<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Mature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archive Warning:</td>
<td>Graphic Depictions Of Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category:</td>
<td>F/M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fandom:</td>
<td>The Hobbit - All Media Types, The Hobbit - J. R. R. Tolkien, The Hobbit (Jackson Movies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship:</td>
<td>Bilbo Baggins/Thorin Oakenshiold, Kili/Tauriel, Fili/Sigrid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character:</td>
<td>Bilbo Baggins, Thorin Oakenshiold, Kili, Fili, Thorin's Company, Dis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Tags:</td>
<td>fem!Bilbo, Female Bilbo Baggins/Thorin Oakenshiold, Female Bilbo, Adoption, adopt, Family, Rule 63, Adopted Sibling Relationship, Adopted Children, Adopted Bilbo, BAMFI!Bilbo, BAMF Bilbo, Slow Burn, Attempted Kidnapping, Attempted Murder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stats:</td>
<td>Published: 2015-02-15 Updated: 2018-08-31 Chapters: 19/? Words: 38055</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Flower Among Gems

by yinyangswings

Summary

The Fell Winter destroyed Billanna (also known as Billa) Baggin's small hobbit family, as her parents were murdered and she kidnapped by orcs. However, she is saved by a familiar group of dwarves which, after deliberation (and Thorin's younger sister giving him grief) Billa joins the family of Durin. As the years pass, relationships are brought into light, and with quests thrown in, it seems a quiet life is a little hard to find for a hobbit among dwarves.
Red Snow

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The small figure curled up in her crate as she listened to the sounds of crunching snow and the jeers of the orcs. Maybe she would die before they brought her to their master, or maybe they would get tired of her and just kill her. It’d be heaven in comparison to this.

Billanna Baggins was a 21-year-old she-hobbit and had previously been living in the Shire with her parents. Now, she was a prisoner, kidnapped by orcs that had attacked her and her parents while they had been at the river to collect ice, heading north so she could be a toy to their leader. With the thought of her parents, tears gathered in her eyes, though she wasn’t sure where she had found the reserves to produce such tears. But with the tears came the horrible memories

“I’m not sure Bungo…”

“Bella, we need more water and we need to see if there are any fish under the ice.” Billa heard her father gently tell her mother as she peered into the hall from her room. “I know it’s dangerous, but we need to go to the Brandywine.”

“I’ll come with you.” Billa replied eagerly as she plodded to the pair. Belladonna looked at her daughter, her eyes wide. “That way we can get more fish and ice and don’t have to go back!”

“Billanna…”

“I’ll be alright Mama.” Billa promised. Belladonna looked at Bungo and then stormed out of the kitchen. A few moments later she returned, carrying all of their clothes, and a blade that if Billa remembered correctly was the one her mother had told she had received on one of her adventures.

“Alright then. We all go.” Belladonna Baggins stated handing Bungo and Billa their coats and scarves. After she pulled hers on, she belted the blade to her side.

“We go there, get ice and check for fish. No hanging about.”

“No hanging about.”

Billa later had shuddered in the cold as she walked around the rivers edge looking for free chunks of ice.

“Billanna, stay close!”

“Yes mother!!” Billa replied dryly. Honestly, she was a 21-year-old Hobbit. Not an infant!! She could care for herself!

Still this winter made her mother nervous, so it was understandable. The Brandywine had never frozen over like that before, so Billa could give her mother slack.

“Billanna!”

“Mother, I’m al-”

A growl broke her complaint and she turned to where her parents were and froze as though the ice
that had covered the ground has rose up and captured her feet. A warg stood in front of her parents, snarling and growling. Her mother was slowly withdrawing her dagger.

But it was too slowly.

And the warg had set its sights on her father.

It lunged towards Bungo who scrambled out of the way as it pounced directly into the spot Bungo had just been. It snarled, drool dripping from its muzzle as Belladonna pulled out her dagger. Billa seemed frozen, unable to move or help as the warg forced her mother and father onto the ice-covered river, Belladonna in front of Bungo, her dagger drawn.

Billa only managed to let out a scream as she spotted movement on the other side of the river and another warg came running out, straight at her parents. Belladonna managed to dodge.

Bungo did not.

“Bungo!!” Billa heard her mother scream, but a strange buzzing sound filled her ears as she watched the two wargs pounce on her father, tearing at his flesh, ripping off pieces of skin and muscle, staining the ice with red, dark red blood. She became aware of screaming, and at first thought it was her mother.

It took her a moment to realize it was her.

The wargs turned to the sound and snarled, their muzzles stained with the life water that had once circulated in her father and began to stalk towards her, their nails clicking sickly against the ice. Belladonna wasn’t about to allow her only daughter, now her only memory of her husband, go through the same fate. She screamed a battle cry and ran towards the carnivores dagger raised high.

And she stabbed the one in the eye.

It shrieked, rubbing at its face to try and get rid of the pain. The other warg turned to Belladonna and her expression was enough for Billa to know what was going to happen next.

Fast. Everything happened too fast.

The second warg raced towards Belladonna, who barely managed to dodge, slipping on the ice.

“Mama!!” Billanna screamed as the warg missing its eye ran towards her and her legs refused to listen. Belladonna looked up and kicked the warg on top of her back, but it slashed its claw over her and her own blood was spilled. She fell to the ground, clutching her midsection as her jacket became stained with blood. She looked at her daughter, her barely a teen daughter and made her decision.

With another scream she smashed her blade into the ice. Luck was with her as she hit a weak spot and the ice fractured, cracks splitting quickly around the warg stalking towards her and towards the one running towards Billa. Both wargs suddenly plummeted into the icy river with yelps. Billa looked up at her mother, who was still clutching the handle of the dagger. Belladonna looked up and gave a soft smile, gripping the dagger harder before she too crashed into the dark waters of the Brandywine.

The keening scream filled the air as Billanna Baggins finally found movement in her legs and stumbled forward, her arms outstretched towards the yawning opening in the river that had swallowed her mother away, as though it would pull her back from its watery grip. The young she-hobbit tripped forward and fell onto her hands and knees, screaming and crying for her father to
awaken, and her mother to reappear.

What answered her however, was a cruel laugh. Turning she saw a strange creature she had never seen before. He was taller than her, squat, broad, flat-nosed, sallow-skinned, bow-legged, with a wide mouth sneering at her and slant eyes, long arms, dark skin, and fangs. She could have sworn her heart stuttered to a stop.

An orc.

She stayed where she was kneeling, once again frozen, waiting for the scream of the blade, the sting as it would meet her neck and cleave her head. However none of that came.

Instead the blade tip pressed against the neck of her blouse and pulled it forward slightly.

Her face grew crimson in shame and if she wasn’t absolutely petrified would probably have been yelling at him as other orcs joined the monster. They spoke in their own tongue and suddenly she was hoisted up by her hair. She screamed in pain before she was shoved into a crate.

And darkness became her companion.

And still that darkness was her companion; though she was jostled to and fro with the movements of the wrag her crate was strapped on, scrapping against the rough wood. She didn’t know how long it had been, but it had to be at least a few weeks or so. The orcs were still talking in their own tongue, sounding like they were arguing, and Billa shuddered, pulling her jacket closer to her, but cold still ate at her. Nothing would warm her now.

Then suddenly a battle cry was heard, in a language she had never heard before and it definitely wasn’t the cries of an orc.

“Baruk Khazâd! Khazâd ai-mênu!”

The crate suddenly jerked and she let out a muffled yelp as the warg that had been carrying her seemed to throw the box she was in off of itself. She bounced several times, smashing her head hard against the wood. Lights seem to suddenly dance in her vision as the crate came to a stop, her lying on her back, one arm tucked under her back the other laying across her chest as her head throbbed. She could hear sounds of fighting but they slowly vanished as she closed her eyes and lost consciousness.

Thorin Oakenshield had only meant to go on a hunt. Food was becoming thin again and while he and the rest of kin that lived in the same property area as his sister, his nephews, and himself lived worked to get food, sometimes hunting was the best option.

But right then they weren’t having much luck.

This damn winter was making things harder and harder to do, and though they managed to get some squirrels it wasn’t going to be a lot. It was only when Thorin had been about to catch a rabbit that they spotted the orcs and wargs.

And the wargs had smelled them.

So now, he was sure, Dís was going to murder him.

Thorin grumbled angrily to himself as he withdrew his hammer from the smashed skull of a warg. Bad enough he had gotten involved in another orc fight, what with how Dís always scolded him into
finding trouble (whenever she wasn’t giving him grief on how he would always get lost)

“Can we come out now?”

“Kíli!”

Yes, Dís was definitely going to kill him with his own hammer when she found out that he and Dwalin had taken on a small orc scouting pack while he was supposed to be caring for his nephews on a hunting trip.

“Aye, you can come out!” Dwalin gruffly remarked, yanking his axe out of the head of an orc. “Pretty far up from where orcs normally go.” He added, looking at his brother-in-arms as two young dwarfs came out from the sparse trees, his eldest nephew, Fíli, in the lead, holding his younger brother’s arm, Kíli. Though he had only really meant to bring Fíli on this, Kíli had been insistent, and the two brothers rarely left each other’s side. Fíli looked around trying to see if there was anything good that the orcs and their wargs had been carrying, his blond hair a stark contrast the bleak surroundings, while Kíli pushed his dark hair back, pouting as some of it had come out of his clip.

“Must have some traders they work with. Or they got lost in the weather.” Thorin admitted looking around. “All things considered, they don’t really seem prepared for the winter.”

“I agree.”

“Uncle! There’s a box over here!! Seems pretty heavy!” He heard his youngest nephew chirp and he sighed, deciding to not answer his nephew. “Fee, lets find something to open it!!”

“Fine, fine.” He heard Fíli remark and then the pair were grunting. Thorin sighed again and looked at Dwalin.

“Think I can convince the two to not breathe a word of this to Dís?”

“You’d have to bribe them pretty well to-”

“Um…Thorin? There’s a girl in this box.” Fíli called out, and the older dwarfs turned around and trudged hurriedly through the snow where the pair was peering into a crate, Kíli slightly on tiptoes. Thorin looked into the opening and at the bottom of the crate was indeed a young girl. She looked dead; likely from the abuse the crate had gone through when the warg had thrown it off. He frowned, wondering why the poor thing was with orcs of all things until he saw the bruises and the bind marks on the one visible wrist and ankles. She had likely been stolen away; and was likely going to be sold as a slave or worse.

“We’ll find a place to bury her properly.” He told the two young dwarfs and went to close the box again so scavengers wouldn’t get into it, when the body shifted and she let out a soft sound.

“Fûsak.” Dwalin murmured and Thorin didn’t even try and lecture his friend about the language around Fíli and Kíli as the girl in the crate shifted again and her eyes slowly opened. Dark green eyes shifted around before locking onto his as she stared at the four of them, probably just as stunned as they were now.

Dís was definitely going to murder him.

Chapter End Notes
Yet another story I'll be working on here. Inspired by Bél of the Blue Mountains by SOABA, though the reason why she is adopted is incredibly different XD. Belladonna was a badass she-hobbit for the small part she had in this story.

Hope you all like it.

Some translations:

Fûsak: Fuck
She was dreaming. She had to be dreaming. She had hit her head hard on the wood, and she was
dreaming, or hallucinating.

Because there was no possible way that four dwarves were hovering over her prison and looking at
her as though she was a ghost.

She went to move and inhaled sharply, gripping the back of her head.

“Uncle, she’s hurt!”

“With a throw off a warg like that, that makes sense.” The taller one with dark hair and piercing blue
eyes stated bending down to pick her up. She whimpered in panic.

“I am not going to hurt you.” The stranger stated as gently as he could. “You need to get out of the
crate and we need to leave in case there are more orcs nearby.”

That…was an excellent point and she stumbled trying to stand and was picked up rather easily.

“Not a dwarf.” The other taller one stated and had she the strength to actually say something she
would have. But right then, she was far too disoriented, and the snow was far too bright and blinding
for her eyes that had seen minimal light for the past few weeks.

“Fíli, put her on your back.” The one that had picked her up stated and the blonde boy walked up
dutifully. Within moments she was resting on his back, and she had instinctively wrapped her arms
around his neck. The one that had lifted her strode away, grabbing a discarded hammer. She didn’t
get to look so much at him before another dark haired dwarf, this one younger was in her vision.

“My name’s Kíli, son of Víli, at your service!” He chirped.

“Kee!”

“Billanna Baggins at yours…” She murmured tiredly ignoring the annoyed hiss from the dwarf
carrying her. Kíli seemed to grin at that.

“That’s a nice name!!”

“Don’t call me that.” She grumbled. “I’m only called Billanna when I get in trouble with my mo…
ther…”

She trailed off and both boys looked at her and were startled to see that tears were swarming her
eyes. They both panicked.

“What did you do?” Fíli hissed out and Kíli shrugged frantically.

“I don’t know! I’m sorry!! Don’t cry!” He pleaded as she buried her face into Fíli’s back, her
shoulders shaking. “Um…um…how about Bél? We’ll call you Bél!” He exclaimed and Fíli groaned.

“Really, Kee? That’s the first thing you could come up with? She’s not a dog!”
“Well-”

“No it’s fine.” Billa muttered. “Bél or Billa is fine. I’m sorry for crying.”

“Why were you? Was it something I did?” Kíli asked earning a glare from his brother. Honestly, she had just stopped.

“Remembering my parents.”

“Oh?”

“They’re dead. The wargs got them.” She muttered weakly, and both dwarfs looked at one another helplessly. They glanced at Dwalin and Thorin, and just from their posture, could tell their uncle and his friend heard her even through the howling wind.

“Well…maybe you can live with us.”

“W…what?”

“Well, why not?” Kíli suggested with a shrug. “We found you.”

