irritated he is.

"Tell them to respect my title," he says.

"Loki, I can't force them to do that," you respond.

He grabs your chin between two fingers, yanking it toward him.

"Yes, you can, pet," he breathes. "Yes, you can."

Your heart pounds loudly in your ears. It's not like you can speak or even think when he's holding you like this, his narrowed eyes piercing into your soul, his angry breaths caressing your face. It's really not your fault your body is full of adrenaline and reacting to him like this.

When you don't say anything, Loki's expression slowly relaxes until the two of you are simply locked in a staring contest. Neither of you move a muscle, trying to figure the other one out.

"Oh, no, no, no!" Rika says suddenly. "This is not happening! You look like a hypnotized rabbit! Come on, have some dignity and move away from him!"

You try to move. You really do, but a soft tug from Loki's fingers has you going still. He licks over
his slightly cracked lips.

"Interesting," he says. "You still react to me."

"I don't love you," you say, throwing those words up in a desperate attempt to shield yourself.

"Hmm. I believe you," he notes. "Perhaps this is lust. Perhaps something else. Something deeper and darker."

"It better not be lust!" Rika exclaims, grabbing you by the shoulders and pulling you away from him. "You stay away from her," she says to Loki.

He holds your gaze even as you're pulled away a few steps. You feel sick again. And dizzy. You can hear your pulse. And yet... you can't look away. Like a deer caught in the lantern light of a horse carriage.

"I think..." Loki says, completely ignoring Rika, "You want to give me a chance. I think you want to fall back in love with me. I think you miss me. I think you want to be with me. You crave someone like me. Someone who controls you."

Rika scoffs and pulls you further away from him. You have nothing to say.

Loki holds his hand out to you. "Come here, kitten."

It's a command.

Rika grips you tighter, and you stare at his hand. Lee looks awkwardly between the three of you.

"You know it to be true, kitten," Loki says. "Think of the potential we have together. I, the king of Asgard, and you, the assassin. I will train you and make you stronger. We can have a family together. We can shape the future of this realm, and thereby the future of our children. Nothing shall stand in our way. Join me. You know you can trust me, pet. We've been through so much together. We're on the same side."

"No-!" Rika says, but you hold your finger up to signal that you want to speak.

"I don't know, Loki." You feel tired. "I don't know if I want that."


He opens his arms. Rika tugs at you. Lee is watching with rapt attention.

"Loki..." you say.

"Pet. You know you can be happy with me." His eyes are wide and sincere.

You shake your head. "Let's just go get Mat."

"Good idea," Rika immediately agrees, letting you go and taking Lee's arm to pull him from the room.

Loki glances at them, irritated, then looks back to you.

"We both know you desire what I have to offer," he says, before you can leave. "Why can we not keep this simple? You will get what you want, and I will get what I want."
"Because you don't just want me to be your subject," you answer. "...Do you?"

He steps a little closer, his expression relaxing gradually. "I suppose not. But is that not the best course of action? We will both be around the prince, and you'll still be his mother, but you needn't sacrifice your life for him. I will not force you to marry me like your friend assumed. You could do as you wish. Be my assassin, even. We could maintain a purely professional relationship."

You look for the nearest chair and sit down, unable to keep standing any longer. You clutch your hand to your stomach and take a moment to calm your lingering dizziness.

"I hate this," you mumble. "All this arguing and negotiating. It shouldn't be like this."

Loki comes over and crouches down in front of you, pulling your hand away from your belly and instead holding it in his. With his other hand, he rubs soothing circles over your abdomen through your dress.

You hold his hand tightly in yours.

"It just makes me so sad," you continue. "That us being together is already off the table. That we can't give this child the happily-in-love parents it deserves. How can we love him when we can't even love each other?"

"I love you," Loki says, his eyes on the little bump he can see when he flattens down your dress.

You feel tears trek down your cheeks. "Do you, though? Do you even want me? Or do you just want this child?"

His eyes meet yours, and then he reaches up to brush your tears away with his thumb. "Can I not want both?"