“I…” Billa stuttered and then shuddered as a breeze blew against her back. Seconds later a warm coat was placed on her back. She looked up and saw Kíli had pulled off his jacket and placed it over her shoulders with a grin.

“You’ll get cold.” She began to exclaim but he shook his head.

“I’ll be fine! I’m a dwarf! And it’s not that cold!”

“It’s bloody cold!!”

“What was all that about being a dwarf and not needing your coat, Kee?” Fíli teased as they entered their home. Kíli glared and was about to argue before his coat was in his face.

“Thank you.” Billa remarked shyly. “And I’m sorry for keeping it.”

“It’s fine!” Kíli replied quickly, his face turning red. “I’m just glad you’re warm.”

“Suck up.” Fíli muttered with a grin and Kíli rolled his eyes at his brother before both turned at the sound of footsteps. Billa looked up as well and saw a powerful looking dwarrowdam with thick raven hair, incredibly long braided sideburns, striking brown eyes, wearing a long flowing blue dress and a furry vest.

“Amad!!” Both boys exclaimed rushing to her with grins. She pulled them into a strong hug, smiling brightly, and despite being shorter than them, caught them up in her arms and hugged them so tightly that their feet briefly left the ground.

“And there are my favorite boys!!” She cooed, brushing their hair back. Both boys laughed and Billa felt a twinge of loneliness as she stood there, awkwardly. “Now where are your uncle and Dwalin?”

“Mister Dwalin is heading back home, and Uncle Thorin is putting the rabbits we caught in the kitchen!” Kíli chirped. “He told us to bring Billa in here!”

“Billa?”
Kíli wiggled out of his mother’s grip and hurried over to Billa, holding her hand.

“This is Billa.”

“And what is a hobbit doing so far from the Shire?” The woman asked and Billa blinked in surprise.

“Oh my name is Billanna Baggins, ma’am-” Billa tried to say.

“She was kidnapped by orcs, Amad!!” Kíli responded.

“And you managed to find her…how?” She stated slowly, slowly turning as footsteps sounded into the room and Thorin came in. He blinked and whatever look Fíli and Kíli’s mother was giving him, seemed to make him shrink.

“Dís-”

“Thorin, please tell me how my sons managed to find a she-hobbit that was kidnapped by orcs?”

“Well…” Thorin stammered out. “It’s not as though I was trying to find orcs. They walked by and-”

Dís was yelling at him at this point in a language she didn’t understand, and both boys scampered away to her, Kíli grinning and Fíli was trying to hide his own. Thorin was trying to throw his two cents in, but seemed to be failing miserably. It was only when she sneezed that Dís stopped and looked at her.

“Excuse me.” She added hastily, blushing. But Dís’s expression was that of concern as she walked over to her and guided her farther in, holding her wrist and pulling her gently.

“You’re nearly frozen. Come along, come along. Boys, you too!” She ushered and Billa looked at the boys who smiled and followed her into a kitchen, and the smell caused her stomach to growl and she blushed. Dís smiled.

“Alright, let me get you three some warm food to eat.” Dís remarked going to where a pot. “Bombur made a stew for all of us.”

“Sweet!!!”

“Thank you Ma’am.” She murmured in thanks.

“Dís.” The dwarrowdam replied with a smile. “Now then, can you tell me what a fauntling is doing so far from the Shire.”

“I’m 21.”

“I see.” Dís replied with a laugh as Thorin looked at his sister than at Billa in surprise.

“That’s just a babe!” Kíli exclaimed and Billa looked at him confused.

"No it's not..."

"Yes it-"

“For hobbits, darling, she’s a tween. They age differently than us.” Dís explained gently. “21 for her is probably about a few years younger than you Kíli.”

“Oh.” Kíli responded before taking another gulpful of food.
“May I ask how orcs came across you?” Dís asked softly. Billa paused and swallowed.

“My parents…and I were at the river to get some ice and fish…” She murmured, pushing through the lump that had suddenly grown in her throat. “Some wargs were nearby and must have heard us. They attacked. The got my father first…my mother…” She inhaled sharply. “My mother died saving me. The orcs just got there before I could escape.”

“And none of your other kin went to go find you?” Fíli snapped, almost angrily. Billa shrugged.

“Hobbits aren’t fighters.”

“Still, that doesn’t make it right!!” Fíli angrily declared. “You’re their kin, and-” He trailed off when his mother gave him a sad look and shook her head.

“Well you’re safe now, darling. And you’ll stay here with us. You'll be safe here.” Dís replied and Thorin looked at her sharply as did Billa.

“Wait, wha-”

“So wait, I’m an older brother now?” Kíli chirped happily, apparently that wasn't a new request. Dís smiled, looking at Billa, who flushed.

“Of course. If that's what she would want”

“Dís!” Thorin hissed. His sister looked at him coolly.

“Yes?"

“You can’t be serious.”

“I most certainly am.”

“You…you really want that? For me to stay?”

“I really do.”

Billa blinked rapidly, trying to keep the burning down in her eyes. She had assumed that she'd be returning to the Shire. Alone. Forced to live in Bag End without her parents.

“Yeah, Billa! It'd be fun!!” Kíli stated happily and Billa flushed.

“Dís, can we talk? Alone?” Thorin stated slowly. Dís nodded, and looked cheerily at her sons.

“Boys, why don’t you go give her some clothes to change into?” She suggested and the two boys nodded and after gulping the remnants of their food, grabbed Billa’s hands and dragged her up the nearby stairs.

“This is our room!” Kíli stated happily showing her the room. It was small, two beds crammed into it, was completely made out of stone (as it had been carved into the part of the mountain that Kíli and Fíli’s family had gotten, as the two brothers had explained) but it was warm with the feeling of a family woven into the room.

“This is our room!” Kíli stated happily showing her the room. It was small, two beds crammed into it, was completely made out of stone (as it had been carved into the part of the mountain that Kíli and Fíli’s family had gotten, as the two brothers had explained) but it was warm with the feeling of a family woven into the room.

“Here.” Fíli stated after a few minutes. “These were Kíli’s when he was younger. They should fit.”

He added and she took them. The material was different then hers, thicker, but it would definitely work.
“Thank you.” She replied and stood. The boys kept looking at her for several minutes and she frowned. “Can you two turn around?”

“Why?”

“I’m a girl!” She snapped and they blushed, as it finally dawned on them and they both turned quickly, both muttering embarrassed apologies. She rolled her eyes and began to change.

“Dís, have you lost your mind?” Thorin demanded without preamble once the brother and sister were alone downstairs.

“I certainly have not,” Dís retorted evenly.

“That girl is a Halfling, Dís,” Thorin said.

"How many times have I told you that Hobbits do not like being called that?” Dís warned and Thorin’s jaw clenched.

"Several, either way-” Thorin bega.

"Either way, she needs us.”

“What she needs, is to be with her own kind.”

"Do you wish to take her back to a home that all will do is drag up memories of her parents slaughtered by wargs? You and I know well enough what those orcs would have done to her, and she needs a family that knows and can help with that knowledge. Not the hobbit family that have likely already declared her dead. And if she is returned, but those scars will bring her nothing but pain. And no hobbit will understand that”

“And her staying here won't burden us or her?”

“Fine, then go and tell the boys that once the snow melts a little, we’ll take her back.” Dís snapped.

“Dís…” Thorin began but his younger sister stormed away, apparently angry. Thorin sighed and went up the rocky stairs. He entered the boy’s room and paused.

Apparently the two boys had been more tired than they had let on, because they were both passed out. And the hobbit lass that was wedged between them was as well. Both of the boys had their arms thrown over her form, as she slept, likely needing it more than them. Every time she twitched as though a nightmare was beginning to take its grip on her, one of the boy’s arms tightened around her protectively and the frightened look on her face slowly slid away and she seemed to curl into their holds easily. He watched the trio silently, then sighed, rubbing his face.

Damn his sister, she was right.

He turned and looked at Dís, who had walked up behind him almost with a triumphant look on her face.

“I still think she’ll be a burden on us.”

“Time will tell, won’t it?” She asked and he sighed, and walked away. She looked into the room and smiled at the three.
“Sweet dreams.” She whispered and then left the room as the three slept, the lone female feeling the safest she had felt since she had lost her parents in the ice and snow.

Chapter End Notes

I feel like Dís would definitely feel protective of Billa (who after this chapter will be called Bél) and like a mama animal, want to take in a girl who is just younger than her youngest son.
She was back in the Shire and she had to be dreaming, because it was spring.

And her parents were there.

She gave a sharp yelp of joy and raced into their arms, curling up to them as both Belladonna and Bungo held her, kissing her temples.

“Mama, Papa…” She murmured her voice thick with emotion.

“Our darling flower.” Belladonna whispered, looking at her with a smile.

“I miss you so much.” She whispered and Belladonna rubbed her hair.

“Shh. There, there.” Bungo soothed.

“It's going to be all right. You'll see.” Belladonna assured her and Billa looked up at her parents, her eyes filled with tears.

“Why did you have to go?”

“Everything has its season.” Belladonna replied softly, giving her daughter a gentle look. “Where one thing falls, another grows. Maybe not what was there before…” Belladonna admitted but Bungo smiled.

“But it makes it something new and wonderful, all the same.” He added and Belladonna nodded.

“But I feel so alone.”

“You are never alone.” Her parents reminded her and she bit her lip.

“And we love you so much, and will watch over you.”

“Promise?”

“With all my love to you, my Billanna.” She whispered and kissed Billa’s forehead. Bungo pressed a kiss to her hair as well.

“With all our love, we promise you.”

Billa awoke slowly, looking around. Tears had slid down her face, but they were slow and not in pain. She jolted slightly at a loud snore and angled her head up to see Kíli and Fíli asleep on either of her sides, sandwiching her in the middle of the bed. She blinked several times, as though she was sure that she would wake up, and was back in that crate with the orcs. But after a few moments, and feeling what was certainly drool on her side from Kíli, she realized that it wasn’t a dream.
And she was safe.

She exhaled slowly and looked up at the ceiling, safety flooding into her. She was safe, and she had that. Her parents in her dream hadn’t seemed upset.

Maybe being here wasn’t going to be that bad.

Several months passed and the snow began to melt. Though they had waited, it seemed that the hobbits had done what Dís had predicted. Billanna Baggins had likely been declared dead.

Truthfully, Billanna didn’t know if she could return to the Shire. She loved it and missed the greens, but could she have stayed there in the home where her parents had lived? Stayed with her family and them just looking at her in pity?

She shook her head and followed Dís, Fíli, and Kíli as they weaved through the streets towards a rather large, elaborate building carved into stone.

“Wow…”

“Big?”

“I don’t think even placing every hobbit-hole in the Shire would make it reach the top.” She replied and the two boys grinned as they tugged her to follow, which she did, trying to be a proper hobbit. Then again, she never thought a proper hobbit would be wearing boots, which she was doing after Dís had given them to her suggesting she wear them to protect her feet from carts, the general rougher landscape of the whole place, and the fact she had already nearly gotten frostbite on them. She had been against them, as no hobbit wore boots, even during the winter. But finally she had conceded that Dís had a point after she had nearly been stepped on a dozen times and had started wearing them. After all some traditions could stay, while others couldn’t in a different place.

“Lady Dís.”

“Werric.”

“May I enquire what is needed from me?”

“I’d like to adopt this girl.” Dís replied with a smile and the dwarf with a long grey beard, beads glittering in it and wearing elaborate robes looked at Billa with disbelief.

“A Halfling? You wish to adopt a Halfling?”

“Your point?”

Werric glared at her then at Billa, who shifted uncomfortably, before Fíli stood in front of her, looking at the dwarf defiantly. Kíli tightened his grip on her hand, which she returned with a gentle squeeze.

“….very well.” He grumbled and Billa let out a breath she didn’t know she was holding. “Lady Dís and…”

“Billa.”

“Billa?”

“Her formal name is Bél.” Dís supplied and the dwarf gave a jerking nod, his lips thinned
dramatically as he scribbled it down onto a sheet of paper. Billa stood there, being as quiet as ever as he wrote in his large old book.

“Step forward.”

Slowly she did so and he grabbed her wrist hard, causing her to flinch.

“Come.”

She followed him to a large tub that was filled to the brim with water, and watched as he walked into it, barely noticing the water.

“Walk in.” Werric ordered and she did so, gasping at the cold water. She wrapped her hands around her forearms as she became chilled.

"Kneel."

"Huh?"

"Kneel and take a deep breath. You must fully submerge into the water."

"But it's freezing!" She hissed under her breath. He shrugged.

"Dwarrows and their kin will have to survive worse."

She grumbled under her breath, before doing so, flinching at the cold. She took a deep breath, but let out a slight yelp as he pushed her, none too gently, backwards into the water, holding her down for a few moments. She held her breath as needles seemed to stab her exposed skin. When she thought she couldn't hold her breath any longer, he lifted her up. She coughed several times, dragging in rattling breaths as the cool mountain air wrapped around her.

She was absolutely freezing.

“You are now cleansed of your previous kin. Your new kin shall protect you and offer you a home in their hearts. Do you accept?”

“I-I do…” She stammered out, her teeth chattering. She heard footsteps and turned to see Fíli, Kíli, and Dís walking into the room.

“Do you children of Durin accept this…girl…as part of your kin and offer a home in your hearts?”

“We do.” The trio stated simultaneously.

“Lady Dís come and give her her Bayurkherumuh to cherish in her heart and so she shall be protected as one of Mahal’s children.”

Dis stepped forward

She kissed Billa’s soaking wet forehead and smiled. Slowly she pulled out a bead and her son’s did the same from their hair, handing the beads to her. Gently she began to braid a chunk of Billa’s hair, weaving the beads into the braid as Werric moved away for some semblance of privacy.