You notice Rika and Lee waiting in the doorway from the corner of your eye, but they wisely don't say anything.

"What about the throne?" you ask. "Do you love that more than me?"

"I cannot leave Asgard without a ruler," Loki says.

You hiccup. "I- I mean, I don't even care. I don't know if I even could love you again. The feelings I had for you are just... gone. I guess I want... to know that you are capable of love. Because so far, I haven't gotten to experience it from you."

Loki gazes at you for a moment before responding. "Do you want me to love you unconditionally, without requiring you to love me back?" He asks this without accusation, entirely serious about this suggestion.

You ponder this. You shouldn't, but... this could be a way to see if he's faking his feelings. And maybe you just want to be loved.

"Yes," you hiccup, wiping at your face.

Loki nods slowly. "Alright. Will you tell me which things I must not do? Am I allowed to bring you gifts? Am I allowed to court you publicly? How far may I go in touching you?"

He stands up and lets your hand go, waiting for your answer.

You wipe the rest of the moisture from your eyes and slowly stand up as well. Who knew asking for
permission was so romantic?

"I don't want to be courted publicly," you decide. "You may bring me gifts, but none that are valuable beyond sentiment. No jewelry, but you could bring me flowers. Anything that might cheer me up a little. As for touching... You can touch my hands. My shoulders. My arms. If you want to touch my belly, you can ask. That's about it for now."

Loki nods. "As you wish, my darling. May I still call you that?"

You smile a little. "As long as you call no one else that, yes."

He briefly smiles back. "Do you wish to rest before freeing your last friend?"

You shake your head. "No. Let's get this over with."

The both of you head for the door to join up with Rika and Lee.

"I'll hold you to those rules," Rika warns as Loki passes.

He gives her a side glance and continues on his way.

***

Mat is sitting on the bed in his cell, hunched over, with his unruly hair covering half of his face. He doesn't look up immediately when the four of you step up to his cell, but he does lift his head as soon as the magical barrier disappears.

"Have you reconsidered your loyalties yet?" Loki asks, building himself up with his feet apart in an intimidating posture.

Mat takes in the situation, obviously realizing that there is little threat if the three of you are standing willingly next to Loki, but wondering nonetheless why you would all come here.

"I will never be loyal to you," Mat growls, standing up and fearlessly stepping forward.

"Would you like to remain here, then?" Loki asks.

"Mat, you don't have to stay!" Rika calls out. "He'll let you free, he's just trying to trick you into staying willingly!"

Loki glares at Rika while Mat steps out of the cell. Before he can get very far, Loki stops him by grabbing the front of his ratty shirt.

"I'd like to see you kneel," he growls. "Show me you understand where you place beneath me, even now."

Mat yanks Loki's hand off him, scoffing and simply walking over to where Rika is standing. Loki looks extremely offended that he just dared such an action. He quickly summons a dagger and holds it out threateningly.

"Submit!" he demands. "Or you will not the light of sun ever again!"

"Loki, no..." you say, covering your face with your hand in exasperation.

Mat looks at Loki.
"It makes you angry, doesn't it?" he asks smugly. "That I refuse to submit to you when even my friends have already done so."

In a flash of movement, Loki lunges at Mat.

If you didn't know better, you would have thought Mat was dead now. Instead, Loki has thrown him on his back, his boot planted on his chest and his dagger held over his face.

Mat coughs violently from the impact, trying to stand up and failing under the pressure of Loki’s boot.

"Beg me for your freedom," Loki hisses.

"No," Mat wheezes.

"Darling," Loki says to you, his voice deceptively calm. "Inform your friend that I am about to do something very nasty to him."

You collapse to the ground, hugging your knees to your chest. You just can't handle this much testosterone right now.

Rika steps in for you. "Mat, we all got our collars off, but Loki still wants us to stay at the palace until some things are sorted. If you promise not to try anything, we can all live in some guest rooms together. Can you just accept that, so he won't lock you up again?"

Mat looks up at Loki, smirking. "Alright. I'll behave, but I want room service and access to the royal bathhouses."

Loki snarls. Lee sits down next to you and pats your back.

Rika turns to Loki now. "My king, just let him go and he'll be out of your hair."

Finally, Loki pulls back and steps off of Mat, who gets up and brushes the dirt off his already dirty shirt.

Loki doesn't wait for anyone to follow him before stomping off, back out of the dungeons. You have to scramble to your feet and jog to catch up with him, your friends following behind you.

He's silent and fuming the entire way to the floor with the guest rooms. A servant is waiting there, curtsying deeply when Loki arrives.

"The food is almost prepared, my king," she says cheerfully.

Loki barely glances at her. "Show the boys their room, then bring the meals. I will bring the girls to theirs."

Rika and you follow Loki while Mat and Lee stay behind with the servant.

"I've given you separate rooms, but they are connected by a door, so you may join each other at your leisure."

Loki stops before two open doors. Inside you see two very nice chambers, with a bathroom each. Not as big as Loki's, but definitely fit for esteemed guests.

Rika cautiously walks into one and you walk into the other. You see her explore her room through the open door connecting them, while you explore yours. Oh, a nice soft bed... And the window
"Is it to your liking?" Loki asks softly, coming in behind you.

You turn to him. "Yes, I like it very much. Thank you."

"Here is the bell I spoke of." He holds out a brass hand bell. "Ring it, and I shall go to you and assist you with your every wish."

You take it from him, ringing it experimentally. It makes a bright, pleasant sound.

"Now, if you need a healer, you will pull on this cord." Loki walks over to your bed and opens a panel in the wall over your nightstand. Inside is a rope, stretching from top to bottom and disappearing into the wall. "They will be alerted and go to you." He shuts the panel again.

"Thank you so much," you say, placing the bell on the nightstand. "Can I really call you anytime I want? Even the middle of the night?"

Loki gazes at you with pure sincerity. "Of course. I would prefer that you do, even if you merely have another craving."

"And are you alright?" you ask him, speaking quietly so Rika won't be able to hear. "I know this was all way too stressful today. Finding out I'm pregnant. Accidentally revealing your true form to me. Finding out I don't love you anymore. Being yelled at and disrespected by my friends. Even for you, that's a harsh punishment to experience all in one day. So, how are you holding up?"

Loki stares at you, then opens his mouth as if to speak, but doesn't say anything. He turns and walks to an armchair in the corner of the room, sitting down and resting his head on one hand. He stares out the window, visibly tense even now.

"Oh, Loki," you plea, slowly approaching him. You can see Rika watching you from her room, but she's sitting on her bed a good distance away. "Please tell me. I won't take any glee from it. I won't call the healers or anything."

"I feel terrible," he admits, still looking out of the window. "Vulnerable. Like the armor I've clad myself in has been stripped away, and every minor thing rubs me raw."

"I know it's painful, Loki," you say, coming to a stop in front of him, "but being vulnerable isn't a bad thing. I don't intend to hurt you. My friends might, but honestly, you can just ignore them. You don't have to stand up for yourself against them. No matter how much they might want me to keep this child from you, I already promised you, I wouldn't. He's yours as much as mine."

You take Loki's hand and bring it to your belly. He gazes at it, his thumb moving slightly to caress you.

"You are being far too kind to me," Loki says. "If I were you, I wouldn't let me touch you at all, or even see you for another moon. You show far too much sympathy for me, even now that you know the kind of monster I am."

"You're not a monster," you say gently, stroking over his head with your other hand. His eyes close automatically and he takes a shaking breath. "At least not because of your genes. Why don't you rest now and then visit me tomorrow morning and have breakfast with me? In the meantime, you can do some thinking, about what you want and what you deserve."

Loki nods tiredly and stands up. "Food'll be here soon," he mumbles, then simply walks out of the
room and pulls the door shut behind him. As soon as he's gone, Rika comes over.

"How much of that did you overhear?" you ask.

She sighs, sprawling out on your bed. "I heard a lot of complicated love drama stuff. And that we're getting food. When's that?"

Chapter End Notes

I hope you enjoyed that. Lots of complicated feelings going around

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