“You are Mesem Nanging Aban, daughter of Dís, daughter of Thráin.” She said softly into the hobbit’s ear, for only her and her sons to hear. Werric was busily looking at paperwork as Dís wiped the water from Billa’s cheeks. “These beads signify that you will be protected by me and your brother’s, and are a dwarf friend. The name is one that shall live in your heart. Now you must never
give this name to anyone. The only one who will know that name besides me and your brothers is your husband.”

Billa nodded and Dís smiled, patting the braid gently.

“Now, why don’t you go dry off while I finish the paperwork since all the formalities are done. Your brothers have your other clothes.” Dís added and the girl nodded, pushing a wet strand of hair with a sniffle before hurrying over to her brothers who were grinning brightly.

Billa sighed as she looked around at the strange place, this Ered Luin. It was definitely different in comparison to the Shire. Even in winter, there hinted that there would be little grass in the spring; all the buildings were so close together. Built with stone, not inside the rolling hills.

Still, Ered Luin had its own beauty, just as her mother had stated. Granted she had never believed that when her mother had stated she had gone on an adventure here with Gandalf.

At that thought she wondered… Would he have done something? Taken her with him on those adventures he always told her about?

Though, if she thought about it, as much of an adventurer she liked to think herself as, she doubted endless wandering with a wizard would appeal to her even if she wasn’t a ‘proper’ hobbit. It was already a few weeks since the adoption ceremony, and she was becoming rather adjusted to the place. Right then she was returning to Dori’s side after going to make him some tea and bringing some fabric that he had forgotten at home. It seemed he was becoming anxious and she thought it would help to have some tea. She was good at making that.

She slowed and then paused in her walking as she spotted her two brother’s sitting on a low wall, both their backs hunched over as they stared at something in Fíli’s hands. Curious, she walked forward, until she was right behind them. They hadn’t seem to hear her.

“What are you two doing?” She asked, causing both of them to jump, Kíli nearly face planting onto the ground.

“Nothing!!” Both boys exclaimed as they spun around, hiding what was in their hands from Billa, their faces a brilliant red hue. Billa looked at them quizzically.

“I feel like you two are lying to me.” She remarked dryly.

“Now would ever lie to our beloved Namadith?” Kíli cooed, earning a glare from Billa and a chuckle from Fíli. Honestly the blond dwarf had his hands full with both of his younger siblings. Thankfully Billa didn’t seem to be as bad as Kíli, but that was likely due to the fact she was still learning about the dwarven culture and didn’t want to step on any toes.

Who knew what would happen once she became acclimated into the family?

“Still would like to know what you two are doing.” She replied dryly and the boys grinned.

“We aren’t doing anything, dear Namadith.” Kíli teased and their sister sighed.

“Well I need to get these to Dori before he gets nervous thinking that I was snatched on the way there or something like that.”

To that both boys frowned and she inwardly groaned. Yet another foot in the mouth moment. Those had been happening a lot with getting used to different races. Though admittedly Dís had gotten a
laugh at the time when Billa had hit Kíli over the head after he had touched her ears, only for her to find out that Dwarf ears weren’t as sensitive as Hobbit ears were. Which had meant none of them, save Dís who had done dealings every now and then and had wanted to learn about Hobbit culture before Billa had arrived, had known that touching Hobbit ears was something done among couples…privately…preferably in a bedroom setting. The heat from all of the dwarrow’s faces, even Thorin’s, had been laughable and likely could have cooked food on top of their faces. Thus had begun a rather awkward silence for several days before Kíli made some joke that he and Fíli at least knew if some poor soul was trying to be serious with her that they’d watch for her ears.

“I’ll be fine, you know.” She added, shifting on her feet. “I know my way around well enough.”

“Yeah, you do. But still we aren’t letting someone try and snatch you.” Fíli replied darkly, looking at Ered Luin as though villains were around every corner now. She doubted it that anyone would try that, then again there was the fact that she was an oddity in Ered Luin. It hadn’t escaped her that several dwarfs would stare at her. But then again she was beardless, shorter than nearly all of them and had much more noticeable curves than dwarrodams. Thankfully when they found out about her age, to them in dwarrow years seemed to be a deterrent.

“They leave me alone.”

“They should.”

“Kíli.” Billa grumbled, rolling her eyes.

“Let’s just get you to Dori’s, hm?” Fíli suggested and Billa sighed before nodding. And with that the two brothers’s escorted the young hobbit to the small shack. Soon after she was dropped off, both boys walked away and Fíli quietly pulled out the small necklace.

“That was close.” Kíli grumbled and his older brother nodded. They had gotten her a present. It hadn’t been planned, honestly far from it. But then Billa had handed them each a present, handmade bracelets of braided leather and beads, having had their mother help her with designs, ever since the ceremony. And well…they couldn’t let her give a present without receiving one, right?

“Think she’ll like it?”

“I hope.” Fíli muttered.

Billa sighed as she hurried back towards the house later on that day, the sun beginning to set, making the sky stain an orange and pink. Dori had gone to go pick up Ori from his apprenticeship, and though he had suggested it, she was fine with walking home on her own.

“Halfling!”

She paused briefly, before continuing her walking, hurrying slightly.

“Oye Halfling! Ya deaf?” Another, this one a gruffer voice, called out and suddenly she was yanked back. She bit back a yelp.

“O-oh hello.” She stammered out as three dwarves surrounded her.

“Ya deaf?”
“N…No…”

She just didn’t want to talk to them.

“You Lady Dís’s new basket case?” One spat out and she bit the inside of her cheek, preferring not to answer. “Never seen a Halfling up close.”

“Well now you have.” She replied rather shortly. “May I go? I have to-”

“Pretty rude for a halfling.” The one dwarf said, lifting her head up by the chin. She swallowed, jerking her chin out of the grip. She however squeaked when one went to touch her ear and she scurried a few steps away, her face on fire.

“Oh sensitive ears, eh?”

“I really need to go now.” She implored, but they moved forward and one lifted his hand to touch her ear and she flinched, closing her eyes tightly.

But no touch came.

“Get. Away. From. Our. Sister!!” A familiar voice snapped and she opened her eyes to see two familiar backs.

“Kíli? Fíli?” She murmured, but neither seemed to notice her as they glared at the two dwarves that were still standing, the one that had gone to touch her ear on the ground, holding his jaw. Fíli’s fist was shaking in rage, and with his younger brother’s expression it seemed he was not too far behind in punching the said dwarf. And though the three dwarrowmen were angry, it was clear that they didn’t want to fight, especially Thorin’s nephews.

“Oh look, it’s her little fake brothers.” One grumbled and Billa bit her lip.

“Brothers.” Kíli snapped angrily. “She’s part of our family and if you are so against it, take it up with our amad and idad!” He snapped, gripping Billa’s hand tightly and pulling her around the three dwarrows.

“Are you alright?” Fíli asked as he hurried back to them, death glaring the three dwarrows.

“’m fine.” She replied, her voice wavering and she forced a smile.

“No you aren’t.”

“It’s fine. They’re allowed to be…curious, I suppose.”

“They can be curious, but that doesn’t mean that they can surround and scare you.” Fíli explained. “If anyone does that again, you come and find us or Amad, or any one of our friends, alright? I’m sure Gimli will have no problem with beating someone up.”

“Oh that’s a bit extreme isn’t it?”

“No. It isn’t. We learn quicker like that.” Kíli replied with a grin and Billa sighed, pushing her braid behind her ear. “You’re our sister, our kin, and a Bahukhazâd.”

“Bahukhazâd?”

“Friend of Dwarves.” Fíli explained to Billa. “That means you are an ally, and therefore do not deserve being harassed.”
She nodded, blinking when both boys stopped and turned, their expressions suddenly nervous.

“An…And because you’re our kin…” Kíli stammered out, rubbing the back of his neck, and she noted that they were wearing bracelets. “Well…we made you this.”

At that Fíli held up a necklace, his normally calm demeanor just as flustered as his brother’s was. She blinked and walked up, looking at the necklace.

It was simple, a garnet jewel pressed into simple silver and tied to leather.

“I…it’s not that elaborate, and we salvaged some the garnet from a really badly made earring, and understand if you don’t-” Whatever Fíli was going to explain, stopped as she hugged both of them, kissing them on their cheeks.

“I think it’s lovely.” She replied happily with a smile. “Thank you.” She added, and both brother’s faces turned red as they handed the necklace to her and she tied it around her neck. Then arm in arm the trio walked back towards their home.

Chapter End Notes

EDITED AGAIN!!!
Also question. Would you guys want me to call her Billa or Bél?
Translations:
Mesem Nanging Aban: Jeweled Flowers of Stone
Bahukhazâd: Friend-of-dwarves
Amad: Mother
Idad: Uncle
Namadith: Little Sister
Bayurkherumuh: Secret Name
“When is your uncle going to like me?”

“He’s your uncle now too, you know.”

“I think Thorin Oakenshield would rather be orc bait than have me consider him my uncle, Kíli.” Bél replied dryly as she followed Kíli through the forest as Kíli hunted. Normally Fíli would be here instead, but as he was now helping Thorin look for work blacksmithing and trying to learn that trade, their time with the eldest brother was limited. Likewise the last time Kíli had shot an animal and returned to fetch them, wolves had gotten to the carcass before they had arrived back. The only retribution was that Kíli had managed to take down a wolf and they had made a cloak for Dís with the fur.

“He’s just slow.”

“It’s already spring.” She muttered. “I’ve started using the name Bél, so it sounds more dwarvish, and everyone else likes me more or less. I mean even Master Dwalin likes me now. Why can’t he at least sort of like me?”

Kíli frowned. That was true. Everyone else had gotten a long with her. Dori enjoyed having the extra hands to work on commissions, she always helped Ori out with his writings. Nori, though she didn’t help him with his work (as Dís would likely murder him), did enjoy her company due to her sharp wit. Bombur enjoyed learning some hobbit meals from her, and Bofur enjoyed her company. Bifur and Balin were teaching her Khuzdûl and Iglishmêk, and she was apparently learning quickly. Glóin, likewise was teaching her about dwarven currency (though she did admit that this part was well…rather boring) and Óin was teaching her about medicine. Even Dwalin was helping her get used to being around so many dwarrows.

At first he had been complacent in just thinking that his uncle was worried about another mouth to feed in this winter, which no doubt was a really bad winter, but still. It wasn’t Bél’s fault.

“You just leave it to Amad, Bél. She’ll get Idad to turn over eventually.” He promised. She sighed and nodded, glancing back towards the mountain.

“Relax Bél. No one is going to hurt you or take you away again. I won’t let it happen.” Kíli promised and Bél smiled, though still nervous. She figured it would be like that for a lot of winters, though she was quite sure that nothing could top the death of her parents. She looked at Kíli and gripped his hand a bit tighter. No…there was something worse that could top it. The loss of anyone in her new family. That was why she had decided to start using her new name…this was her family.

“Hey Bél…” Kíli urged her to stand right next to him. She was handed his bow and looked at him quizzically.

“Let’s practice with aiming.”

“Kíli, I’m no fighter.”

“You still need to learn how to use some weapon.” Kíli remarked with a grin and Bél sighed before nodding. “Okay, so stand like this, and extend your arm like this. Now you pull back the string like
this.” He instructed and she did so slowly a few times, getting used to the feel of the bow. He then handed her an arrow. “Now you nock the arrow here aannndddd here.” He continued, placing the arrow in the correct areas. She bit her lip, staring at the tree in front of them.

“Now breathe slowly in and out and focus on the target.” Kíla added and she did so several times before pulling the string back and releasing the arrow. Just as Thorin was walking through a nearby bush.

The arrow barely missed the side of his face and Bél squeaked in alarm and Kíli’s eyes widened. Thorin was silent, his gaze slowly shifting to the quivering arrow right next to his face.

“Uncle-”

“What have I said about training without an adult?”

“I was just showing her how to shoot an arrow.”

“Hobbit’s aren’t known for fighting, and you expect her to know how to work a bow?”

Bél flinched and Kíli glared almost angrily.

“She hit the tree didn’t she?” He asked coldly and Thorin glanced at the said tree as Kíli walked over and pulled out the arrow.

“Come on Bél, we’ll keep hunting.”

“Kíli-”

“Relax, Uncle.” Kíli sighed. “I’m the only one hunting.” He continued and grabbed the girl’s hand, pulling her away. She glanced over her shoulder and spotted, to her surprise, Thorin was watching them with almost a guilty look on his face.

She didn’t understand it at all.

“Must you be so cruel to her?”

Thorin didn’t bother looking up from the anvil, though he did drop the hammer to the ground.

“Dís-”

“I’ve never seen Kíli so angry at you, Thorin. And after hearing what you said to her, I can understand why.” His sister snapped as he turned around. “She’s trying to get assimilated in this place, and you are not helping!”

“You’re setting this family up for heartbreak, Dís. When she dies of old age before Kíli or Fíli even gain grey hair, or before you and I have a full head of white hair, what will happen then?”

“We have memories of the hobbit that was a member of this family that loved us and that we loved her.” Dís replied angrily, throwing her arms out in exasperation. “Besides that fact, any day we could die. I’d rather live my life knowing that I helped a young girl feel love and safe then have it where she grows up alone!”

Thorin was silent.

“You want to bring heartbreak into the family? Keep treating her like this, and you will!!” She
warned and turned around, leaving the forge, slamming the door shut. Thorin sighed, rubbing his forehead.

“NO!!”

Bél nearly jumped out of her bed, and it seemed that she hadn’t imagined it, because she heard Kíli fall out of his bed while Fíli was fumbling for a match to light the lantern on his shelf.

“Was that Thorin?” She whispered, sitting up.

“I think so.”

“Has that happened before??” She asked.

“I think so, but it’s never been that loud.” Fíli replied nervously and with that trio slid out of bed, and as they got close to the door, heard footsteps hurrying past it and then the door farthest away open. They opened their door, walking out and quietly and once they got to the opened door, peered in.

And there was Dís cradling Thorin’s head to her shoulder, whispering into Thorin’s temple as her elder brother clutched her tightly, his shoulder’s shaking.

“It’s okay…ssshhh…you’re not there. It’s not Azanulbizar.”

Billa heard Thorin choke out something in Khuzdûl, and Dís closed her eyes, running her fingers through his hair. A slight tug on her wrist made her move back and her two brothers were motioning her back to their room, which she followed them back in. She glanced at the door as Fíli shut it.

“Hey Fíli…can I ask a question?”

“Hm? Sure.”

“What’s Azanulbizar?” She asked timidly. Both boys were silent. “If…if you don’t want to answer, that’s fine!” She added quickly, blushing.

“It’s not that…it’s just…well…before you were probably born, our great-grandfather, grandfather, and our uncles…”

“Uncles?”

“We had another one. Uncle Frerin.” Kíli added with a shrug and Bél decided not to ask.

“Yeah…well after Erebor was lost, our great-grandfather, King Thror, tried to take back Moria or Khazad-dûm…but it had been overrun by orcs.”

To that Bél shuddered, gripping her pillow tightly.

“Azanulbizar was the final battle. They tried to take Moria back through the east gate, but Azog the Defiler was leading the orcs. The Pale Orc and he swore to end the line of Durin. He started with Thror by beheading him. Our grandfather, Thrain…Amad says he went mad with grief. And without any leader, the dwarves were helpless and began to lose. But when Azog went against uncle, he almost beat him. Until Uncle got a hold of that oak branch.”

“The one he made that shield with?”

“Mhm.”
“He cut off Azog’s arm…and rallied the remaining dwarves. And they won.”

“…but…”

“But there was no celebration. The loss on the orcs was great, but the loss of the dwarves was devastating. And there were too many dwarves to bury in stone like customs were supposed to. So… they were burned in mass cremations.”

Bél frowned.

“A lot of those who survived the battle have episodes like that.” Fíli replied.

“That’s horrible.” She murmured.

“He’s getting better…he was really bad when they got back apparently. We weren’t born yet, so we wouldn’t know.”

Bél frowned, looking at the pair of them as they conversed quietly with one another, apparently debating on whether or not they should have told her.

“Well…at least he’s here…and he knows that he’s not alone to deal with this.” She murmured, resting her chin on her knees. Both boys looked at her and then at one another. For some reason it felt like she wasn’t just referring to Thorin.

“Yeah that’s true. He’s got Amad…He’s got us.” Kíli remarked standing and walking over to sit next to her on one side, Fíli on the other. “And he has you. We all have each other, so no one is alone. Same as you.” He added, nuzzling her head. She blinked and then smiled as the two boys.

“Yeah. We have each other.”

Dís nearly laughed the next morning when she entered the room and saw the trio all asleep on the bed, sitting in awkward position that left them all with pains in their necks and backs.

Chapter End Notes

Thorin is still being a bit hard headed, he'll come around.
So here is another chapter.

Question as I am curious. Which would you rather read? Bél saving Fíli and Kíli? Or the brother’s saving Bél?
Bél looked up as the door slammed shut and Kíli stormed past the kitchen.

“Kíli?” She asked, but he didn’t respond. Dís looked up as well and sighed.

“Not again.”

“What? What’s wrong?” Bél asked, looking at her adoptive mother in confusion. Dís looked at her before sitting down and exhaled loudly.

“Someone probably made fun of Kíli’s beard again.”

“Again? Why is that?”

“For some dwarves, they see Kíli’s lack of a full beard as insulting, and a lot of them tease him for it.” Dís explained. “A lot of times they leave him alone because of Fíli, but he’s not there every minute, so sometimes it just gets to him.”

Bél was quiet and looked back at the doorway; she then looked at Dís and stood.

“I’m gonna go talk to him.” She remarked and hurried away, missing Dís’s smile as she hurried up to the room. And there was Kíli, resting face first on his bed. She hesitated before walking and sitting on the edge of his bed.

“Kíli?” She said softly.

“Go ahead. Say it. ‘Kíli identifies more with elves than he does with dwarves’. ‘He looks like one after all, wouldn’t you agree?’” He mimicked and snorted, staring at the wall.

“That’s ridiculous, Kíli.” She replied. “You aren’t an elf, you’re a dwarf.”

He shifted and looked at her.

“You’re just saying that.”

“No I’m not. You don’t look like an elf.”

“You don’t think I look like an elf?”

“Of course not.” She repeated. “You’re obviously a dwarf, I mean you have a beard.”

He scowled. “Barely.”

“You still have one, Kíli. Sure, it’s not as long as other dwarves, but you’re still young, so it will probably grow a bit more, and you know it’s probably a good thing, because if you tried to use your bow, it would get caught up. Elves don’t have any facial hair, neither do Hobbits…instead we have hair on our feet.” She reminded him, yanking off her boot to show him. “Which by the way is not that great or tactical when you have the stupid idea to walk through a thorn or bur patch, because Yavanna above so many get stuck in there, you can hear those who got stuck screaming and whining when it’s time to yank them out. And don’t even get me started on cleaning the hair. You’d be
amazed what we’d find in there.”

He chuckled, and she decided it wasn’t that bad for making fun of her feet hair if it got a chuckle from him.

“You’re the proper height for a dwarf and not tall and lanky like an elf. So you’re clearly not an elf. You’re just…young. So what if you don’t have a beard like others? You have a lot more attributes that are just as good.”

“Like?”

“You’re kind and loyal and funny, you have a contagious grin, you’re an amazing archer, which by the way, you should have noticed that there are very few dwarf archers, probably for a reason. You’re a hard worker and smart.” She continued. He was blushing at this point and she grinned.

“You’re also one of my nadads. And so that’s something too. You didn’t have to be.”

“What do you mean?”

“I’m a hobbit, Kíli. You and Fíli could have easily just rejected me and I’d probably be back in the Shire.” She explained. All alone. “You didn’t have to want to be a brother to me.”

He sat up to that and tapped her forehead gently.

“Well I want to. And if any dwarf tries to say otherwise, I’ll beat them up.”

She laughed, pulling him into a hug.

“And I’m thankful for that. And that’s why I know you’re a dwarf. They seem to be amazingly loyal.”

He snorted.

“So, Kíli, don’t let what others say about your beard or anything otherwise about you not being a dwarf. As a hobbit who has seen elves…long story, don’t ask…” She threw in. “You certainly do not look like an elf.” She explained. “I promise.”

He nodded, looking at her, pressing his forehead to hers and she laughed. Dís smiled from where she was leaning against the wall next to the door before she walked back down the stairs.

“What loses its head in the morning and gets it back at night?”

“A pillow.”

“You use a knife to slice my head and weep beside me when I am dead.”

“An onion.”

“What has 4 fingers and a thumb, but is not living?”

“…A glove.”

She looked up at her brothers who were both groaning loudly.

“How do you know all these?!”
She laughed loudly as she set her book down. “In Hobbiton, there was an annual contest on riddles and rhymes. Guess who always won?”

“AAaauuuuggghhhhh!!” Kíli groaned, rubbing his eyes angrily. “There has to be some riddle you don’t know.”

“Well if you keep at it, I’m sure you’ll find one eventually.” She teased, sticking her tongue out, laughing as he threw his pillow at her. Fall had come, and it was getting late. Fíli for one, looked exhausted, having started working under Thorin as an apprentice blacksmith. She was honestly surprised he was still awake, though she supposed it had to be amusing and entertaining trying to find some riddle she didn’t know. She tossed the pillow back to Kíli as Dís came in, looking at the trio amused.

“Honestly, you three should have been asleep hours ago. Best be off to bed, or else the Misty Mountain’s monster will come and gobble you up.”

“Amad…” Kíli drawled. “That’s something you tell to babes.”

Dís merely rolled her eyes. “I can say it as long as I want until you stop coming to me to run my fingers through your hair.”

“Ammmmmmaaaaaaddddd…” He whined as Fíli and Bél snorted at his embarrassment. Bél however stopped when she saw Thorin walk by, glancing at her. Dís noticed as well and sighed as Thorin continued to his room, and shut his door.

“Pay him no mind. He’ll get over it eventually.”

Vaguely Bél wondered if that was after she went and died of old age, but she could never know.

“You three get some sleep.” Dís ordered again gently, blowing out the candle and shutting their door. Bél smiled and set her book down.

“Hey Bél?”

“Hm?”

“I was wondering…what were your parents like?” Kíli’s voice asked. Bél was quiet and then sighed.

“They were…exact opposite of each other, though they loved each other so much.” She admitted with a chuckle. “But that has more to do with their families. The Baggins are known as prim, proper hobbits with little time for adventure. The Tooks have the nickname ‘Fool of a Took’ for a reason and are more adventurous.” She explained with a smile. “As such, my father enjoyed simpler things…baking, reading, writing. That stuff. My mother went on adventures with Gandalf the Grey.”

“Tharkûn?”

“Um…I suppose?” Bél remarked in confusion, furrowing her brow. “I don’t really know all of his nicknames. Anyway, my mother and Gandalf went on a few adventures, but my mother went on quite a few on her own…almost made it here once. Had to turn back though.”

“How come?”

Bél grinned in the darkness.

“She found out she was a few months pregnant with me.” She explained and in the darkness heard
Fíli whistle.

“Your mother sounds like a force to be reckoned with.”

“She was.”

“Hey Bél?”

“Yes Kíli?”

“I’m glad your mother managed to save you.” He said softly, almost hesitantly. She looked up in the darkness and, reaching over and tapping his foot gently, to which he nudged it in return.

“I am too.”

"Find a deer Kíli, how hard can it be?" Kíli whispered in annoyance, crouched low in the snow next to him, bow ready in his right hand as it had been all afternoon while he trekked through the forest. “Or at least something.” He mimicked as he jumped over a ditch “Let’s make it any harder for me…” He grumbled. Still he understood why.

Winter had come early in Ered Luin again, far too early, and the entire mountain was struggling to survive. The human farmers and traders they relied on for most of their food had been surprised as well by the sudden strike of winter, destroying valleys and fields of crops before they could be harvested all around the mountain. It had quickly caused a food shortage throughout the entire region felt especially hard among the dwarves, as most farmers had only enough to feed their own families after losing an entire harvest and precious little to sell, even to those who could pay. Even Kíli and Fíli, who were among the slimmest of the dwarves in the Blue Mountain, had tightened their belts a few notches in the last weeks as food became scarce.

Which worried them for their sister.

She didn’t complain, taking her portions without any annoyance or complaint, but the brothers could see the lack of food was making Bél easier to exhaust. Which had made the duo try to help her with her chores when they could. She was getting better at using a bow, which was good, but they had decided that she’d sit this winter out for long hunting expeditions.

And normally Fíli came along, but this time he was helping their uncle with commissions at the forge.

So there was Kíli, alone, as he squinted and lowered himself down to a crouch when he saw the movement beyond the trees; it was definitely a stag. Kíli silently pulled out an arrow and crept forward. Hunting was Kíli's specialty, it had been for the past several years since he insisted to Thorin that learning to hunt and use a bow would be more helpful to the family than having all three Sons of Durin trained at the forge when there was no work to be found on it. And soon Bél would be able to hunt with him as well, as apparently, in her words; he was an excellent teacher with the bow.

Fíli had told him that he looked like he was walking on air after that reveal.

Kíli slinked silently closer to the stag, his expression that of pure focus and concentration. When he got in a better position to see through the trees, Kíli set his shoulders back and exhaled noticeably as he nocked his arrow and released his shot. The animal staggered half a step and then collapsed to the ground.
"Haha!" Kíli whooped.

Kíli carefully tried to remove the arrow to see if it was salvageable, and after doing so and seeing that it was indeed salvageable as it had only hit muscle, cleaned the blood off and put the arrow back into the quiver.

He heard a twig snapped and looked up, his hand going to an arrow and took a step back to try and gauge who or what was there.

But his foot never made solid contact with the ground and suddenly the sky and ground were in a struggle to be above him as he fell further into a ditch head over heels. He felt a sharp pain in his leg, but barely managed a yelp before his head smashed with a sickening cracking sound into a rock and he must have gotten snow in his eyes because his vision suddenly turned white before darkening as he finally rolled to a stop. It was several moments of silence as snow fell lazily down. Finally his eyes slowly opened, but the world was hazy and blurred.

"Fee? Bél?" He called out in a small voice, but no one answered him. “Amad…Idad…” He tried to call out a bit louder, but it seemed the snow had swallowed his cries. Kíli curled into a tight ball, blood covering his face and shivering from cold and pain as bitter wind funneled into the ditch causing him to tense his muscles and gasp.

He curled into a ball, eyes clenched shut as he gasped and tried to shut out the cold and the pain that was attacking every inch of his body.

“Amad…” He called out weakly again, before darkness enveloped him and he lost consciousness.

Bél jumped when a shattering sound came from the kitchen and she hurried to the room and saw a cup, or the remains of a cup lay on the ground, shattered to bits. She blinked in confusion.

“I could have sworn that Kíli pushed that farther in on the counter before he left.” She mumbled bending down to pick up the pieces. Something cold settled in the bottom of her stomach and she looked up and towards the door as if expecting him to come in at that moment. He did not and she swallowed, trying to quell an uneasiness that settled in her heart as she opened the door and watched the snow slowly fall to the ground.

“Kíli, where are you?” She whispered.

But the snow held no answers or comfort to the worry gnawing at her stomach.

Chapter End Notes

I think Bél and Kíli would be closer in general since they are closer in age. Don't worry Fíli get's to be a protective big brother as the chapters go on. But I imagine that there is a reason why Dís thinks her youngest son is reckless, so...woe is me?

Translations:

Amad: Mother

Idad: Uncle
Kíli hadn’t returned.

At first they had all thought he had just lost track of time, but when dinner came and passed, the worry set it. Kíli wouldn’t miss a meal.

So now they were out in the snow as it fell thickly around them. They had split up, Dís at home with Óín, Ori, and Dori in the off chance that Kíli came home, Fíli with Thorin, Dwalin, were in one group, Bifur and Bombur along with Balin and Glóin in another. Bél shuddered as she shouldered her bow back, looking around, trying to stay close to Bofur and Nori, but she was finding it difficult. Bofur and Nori looked back as she squeaked, falling into a spot that made the snow reach her waist. They trotted over, Bofur lifting her up onto higher ground.

“You alrig’ lass?”

“I’m fine.” She said, trying to keep her teeth from chattering. She rubbed the tip of her ears, trying to get rid of the numbing sensation. Suddenly Bofur pushed his hat over her head and she looked at him in surprise. “B-Bofur, you need this!!”

“I’m fine, lass.” He said with a grin.

“Come on, let’s find your brother.” Nori called out.

Bél nodded and trudged after him. Suddenly the wind picked up and she ducked her head to avoid the sudden snow that came raining into her face. She thanked Yavanna over and over again for being a hobbit, being something that had a natural high body heat.

“Bofur, Nori, we should stay close. It’s getting really hard to see!” She called out. However the dwarf didn’t answer. She looked up and realized he wasn’t in front of her. She turned around and he wasn’t behind her.

“You’ve got to be joking.” She whispered. How had she lost him in a few minutes? “Bofur?? Nori?!” She called out, but only the wind roared back at her. She took a few steps forward, dragging herself further forward. “Alright, this isn’t very fun-NNNNNNNYYYYYYYYYY!!!” She shrieked as she suddenly lost her footing and plummeted forward, rolling down an incline, squeaking the entire way. Finally she face planted at the bottom, and she screamed in frustration into the snow, forcing herself up.

“I swear to Mahal, to Yavanna, if I trip again-” She began but squeaked as she did just that, face planting into the snow again. She let loose several curses she had learned from Nori, before pushing the snow out of her face and turning to see what she had tripped on. It looked like a large rock and angrily, she tapped it and blinked in confusion.

What type of rock gave a bit under her foot?

She crawled over to the rock and her heart dropped as her stomach rose.

“Kíli!! Durin! Please no!” She exclaimed in a panic scooping the snow away from the dwarf’s face. Using her teeth she tore her glove off pressing it near his cheek and her panic mounted at how cold
he was. Please…please don’t be…

He let out a weak, shuddering gasp and she sobbed in relief. He was still alive, albeit barely.

“Kíli…” She breathed, jerking her head up when she heard a growl above her. Her heart suddenly found the vacancy that her stomach had just left and crawled its way there as several pairs of eyes stared down at her.

Wolves.

“Fûsak.” She whispered as the wolves began to descend down towards her.

“Did you find him?”

“No.” Thorin forced out as he entered their home, looking around. “Has he not returned?”

Dís shook her head, her shoulders shuddering painfully and Thorin decided his boots tracking in snow was not his primary concern as he strode over to his baby sister, and trapped her in a hug.

“We’ll find him, Namadith. I swear to you.”

“I should have made someone go with him.” She sobbed into Thorin’s chest. “He’s gotten better at hunting, but I shouldn’t have left him to go alone.”

Fíli stood there awkwardly, unable to comfort his mother, but yearning to return to the darkness to try and find his brother. He looked back over as Bifur, Bombur, Balin, and Glóin came in, but they too shook their heads.

“-going to kill us!”

“What choice do we have?” They heard Bofur snap.

“I prefer not losing my head!”

“We couldn’t see anything in front of us!”

“What are you two talking about? Did you find Kíli?” Thorin asked, stopping the argument between the two dwarves. They shook their heads as Fíli looked around.

“…Where’s Bél?” He finally asked, and silence greeted him. Dís slowly moved away, her eyes suddenly like steel. Both dwarves took a step back.

“Where is Bél?” Dís hissed out. “Where is my nâtha?”

“We…we don’t know. We lost sight of her when the snow took a turn for a worse.” Nori managed to say, wilting under Dís’s gaze.

Fíli had to admit, even as cold water seemed to splash over his entire body, he had never heard his mother scream like that.

He also didn’t know she could make a flying leap like she did, aimed at Nori’s throat.

The wolves snarled at her as they began to stalk towards her. She pulled out an arrow from her quiver nocking it in her bow. She let out a scream as one began to rush towards her and loosed the
arrow, hitting the wolf square in the chest. It stumbled and fell a few steps in front of her and she pulled out another arrow but was too slow as another wolf pounced at her. She barely managed to lift her bow in time, using it as a spacer between her and its’ snapping jaws. She used the arrow in her grip, and stabbed it in the face, earning a sharp yelp and it literally jumping away from her, trying to get the arrow out of its eye as she rolled back onto her feet, just like Dwalin had showed her, and pulled out her dagger and lurched forward and impaled the wolf in the neck. It struggled for a few brief moments before stilling. She whirled around, her expression animalistic, blood splattering over her face, snarling at the wolves that were daring to paw at Kíli’s form.

“Get away from him!!!” She snapped and the wolves backed away, tails in between their legs as she walked forward menacingly. They backed away as she snarled again, and the wolves seemed to take one look at her bow and dagger and decided that the deer carcass up above was better and rushed away. She panted and then sheathed her blade and swung her bow over her shoulder hurrying to Kíli’s side again.

“Kíli, Nadad please. Please, we need to go now!” She hissed out, unsure if any other creature was coming to try and eat them. Kíli’s only response was a weak groan and she realized he wasn’t going to be much help. She looked at the ditch, and contemplated for a moment to returning to Ered Luin and getting help, but quickly dashed that. There was no guarantee she could find her way back, if Kíli would survive much longer alone, or if those blasted wolves decided to come back. She huffed and pulled out a rope, which in hindsight should have been used to keep her tethered to the other two dwarves and looked back at Kíli.

He looked so cold.

She tore off Bofur’s hat and lifted his head gently, slid it on. She then discarded her cloak, thankful for her actual fur coat that Dís had just made for her and tied the cloak around Kíli’s neck, before pulling up her scarf around her face tying it tightly around her nose and mouth, and stuffing the ends of it into her coat. Then, with a grunt of pain and surprise on how heavy he actually was she pulled his limp arms over her shoulders and pulled his body over her back, stumbling forward at the weight. Her muscles ached already but it didn’t stop her from tying his wrists so they were cinched closed, ensuring he couldn’t fall off of her. Then she pulled out her dagger and grabbed his blade resting on his hip and slowly began to climb out of the ditch.

Her muscles screamed in protest, but she ignored them as she finally made it out of the ditch and stared ahead of her. She could make out the mountain’s outline. Her eyes narrowed in resolve and she began to trudge forward, her movements slow and agonized, as the wind howled and snow pelted them, seeming to weigh her down further. There were multiple times she hit a soft spot and she sank up to her chest in snow. Each time she clawed herself out.

She couldn’t give up.

Her lungs burned angrily and her legs were numb, but each time her mind told her to just quit, she focused in to the shallow, slight breath that was warming the side of her neck, giving her the sign Kíli was still alive.

He was still alive and she had to cling onto that thread.

She looked up at the mountain, it was getting closer, but still seemed so far away. She grunted, straining forward, her legs moving through the snow, her body aching angrily at her.

“*Keep going...keep going...keep going...*” She chanted inwardly, gripping Kíli’s pant leg tightly, stumbling forward as the snow began to lessen in height as she grew closer. She looked up, her eyes blurring slightly with tears.
Ered Luin.

She was almost there. She could see the houses; the streets quiet as many families were inside, warm and safe, the lanterns burning low.

“We’re almost there, Kíli.” She hoarsely said, to which he didn’t respond. “Stay with me.” She begged softly. She couldn’t feel her body anymore, everything was numb and darkness was creeping in the edges of her eyes. She shook her head violently. No. She was so close.

She couldn’t pass out.

She wouldn’t pass out.

She forced her feet forward, one after another, stumbling as her legs felt suddenly like rubber and boneless. Her breathing was ragged and finally she looked up and saw she was standing in front of the house. She tried to move her arms, to open the door, but found they had locked into place supporting and holding Kíli’s legs up. She bit her lip in frustration. So close. She was so damn close!

In frustration, and gaining a sudden amount of energy lifted her leg and smashed her foot into the door. Once. Twice. Thrice.

The fourth time seemed to do it, and the door swung open, smashing into the wall.

“HOW COULD YOU LOSE HER?!” Dís was screaming as they stood in the kitchen, Thorin holding Dís back.

“We didn’t mean to!” Nori replied earnestly, holding the snow to his eye. “She was there one second, and when we looked back she was gone.”

“SHE’S JUST A BABE!!” Dís screamed. “SHE’S NEVER BEEN IN WEATHER LIKE THIS!!”

Thorin kept his mouth shut on asking Dís why she had let Bél out in the first place, as his younger sister would likely strangle him. Two of her children were lost in this storm, and the likelihood of finding them both alive was slim to no-

A shuddering banging sound startled them. Then there was another, and another, and finally the fourth one; they heard the door slide swing open, reverberating as it hit the wall. They hurried out and Dís screamed.

“BÉL!! KÍLÍ!!” She shrieked as they stared at the two forms in the doorway, one piggybacking the other, covered in snow, white as sheets. The group hurried forward and proceeded to separate the two. Óin was looking at Kíli, who in the lighting everyone could see was pale as a ghost, his lips nearly blue.

“Get all the blankets we have in our houses. Dori, heat up some water, and Ori and Bofur, get a fire set up in the lad’s room. We need to warm him up!”

“His head. He’s bleeding.” Dís whispered in panic.

“I’ll check that once we get him out of those clothes.” Óin explained as Dwalin picked up the limp boy and went up the stairs, the group with each task hurrying to where they were supposed to go. Fíli looked at his sister, with a look of gratitude etched on his face.

“You did it Bél, I don’t know how, but Maker’s above, you found…Bél?” He asked, his tone
changing, alerting Thorin, who had been climbing up the steps to the bedroom and he looked back.

She hadn’t moved an inch, and was just staring ahead, past Fíli as though he wasn’t even there, panting loudly, raggedly. Then her legs gave out and she fell forward, barely being caught by Fíli.

“Bél!?! BÉL!?” Fíli cried out, sinking to the ground as Thorin skipped several steps of the stairs and raced back to the pair. She was pale, her chest rattling breaths, and it finally dawned on him that she had overworked and nearly killed herself getting her and Kíli back here, and Thorin cursed under his breath, and picked her up out of his nephew’s arms, who scrambled up and chased after him as he carried the dead weight hobbit to the room where Óin was. Bél glanced at him as he carried her into the room where Kíli and everyone else seemed to be, black beginning to crowd her vision as she was settled on something soft. The voices of her family molded into one jumbled mess of words and the last thing she saw before she passed out was Kíli.

And then darkness took her into its’ loving embrace and she didn’t know anything else.

She didn’t know when she had awoken again. All she knew was that the room was comfortably warm, and when she shifted, her muscles screamed out in protest and she made a soft cry of pain.

Then Fíli was in her vision, shushing her soothingly.

“Hey…it’s okay.” He whispered, pushing her hair back. “You’re back home.”

“…Kíli?”

He shifted and pointed over his shoulder and she forced her head up. And there he was. Still out cold, but even in the dim light, she could see color had returned to his cheeks, and his lips were a healthy pink.

“He’s fine. He woke up momentarily, said you saved him.” He explained gently as she rested her head back down.

“I’d…do it again…for either of you.” She murmured, looking at him with a soft smile. He returned it, pushing her bangs back.

“We can never repay you.”

“We’re…family.” She murmured gently, closing her eyes and forcing her hand to move, patting his hand gently. “Don’t need…repayment.”

He chuckled and squeezed her hand.

“Go back to sleep. I’ll stay right here.” He whispered and she returned the squeeze.

“Promise?” She murmured, even as sleep began to drag her back into its clutches.

“Promise.” He replied and with a soft, relieved sigh she let herself fall back asleep, Fíli running his thumb over her knuckle, soothingly. Thorin watched from the crack of the doorway, before moving away, leaning against the wall, covering his mouth with a hand.

Kíli had told them more than just her saving him. He had gained consciousness in little moments during her struggle back, having moments of clarity, but other than that swimming back into darkness. And in those moments, though his mind was foggy, he had told them that Bél had been dragging herself nearly killing herself just to get him home. How she had kept pleading with him to
not die, chanting to herself to keep going even in snow drifts that went over her chest.

She had nearly died saving his kin.

Her kin, he corrected mentally.

She was far from the useless hobbit he had seen her as, and far from the burden he had made her out to be.

If she hadn’t been there, they’d be finding Kíli’s corpse. Burying another member of their kin.

A sound startled him and he looked up see Dís, her eyes still puffy and red. He opened his arms and she accepted the hug and the gentle squeeze.

“It’s okay…everything’s okay now.” He murmured into the top of her head.

“She’s missing arrows.” She murmured weakly and he looked at his sister. “And there’s blood on her dagger. And on her face...She must have had to fight something to…”

“Let’s not think about the details right now, alright?” He soothed, lifting her chin up. “What matters is that both of them are back and safe and are resting now. They’re alive.”

She nodded, gripping her older brother’s tunic.

“Thank Mahal.”

“Aye. Thank Mahal.” He murmured gently in the still darkness, allowing his heart to finally slow down.

Chapter End Notes

Well MsGreenTeaTiger, you were sort of close in the last chapter about the wolf thing...just a chapter early XD Normally I would hold this off until I finish the other two chapters for my other stories, but this little arc demanded to be finished. So...tada~!

And here we have BAMF Bél.

Translations:

Fûsak: Fuck
Namadith: Little Sister
Nâtha: Daughter
Nadad: Big Brother
“Found anything yet?”

“Nothing!” Dwalin called out, his voice echoing. Other than the occasional yelling and the sounds of walking through the snow, it was quiet.

Bél and Kíli were still home, resting and recuperating, even though it had already been nearly a week. And Bél was finally able to sit up by herself, though it was clear that she had exerted herself far too much by how tired and sore she was. They were out looking for where this place that Bél had said she had found Kíli.

Thorin wanted to see what had happened.

“We have to be close,” Fíli muttered.

“I know.”

“I need to find Kee’s bow.” He muttered, tromping through the snow. “And see for myself.”

“Fíli, this wasn’t your fault.”

“I usually went with him on hunts…and Bél’s my namadith. You’re supposed to make sure that your younger siblings are safe. And I didn’t. I could have lost them both.”

And I would have been alone.

The unsaid comment caused him to briefly pause. They were his siblings, and in one brief night…he could have been alone.

He didn’t know if he could have handled that.

“I foun’ something!!” Bofur called out and the group hurried to where he was standing, staring down into a ditch. “Makers above.” He added, his voice hoarse.

And Thorin quickly saw why.

Two bodies, wolves, Thorin realized, lay on the ground covered in a blanket of snow. In the light they could see crimson trails in the snow, and had pooled in the direction of an indent in the snow, and an arrow was embedded in each wolf.

“Kíli must have been attacked by them while out hunting. Fell down the ditch...” Thorin began to conclude but Fíli shook his head.

“No. Those are Bél’s arrows.” He refuted, pointing at them. Thorin looked at his eldest nephew in confusion.

“You sound so sure.”

“The fletching is green.” He replied pointing at the end. To his uncle’s blank stare, he sighed. “It was something I came up with so those two didn’t argue whether or not one had the other’s arrows. Kíli
has blue, Bél has green.”

“So…that means…”

“That means the lass killed two wolves to save Kíli.” Dwalin muttered in amazement. “Well, it seems she has some dwarf in her after all.”

Thorin just stared at the arrows that were poking out, almost mocking him. Mocking him with what that hobbit had nearly sacrificed.

“This is boring.” Kíli complained as he flipped another page in his book. Bél snorted and looked at him. “What? Don’t you want to move around?”

“You nearly died, Nadad.” She commented dryly. “And I nearly died dragging you back here. Moving for me is a tad bit painful for me right now, you heavy oaf.” She drawled and he sighed.

“I’m really sorry.”

“It’s not your fault.”

“Yes it is. I fell and hit my head hard enough to pass out and made you drag me back here.”

“That was an accident. The snow was so deep; I don’t blame you for missing the fact that the ditch was there. In fact I fell down into the same ditch. And you didn’t make me do anything. You’re my brother, and it was the proper thing to do.”

“Hobbits and being proper.”

“Dwarfs and being heavy.” She shot back with a tease, earning a pillow to the face. “Annoying clot.”

“Still your brother.” Kíli reminded her and she chuckled.

“Yes. Still my brother.” She remarked, sticking her tongue out before giving a gentle smile. “And I wouldn’t have it any other way.”

He grinned as Dís came in sighing.

“You two should be resting.”

“We are, Amad. See? We’re both lying down and reading books.”

“Mhm…then why is it your pillow is on Bél’s bed?”

“Um…it likes it there?” Kíli suggested, earning a snort from Bél. Dís chuckled before she handed them each some food.

“Sssooouuuupppp.” He cooed happily. “Just what the doctor ordered!”

“Hence why you’re still here keeping warm.” Dís remarked, folding her arms against her chest. Kíli scratched the back of sheepishly.

“I’m really sorry Amad.” He again apologized, looking at her with big puppy dog eyes. Dís’s brow rose, almost amused.
“My son, who do you think gave you such abilities?” She asked and Bél laugh at the chastised look on Kíli’s face as she tossed him back his pillow. They heard the door (repaired as had the wall… apparently Bél had put a dent in it…rather impressive) open and then shut.

“Upstairs!” The dwarrowdam called out, standing and exiting out the room. Fíli appeared, looking winded.

“Did you find my bow?” His youngest brother asked hopefully, yelping when the said bow crashed into his forehead. “Hey! I’m injured here!”

“There isn’t much to lose in there, knucklehead.” Fíli remarked dryly. “Bél, how did you do it?”

“Do what? I haven’t left this room. Kee can vouch for me.” Bél replied, flabbergasted.

“That’s right. Down right annoying me to death. Fee save me.” Kíli whined.

“You’re just sore because you still haven’t figured out a rhyme that I haven’t beaten.” Bél teased and Fíli jumped in before an argument could occur.

“Drag him. Namadith, you dragged him nearly a mile and a half.”

“Did I? Well…that explains why I couldn’t move for the two days.” Bél answered dryly. “I don’t know, to tell you the truth. I suppose adrenaline.”

They both said words in Khuzdûl and she cocked her head to the side.

“What does this have anything to do with the testicles of a-”

They hurriedly covered her mouth looking at the door frantically.

“Do you WANT to become an only child?” Fíli hissed out in worry.

“Yeah, Amad would skin us if she knew we knew those words.”

Bél snorted then laughed, looking at the pair amusedly and the pair smiled before laughing as well. The three continued their conversations. Bél only glanced up at the doorway, and was almost startled to see Thorin standing there. The two brothers had not noticed yet, and it seemed Thorin wanted it to stay that way. He gave a slight bow with his head and continued down the hall, leaving Bél utterly confused.

What had that been about?

It shouldn’t have worked.

She shouldn’t have been able to mingle so easily into their culture, and adapt so well. She was a Half-…she was a hobbit. From what he had known, they were simple folk, caring all about was food, music, and good cheer.

Yet she had risked her very life to save a dwarf.

The exiled King of the Mountain stood and exited his room, wandering around the silent abode. He paused as he walked past the three’s youngling’s room and gently eased the door open. It appeared that they were all asleep, as he likely should have been.

Kíli was drooling on his pillow, half his body hanging precariously off the bed, and his leg twitching
occasionally. Fíli seemed a bit calmer, one arm thrown over his eyes, while the other lay fallen off the edge of the bed, his chest rising and falling slowly.

“They sleep like that regularly…” A soft voice, heavy with sleep murmured and he glanced at Bél, surprised to see her eyes partially open staring at him. She offered a kind smile.

“No matter what I tell them…they always sleep like that. Makes for some…interesting hair formations.” She yawned out.

“I am…sorry…”

She blinked; sleep leaving her as she looked at him. He seemed flustered, apparently not used to apologizing.

“I am sorry for doubting you.” He amended. “You have more than proven yourself in this family, and I have done nothing to…allow you into this family. And for that I apologize.”

She pinched her arm under the blanket, sure she was still dreaming. But to her surprise, when the pain swam up her arm, and Thorin didn’t vanish, she realized this wasn’t a dream.

And she did the only thing she could think of…

She smiled.

“Thank you…for saving him.”

“Whatever is family for?” She asked gently and he snorted, paused and then bowed his head for a moment.

“Sleep well, Bél.” He said softly.

“And to you.” She replied and with that he closed the door. Bél stared at the door and then at the ceiling.

No one could fault her that she fell asleep with a smile on her face.

Chapter End Notes

And here we have Thorin FINALLY apologizes and thanks Bél :D

So I was curious. I already have some arcs planned out, but I was wondering if there was anything specific that you guys would want in the chapters. Sibling bonding stuff, Bagginshield (Eventually) scenes, Dís and Bél, other dwarrow scenes. Just be a little specific, so it gives me some idea to work with :D
Bél looked, no stared, at her small clothes and the stains that were on the inside. Oh wonderful, perfectly, fantastically wonderful!

Her first blood week, and she had stained a pair of her small clothes already. And she didn’t really want to wander back to her room without a pair of underwear on. She had two brothers, who though were likely still asleep she didn’t want to go back in there. Besides…she didn’t know what she was supposed to-

“Bbbbbéééééééééééélllllllllllll…” Kíli whined sleepily as he knocked on the bathroom door causing her to jump. “Can you hurry up?”

“Um…can you get Amad?”

“Amad? Why do need Amad?” Kíli asked, the sleep gone.

“Just get Amad.” Bél repeated.

Footsteps disappeared. A few minutes later they returned.

“Bél? Is everything alright?”

Bél wanted to scream. Of course he would get Fíli!

“Can you get Amad?” She repeated, trying to hide her frustration.

“Why do you need Amad?”

“Unless dwarrowmen have blood weeks as well, I really, really need Amad.” She finally spat out. There was silence and then hurried footsteps and a muffled yelp and arguing sounds. A few moments later there was more knocking on the door.

“Bél?”

The said she-hobbit sighed in relief and opened the door, allowing Dís inside.

“Sorry if I woke you.”

“Don’t be. It’s part of a mother’s job to help their daughter out.” Dís said with a smile. “And I’d much rather help you with this than how Thorin had to help me with this.”

“Thorin??”

“Mhm.” Dís said with a chuckle. “My own mother was killed when Smaug attacked Erebor. And all I had was my father, grandfather, and my two brothers.”

“None of which is female.” Bél acknowledged with a slight grimace.

“That would be correct. So imagine my panic when I woke up bleeding, then imagine my older brother Frerin panicking and dragging me to Thorin who was out in the market, and have him
explain that I in fact was not dying and it was all a natural thing.”

Bél bit her lip to stop her laughter.

“It was a rather embarrassing trip to the healer’s ward after that.” Dís admitted with a chuckle. “So it will be a pleasure for you to let me help you.”

“Thanks…my mother said it would happen soon…I just didn’t think it’d be so soon. Other hobbits have another year or so.”

“Each person is different.” Dís said with a smile, patting her head. “Now, I’ll go send Fíli out to get some items.”

“Just Fíli?”

“If I sent Kíli with him, they’d likely get into a brawl. No, no Fíli can handle it.”

Which was why a few hours later, Fíli was looking at the list his mother had given to him, scratching his head. Some of these things were easy enough to get, but some of them he knew would be causing him to blush.

But the thought of his little sister suffering the embarrassment of bleeding around the place was enough for him to go through and get these items. And he did so, moving faster in some parts of the market, his face on fire. He sighed. Almost done.

“…unnatural I say.”

“Aye, who would want a Halfling in their kin?”

Fíli froze in his step and slowly turned to look at the group of dwarflings sitting nearby, eating some peaches.

“Little beardless runts, that’s all they are. Don’t know the meaning of struggles like us.”

No doubt they were talking about Bél, and fury filtered in his veins, but he remained still, hoping they would either cease in this gossip, or notice him and be wise enough to keep quiet.

They did neither.

“Why do you suppose they kept her?” One of them asked, taking a large chunk out of his fruit. “It’s not like she’s anything impressive. And she’s too young for any of them to have fun with.”

Fíli’s vision turned more a shade of red, but the fury was tethered as his fists became white.

But the tether was withering.

“Don’t know.” The one said, apparently the leader. He then laughed. “Maybe they should throw her back out into the snow and make her walk back to wherever she came from, not like anyone would-”

Whatever he said afterwards was lost to Fíli as rage roared past his ears and the items he had been carrying dropped and clattered to the ground, as he stormed over to the unsuspecting dwarrows.

How dare they!!

How dare they hint at the fact of his kin abandoning her into the snow, as though she was a useless bag of meat!
And the mere thought of that hit too close, far too close, to the raw nerve of him nearly losing his siblings to snow.

The dwarf barely had time to look up before Fíli’s fist connected with his face.

“Fíli? Are you okay?”

The said dwarf sighed and looked up as he saw Bél standing there. To say he had gotten a lecture when he had come home, disheveled with a bloody nose and lip, had been an understatement. Dís had been outraged, first at Fíli, then at the dwarrows that her son had fought. So he was ‘grounded’ in a sense right then.

“I’m fine.”

“How’s your nose?”

He chuckled. “It’s fine. Promise.”

“…I’m sorry.”

“What are you sorry for?” He asked, now genuinely confused as Bél sat down.

“You got into that fight because of me…”

“They should learn to keep their mouth’s shut, Bél. That has nothing to do with you.”

She seemed less than convinced.

“Look there are people who are going to disagree with the fact that we adopted you, but the fact is, we did, and we couldn’t be happier about it. And if any of them are stupid enough to call you names in front of us, they have to learn.”

“But you get in trouble.”

“You’re my namadith. It’s an honor.” He said and she flushed at the statement, pushing her hair back. He grinned, tapping her forehead with his fingers. She smiled.

“Honestly, and Amad says Kíli’s reckless.”

“Oh I’m not reckless, I’m a brilliant tactician.” He said, mockingly bowing earning a snort from her. “Just sometimes peacemaking must be set aside to show those what I’m capable of.”

“I see.” She replied with a grin.

“Nothing I wouldn’t do for my sister.”

She smiled gently.

“Did you have any siblings?” He asked and she gave a chuckle.

“No…I’m an only child.”

“Really?”

“Why is that surprising?” She asked with a grin. He blushed sheepishly.
“Well, from what I’ve heard Hobbits have really large families…like families that break the concept of a large dwarf family.”

“Well, when my mother was pregnant with me, it was…well it was a hard pregnancy for her. Gandalf came along and helped her, but he said to not have any more children after me. And I don’t really think my mother wanted to anyways…apparently I was a twin, but my brother didn’t make it. It was really hard on the both of them to lose Bilbo.” She said, scratching her cheek. At least now they were with their son. They had lost one child to be reunited with the other. Fili seemed to pick up on that train of thought and patted her hand.

“Well, we’ll protect their daughter. And we’re glad to have gained her into our kin. If anyone says otherwise, they have to deal with Kíli and me.”

She smiled and laughed.

“My mother thanks you and will hold you to it.” She stated and nudged him slightly. He chuckled nodding.

“It’s a promise I will enjoy keeping.”

Chapter End Notes

Short chapter, but I wanted some Fíli love in this :D

And I added Bilbo...well...sort of >_>;;
“I have a favor to ask.”

That got Dwalin’s attention and he glanced up at Thorin as they watched Kíli and Bél work on their archery. The expression on Thorin’s face made Dwalin’s brain instantly went on alert and apprehension was beginning to cover his face. Thorin rarely asked for favors of him and when he did, it was usually something Dwalin wasn’t very keen on doing.

“I want you to teach Bél how to fight.” Thorin continued. “She needs to learn how to use a sword more properly than just quick lessons you gave her.”

“...You want me to what?” Dwalin asked after a long while, looking at Thorin as though he had heard him wrong. But he hadn’t. “No. No way in hell! I’d hurt her if I tried to train her seriously. She’s not as sturdy as other dwarves in training for anything less than simple defense. I mean yes, those tricks saved her in the long run with Kíli-”

“That’s exactly why I would be asking you.” Thorin responded. “Well, really it’s Dís who wants me to ask. You trained her those moves, and they saved her life as well as Kíli’s.”

Dwalin groaned to himself. With Dís leading this bid, he’d be in the longest battle of his life if he didn’t accept.

“...All right, I will teach her, if you and Dís insist.” Dwalin grumbled, realizing if Dís found out he still rejected training her adopted daughter, Balin would be one brother short.

Thorin looked up in relief, as apparently the prospect of telling his sister that Dwalin had said no was something he did not want to deal with either.

“If it’s any consolation, she will probably hate those lessons.” Thorin remarked glancing at the other two. Dwalin snorted.

“Aye. I doubt she will be happy, but what choice do I have?”

“No, no.” Bél gave Dwalin a weary look as he rubbed the bridge of his nose, while she sat on the grass, the training sword resting on the ground. “You are supposed to deflect the blow to the side and throw me off balance, not push against it and try and force me back.”

“I guess I don’t really understand this. I mean if the weapon heavier than me, how am I supposed deflect it without me becoming a pancake?” She asked weakly and a bit timidly. He sighed.

It had been a few weeks since she had been told that he was going to be teaching her how to actually fight using a sword, not just a hunting dagger and not just for defense. To say she had been surprised had been an understatement. To say that Fíli and Kíli had been surprised had, likewise, been an understatement. The first few weeks had had them watching him to make sure he wasn’t going to pound their younger sister into a bloody pulp.

“You have to move properly.” Dwalin explained standing her up, and placing the sword into her hand. She bit her lip following his instructions. She then looked at him questioningly.
“Why is Amad making me learn this?”

“She wants to make sure that if you’re alone, you can fight back.”

“I am doing well with archery.”

“Aye, and when you run out of arrows? What then?”

She was silent and then sighed.

“It's just...Hobbits aren’t well known for swords.”

“But they are known for archery?” Dwalin asked, amused as they moved through the steps again. Bél’s brow furrowed in concentration.

“Not necessarily. If anything it'd be conkers and truth be told, hobbits don’t normally leave their respective towns and areas. I think only the Took and Brandybucks are known to traveling outside of their places, and even then most of them just go to different areas of the Shire. The land itself is peaceful and there’s no need to fight with anyone. And if there is, normally the Rangers protected the lands.”

“Yet they couldn’t-”

“What happened a year ago, they weren’t expecting it.” She replied swallowing as she pushed forward, and he stumbled backward but regained his footing. “The hobbits well...we used what we had on hand. Garden tools, slingshots...my mom is the only one who ever owned an actual fighting dagger that she used other than decoration. And she got that on her travels.”

Dwalin was silent as he watched her.

“I see.”

She gritted her teeth, then yelped as he tripped her up and she fell back onto the ground, grunting.

“Not bad.” He remarked as she glared at him. “Granted, my own Amad has more strength than you in pushing.”

“Your mother sounds terrifying,” Dwalin snorted but didn’t dispute it.

“You cannot learn sword-fighting in a day. It is something that will be learned slowly and over time and gain that courage.” Dwalin explained.

“Gandalf always said true courage is about knowing not when to take a life, but when to spare one.” Bél replied and Dwalin blinked.

“Aye. But it also means knowing how to take a life if you need to.”

“I’m not getting out of this, am I?”

“Not on your life.”

“Joy.” Bél grumbled and Dwalin smiled.

The lass was something else. A bit soft around the edges and not a lick of sense when it came to
relying solely on a sword.

But he would work on that.

Besides, the simple moves he had taught her had already saved her.

He wondered what would happen with a real fight.

Well, he mused, he was going to find out.

“Again from the top.” He remarked and barely hid the smirk as she groaned.

Dís chuckled slightly as Bél sat up one morning, her hair sticking out in every direction.

“Rough night?” She asked as the brothers began to wake up.

“Rough afternoon is more accurate. I don’t really get why I need to know more about sword fighting.” Bél grumbled.

“It will protect you.”

“If Dwalin doesn’t kill me first.”

“I doubt he would do that.” Dís stated then looked at the mess of curls. “How about I braid your hair back. The way you do it is nice, but it’s bound to get undone easily.”

Fíli and Kíli snorting in agreement was enough proof to their mother that it had come undone in previous training exercises.

“You two go get ready. We’ll be down shortly.” Dís said and the boys sleepily left nudging one another to get out of the room. Dís chuckled as Bél stood and untied the ribbon from her hair. Dís smiled.

“I didn’t realize your hair had gotten so long.” She stated, noting the thickness of the strands.

“Hobbit hair grows really fast, I’m afraid.” Bél admitted tiredly, stretching.

“I think it’s lovely. You should wear it down more often.”

“I don’t want it to get caught on anything to be honest.” Bél said with a grimace. “There are a lot of pointy tools that would hurt if it got caught in them. And the last thing I need is an arrow accidentally being directed off course cause it got tangled in my hair or me accidentally sewing some hair into a dress or shirt.”

“Point taken. Do you want me to trim it?”

“Well…how much?”

“Not a lot. Don’t forget, dwarrows have issues with people cutting their hair off. If I cut off a lot, it would certainly garner attention.” Dís explained and Bél flushed, not wanting that, she didn’t any more attention. Dís held up the part she wanted to trim. “Just this much. See?”

“Alright.” Bél agreed, and turned her head again as the older dwarrowdam returned after getting the scissors. She trimmed the split ends at the bottom, and after that little trim was done, set the scissors aside and grabbed a brush, before lifting the hair up and began to work on the hair, section by
“Your hair is lovely.” She repeated. “Did you inherit it from your mother’s side or your father’s?”

Bél chuckled.

“I gained my mother’s hair, but my father’s hair color.” Bél replied. “Which can’t be the same for my face. I gained my father’s nose and eye shape, but my mouth and eye color…that’s my mother.” She replied softly, and Dís glanced down to see the young she-hobbit fiddling with her fingers, before her eyes traveled up to Bél’s face. She began to work on the braid, taking great detail to it so it would stay in place during training. Bél deserved that, to feel safe.

She had lost so much already.

From what Fíli had told her after his punishment was over, Bél had lost a brother as well before birth… and with her parents dead, in a sense, she was the last of her immediate family. Being barely a teenager and had been subjected to orc’s torture for however many weeks, even a strong man would shatter under such weight. A teenaged hobbit from the Shire surviving this was unheard of, and it led to no surprise that even now Bél still carried such a lost look every now and then. But she knew her sons were slowly diminishing those looks, always making her laugh…or sigh in aggravation at their tendencies to roughhouse. Whatever the case the two brothers made her feel safe and made her forget the trauma she had gone through.

Dís sent a prayer to Mahal and then one to Yavanna (as one way or another she knew that the Maker would inform his wife) asking that the message would be sent to Bél’s family…that they could rest in peace. Their daughter was safe, completely safe. The gap left by them passing would be filled as more years passed. Only a year and a half and she had already seen Bél grow, and it would continue to where she could smile and live her life in the safety of a family.

She would make sure of that.

"There we go." She said as she finished the braid with a smile. Bél looked at her with her own easy smile, giving Dís a glimpse of what the Billanna Baggins probably had looked like when her own mother had done this to her. Dís pressed her forehead to the she-hobbit’s, smiling. "Never forget Bél, your mother and father knows where you are. And they love you so much."

Bél's eyes lit up with unshed tears.

"And they will always watch over you. Just as we will."

Bél's smile lit up as well and widened, nodding.

"Thank you, Amad." She whispered drawing Dís into a hug which the dwarrowdam returned before helping the young hobbit up.

"We best hurry downstairs before the boys eat all of breakfast." Dís teased and Bél laughed, nodding. And with that the two headed downstairs to their loud energetic family.

Chapter End Notes

Some Dwalin and Dís moments.
There will be a slight timeskip in the next chapter FYI as the first arc of this is over :) More of the company will be in the next few chapters~!

And it's not that Dwalin hate's Bél. He just is very much aware that in comparison to her, he could hurt her badly with his strength. And he'd rather not for many reasons, Dís murdering him after making him dig his own grave being one of the top few XD
“See anything?”

“Nothing.” The girl stated as she narrowed her eyes trying to see as far as she could from standing on the back of the pony, standing as she held the reins of the gentle mare. The pony neighed softly as Bél sighed before glancing back at her brothers apologetically.

“It doesn’t seem like there is any game here either, unfortunately.” She remarked sadly.

“Damn.” Fíli grumbled, watching as Bél sat back down in the saddle and looked at him. “This is the third place we’ve gone to and still nothing that could be for hunting.” He complained while Kili nodded in agreement with his brother. Bél shrugged.

“At least it’s not winter. It could be worse and we’d have to go this far when it’s below freezing.” She replied.

“True. Still…it sucks having to go so far from home to get some meat.”

“Well we’re old enough and this time I have a pony so if you fall I can pick you up.” Bél teased earning a groan from Kíli.

“It’s been five years.” He whined and Bél snorted.

“Yeah, since that winter.” Bél retorted. “But that hasn’t stopped you from falling into the river, falling off that tree branch into the girl’s bathhouse by accident.” Bél remarked, counting off the incidents with her hand.

“Falling into that pig pen and right into the manure.” Fíli added and the dark haired dwarf threw his arms up in exasperation.

“Fee, you’re supposed to be on my side!!” He exclaimed and the eldest brother chuckled, shoving Kíli lightly.

“I am on your side. But you have to admit, you fall a lot.” He remarked and Kíli grumped in his seat before smirking at the golden-haired dwarf.

“Beats getting shit-faced and puking on the lass you were flirting with.” Kíli reminded him and Fíli’s face went scarlet.

Bél sighed as she heard Fíli yell something expletive and then Kíli grunt. She slowed down and gathered the reins of the other two ponies’ that whinnied at her as she looked at the two boys wrestling on the ground. She rolled her eyes, watching the pair.

Five years.

It still startled her sometimes on how quickly the years had gone by for her. She was now 26. Only four years away from being of age for a hobbit, though that was years away from becoming of age for a dwarf, and though it was going to make things difficult for her when she wanted to actually court someone, as any dwarf that didn’t know her well enough to know that when they normally courted and married, well…she’d roughly between the age of her mid late 30’s to mid 40’s in human
years. And while that wasn’t necessarily bad it would be difficult to have a child at that age… something dwarves needed. But that didn’t mean moot if a dwarf wasn’t her ‘One’.

Secretly, she had never really understood that.

Sure dwarves could roll around in the sheets, but they never married until they found that person who would be their One, someone who knew their secret names.

Frankly she didn’t see that ever happening with her. Heck, she was a hobbit, who could get married a month after meeting one another. To have something as profound and well…beautiful…as finding a soulmate was likely to not happen for her. She sighed slightly, and glanced at the two boys that were still wrestling on the ground.

Granted, the prospect of gaining husband with these two breathing down his neck to make sure she wasn’t hurt was slim to none.

“Are you two finished? If there was any game here, you probably scared it away.” She huffed. Both boys looked up, a good chunk of Fíli’s hair gripped tightly in Kíli’s hand contorting the blonde’s head to the side, while the former’s fingers were stretching Kíli’s cheek. She rubbed the bridge of her nose in exasperation.

“We better head back. It’s probably going to rain soon.” Bél remarked, looking at the darkening sky. “And I’d rather not be out here.” She remarked. No sooner did she say that did the downpour begin. She glared at the two.

“Oh come on, what could happen?” Kíli teased as thunder rolled.

Bél answered that question a few days later.

“Bél.” Kíli sang as he came into the room, looking at the mound under the blankets. “Oh beloved Namadith, you missed breakfast. Thorin made it with love.” He teased.

She only responded with a low groan.

“Oh come on Bél, Thorin’s cooking isn’t that bad.” He teased nudging her. She shifted only barely and let out a serious of ragged coughs. He blinked then frowned.

“Bél?” He said shifting the blankets. His eyes widened.

She was curled up into the fetal position, and several strands of her hair were stuck to her forehead, which glistened with sweat. Despite the obvious sweat, she was shivering as though she had been thrown out into a cold breeze. Her cheeks were flushed a deep red and though her eyes were closed, her brow was furrowed, as though in pain. She blearily looked at him.

“Kee…since when we…were der two of you?” She mumbled, her voice strange and pitched differently.

“Stay right here.” He said tucking her in and scrambling out of the room. He barely remembered illnesses like this, but he did remember when that sickness had swept through Ered Luin. So many dwarves had gotten sick, and a good handful hadn’t woken up.

Bél couldn’t have gotten it…could she?

“Amad, Bél’s acting weird.” Kíli called out, poking his head into the kitchen.
“From my perspective, both of you are weird.” Fíli grumbled humorously from his readings.

“I don’t mean like that.” Kíli snapped. “I mean she has a really red face and is sweating, but shivering too. And she thought there was two of me!” He explained quickly. They then heard muffled coughs echo down the stairs. “And she’s coughing like that!!” He added quickly, trying to keep the shrill tenor out of his voice. Dís dried off her hands and walked out of the kitchen.

“She’ll be fine Kíli.” Thorin said, trying to soothe the dwarrow’s worries, but it seemed to do little as Kíli raced up after his mother. Fíli glanced at the older dwarf, who sighed.

“Go on.” He ordered and like a flash, Fíli was up from the table and hurrying after his little brother. Thorin glanced towards the stairs, before walking out as well.

“It looks to be something called the flu.”

“The flu?”

“Mhm.” Óin remarked as he pressed a damp cloth to Bél’s forehead. “For hobbits, I reckon it’s easier to gain such illnesses than a dwarf. She’ll need plenty of liquids and rest to combat it.”

“Will she be alright?” Fíli asked, both brothers eyeing their coughing sister nervously.

“She’ll be fine. The flu is hardly fatal from what I’ve heard.” Óin remarked. “It probably didn’t help being in that downpour a few days earlier, but she’ll be fine.” He repeated at the panicked look on their faces.

“Why don’t you all get these items? It will help her in easing any discomfort and-”

The boys had snatched the list and were down the steps before Óin had even finished. Thorin and Dís sighed at the brother’s antics.

“Thank you Óin.” Thorin answered and Dís nodded as well which caused the grey-haired dwarf to snort.

“If I didn’t help, what type of healer would I be?” He asked gruffly and the other adults left at that.

“Thank you you, Óin.” Bél mumbled shifting tiredly under her covers. He smiled patting the blanket.

“Think nothing of it, Lass.” He responded with a smile. “Yer handling it better than Glóin, that’s for sure.”

“Oh?”

“Mhm. The poor bloke gets a head cold and it’s as though he’s dying. I jus’ give him a draught to shut him up.”

Bél chuckled, before coughing violently.

“Maybe we should hold back on the laughing. What do you say lass?”

“Good…idea…” She grumbled, burrowing further into her blankets. He smiled and patted the blanket again.

“Óin, what made you want to become a doctor?” She asked tiredly. He paused. Why indeed…
Multiple reasons were likely but there was namely one reason. He had never had much love for banking as his father and young brother had. In fact he found it more interesting to collect mushrooms and try to make different concoctions and see what didn’t work and what did. To be honest, he thought he would become an alchemist or a potion’s expert.

But then his mother fell ill. She hadn’t been the only one of course, the Dragon’s Cough seemed to sweep over Ered Luin. Dwarrowman, dwarrowdame, dwarfling, young, old…it took no care in its’ choice of victim.

His mother had been one of them.

Like many, the healers had proclaimed her a lost cause, and had said to just make her as comfortable as possible. He had been stubborn and began to spend da and night by her side, working on using the tonics he had made to help her.

By Mahal’s grace, she had survived.

And he had found his calling.

“Heh, you just find your calling every now and then, lass.” He remarked patting where her knee was. “You’ll find yours to-”

He turned back to her to see she had fallen asleep. He smiled. “Sleep well lass.” He said softly and she smiled in her sleep.

“’ello, Lass!!” Bofur sang as he entered the room with a grin. “Food delivery from Bombur.” He added with a chuckle and she smiled.

“Really?” She asked sitting up. Her cheeks were still flushed and every now and then she would have horrible coughing fits, but thank Eru she seemed to be recovering swiftly.

It was good thing too. The boys were about the drive Thorin up a wall apparently with their incessant questioning and begging to see her during their trips into the forests to hunt. The mustached dwarf grinned setting the small pot down.

“It smells good.”

“Must be strong then, for you to smell it through your stuffed up nose. That might mean it will clear it out.” Bofur remarked settling in the nearby chair. “Is it alright if I stay? Bildris will be wanting the pot back.”

“I know better than to deny your sister-in-law, Bofur.” She said with a chuckle before digging in. He laughed before nodding.

“Aye, Bombur certainly chose a spitfire.”

“I believe many dwarrowdams are spitfires, Bofur.” Bél replied, smiling as the soup warmed her and began to clear her nostrils.

“Many are.” He agreed. They were silent for several minutes as Bofur observed her. “I never did apologize those years back when we lost you in that snow storm.” He finally muttered. She looked up and blinked, her brow furrowing.

“Bofur, that wasn’t your fault.”
“I promised Lady Dís I would watch over you, Lass. You nearly died because I failed that promise.”

“If we hadn’t gotten separated, we wouldn’t have found that ditch where Kíli was. It was pure luck I found it on my own. And we were all frantic with worry, how could I blame you for that? We weren’t prepared for just how bad the storm was.” She added, patting his hand. “I do not blame you. Why should you?”

He was silent and then he chuckled.

“You’re a strange lass.”

“Am I? I didn’t notice with being raised by dwarrows.” She teased and he burst out laughing.

“Aye.” He admitted with mirth and she smiled, taking another spoonful, listening to Bofur tell tales of what was occurring in Ered Luin right then, enjoying the soup that Bombur had made. It was probably the most food she had been able to stomach.

And the Oakenshield kin could not have been any more grateful when Bofur exited the room with an empty pot.

The Ur family was pleasantly surprised a few days later when a deer and some of Dís’s cookies showed up on their doorstep.

Chapter End Notes

Gonna try to get a lot of the dwarves before we get Bagginshield started!!!

I have Óin, and Bofur, and I got Dís and Dwalin in the last chapter.

9 more to go!!
Balin, son of Fundin was far from young. True he was not a dwarfling and he wasn’t elderly, but he had seen many things. So when Dís had decided to become a surrogate mother to a recently orphaned hobbit, he had had his reservations, though never voiced.

How could a kindly child of the West, unused to such culture of the dwarrows, would manage in their society? It was bound to be difficult to live here among them. But he had been mistaken.

She had blended in wonderfully.

And she was quite eager to learn on what to or not to do in a dwarrow culture, just as many of their kin and friends were keen on learning

But that didn’t mean there were a few dwarrows that were still wary of her learning their culture. Particularly older dwarrows were still against it.

He came out of his musings as Bél groaned, slumping over a book.

“What’s wrong lass?”

“I know Westron, Sindrian, Green Speak, and now Khuzdûl, but this word is killing me!!” She whined, pointing at a collection of runes. “And there are a dozen words that could go with it, but it would make the sentence change and have a different meaning.” She grumbled.

He chuckled.

“That is why you’re learning.” He responded and she grumbled. He pointed at the runes.

“It’s abzari, or to sadden. So the line would be…”

“Abzari’u ik-kurûd. To sadden the heart?” She questioned and he nodded. She then looked at the book. “What book are you making me read here?” She asked humorously and he chuckled.

“The Tale of Denar the Carver and His Wife, Náv.”

“A love story?”

“In a way.” Balin remarked. Bél frowned as she continued reading. Balin glanced up and his smile lessened when he saw several other dwarrows glance at the pair in annoyance. Bél seemed to not notice, intent on reading the book. Balin continued watching from the corner of his eye and then after patting her on the shoulder that he’d be right back which she barely mustered a nod as he followed them.

“Unnatural I say…”

“Adopting her…one thing…her learning is another.”

Balin’s frown deepened momentarily before he strode forward, a pleasant smile on his face.

“Gentlemen, what seems to trouble you that you must hide in the shadows?” He asked brightly, possibly too brightly as they others jumped when the spotted him. He was gentler of most dwarrow
folk. The diplomat and the scholar.

That did not mean he couldn’t be fiercer than a warg when provoked.

“Nothing Balin, Son of Fundin.” One of the dwarrows remarked with a tight smile. “Nothing is troubling us.”

“Is it not? Well then I suppose you were death glaring Lady Bél for an entirely different reason?” Balin remarked, the cheerfulness still in his voice, despite their squirming.

“It’s not natural. A Halfling learning our customs. It isn’t-”

“The lass is half of nothing, and you’d do well to remember that.” Balin snapped. “And if you think Lady Dís will sit idly by and allow her surrogate daughter to not be able to understand anything, you’re into a whole level of battles.”

“The fact remains that we do not teach Khuzdûl or Iglishmêk to outsiders.”

“The fact also is, she is not an outsider. Not anymore.”

“She should respect her own culture and respect ours. Outsiders are not supposed to-”

“What is the meaning of this?”

If the dwarrows hadn’t felt fear prior, the look on their face as Dís’s voice rang out changed that. They both turned, gaping like fish at the darkened glare on the dwarrowdam’s face.

“Lady Dís-”

“Do you think that even for a moment you can placate me? You continue to dismiss Bél, but now you are so dishonorable you would do so behind my kin’s back?” She snapped out. From the anger in her face and the way the other Dwarf dropped his eyes and muttered his reply, Balin knew he was now treading onto dangerous territory.

And he couldn’t be any prouder. Dís was so enraged, she was apparently trying to set the council on fire by the force of her glare.

“Amad?”

Dís looked up and then the smile crossed her face as she looked at the confused Bél looked at her.

“There you are.” Dís stated, her voice changing with the turn of a head. “Balin and I were just discussing some things with these dwarrowmen, which they will be following through unless they wish to speak to my brother.” She snapped the last word and then turned and ushered away.

“You best listen to her lads. Facing Lady Dís’s wrath again will wind up hurting you more.” He remarked shrewdly and walked away as though they had had a pleasant conversation.

It was only later that night when Balin realized that Bél wasn’t as ignorant of those around her as they had hoped.

“Balin, is it bad that I’m here?”

“Where would you get this idea, lass?” Balin asked. Bél twiddled her fingers looking at the floor.
“Well, those at the library weren’t happy that I’m learning Khuzdûl, and well I can understand why, because I’m not and dwarf and all… and well…”

“If you hear them speak of such things again, you come and find me. I will address them.” A voice remarked and they turned to see Thorin entering the living room, pulling off his weapons and coat. “They will not talk of my kin, adopted or not, in such a way.” He continued and a slight blush crawled up onto Bél’s cheeks, as she grew embarrassed from all the attention.

“I suppose…” She murmured.


“…alright…”

“Bél!”

The called girl looked up at the call and sighed.

“What did he get into now…” She muttered and then excused herself going to see what Kíli had done. Balin glanced at Thorin, amused.

“What?”

“Oh nothing. It’s just amusing to see how much has changed.” He remarked with a chuckle and Thorin seemed to glare at him and then snorted.

“Even if I did not believe it, do you think my sister would ever leave me alone if I did not say that?”

To that Balin chuckled.

“No I suppose not.”

Change was always on the horizon, Balin mused. And even stone would change in the constant beating of the ever-changing earth.

Chapter End Notes

So this chapter is a wee bit shorter, but I liked Balin by himself being his own BAMF self through words. Also it coincides with the previous chapter of how times has changed for Bél and the company. Yeah, there is still going to be a stigma for her being in this family, but there are more willing to come to her defense than previously.

Also you can see a change in Thorin as he is now a bunch more accepting to Bél than in previous chapters.
“Where are they?”

“Bifur…”

“Don’t beat around the bush. Where are my wife and son?” The dwarf asked as the little dwarfling by his feet chewed on a ragdoll, looking up at her father.”

“I’m sorry Bifur…they didn’t…”

“They didn’t make it.”

“Bifur…”

“No they were supposed to be alright! They were supposed to be-”

“Bifur!”

“Bifur?”

The said dwarf jumped slightly, nearly stabbing himself with his carving knife as he looked up and into curious green eyes. Bél smiled lightly as he cocked his head.

“Hello Bifur, Bombur asked me to deliver this to you. Apparently you forgot your lunch.” She informed him, tutting at him. “You should know better. Lunch is one of the most important meals of the day.”

“You say that about every meals.” He signed and she flushed slightly, coughing lightly to save face.

“Yes well, you can’t blame me.” She remarked with a flush. “Eating is really important.”

Bifur chuckled and signed to her, allowing Bél to smile. She handed him the basket she was holding, huffing the entire way. Bifur smiled, patting the seat next to his. After a brief moment of hesitation she didn’t realize that she hadn’t left.

“Sorry it’s interesting to watch.” She said sheepishly. He smiled.

“It’s alright.” He signed with a chuckle. She kept watching and finally he handed the small trinket to her.

And watched the childlike glee as she moved it around in her small hands, looking at the designs on the small figurine. And for a brief moment he thought of his youngest child.

His daughter Binur.

His Binur…his shining light.

After his wife and son had died during the labor, she had been his only shining light. He had
probably spoiled her, perhaps too much. But never rotten. They didn’t have the means to be spoiled rotten. But they had had a peaceful life in Ered Luin and she smiled whenever he had shown her a new toy.

She had been his little angel.

Which made it so hard to accept on how she had been taken cruelly before she had even lived her life. She had only been out of his sight for only a moment as he packed his pack back up. Only a few moments. Yet that scream still haunted his nightmare, the never-ending run around the corner, searching feverishly for his child.

Finding her form lying there, in a crumpled heap, a orc axe embedded in her chest.

He touched his temple, where another axe had been embedded.

He had gotten his revenge. But the cost had been great.

He didn’t remember much, and his cousins had said that had been a good thing. The blood had been overflowing down his face, his skull split open with an axe embedded into the skull; he had been in a coma like state for several weeks. When he had awoken, something had broken. He could understand everyone perfectly fine…but he couldn’t speak with him or her, unless they knew Khuzdûl or Iglishmêk. It was though any Westron had vanished from his mind.

There was a gap that no one other than a dwarrows could pass.

Except Bél.

And even when she hadn’t been able to understand him, she had tried, miming her questions to the best of her ability.

Yes…maybe the bridge wasn’t as destroyed as they had previously thought.

He smiled at the girl still looking at the toy, and she beamed.

“This is a really cool, Bifur!” Bél exclaimed and he smiled.

Yes…cool indeed.

———

“Ow!!”

Thorin paused from entering the home, looking over at the hunched over form.

“Bél?” He called out and she jumped, turning around and hiding her one hand behind her back.

“Thorin! Hi!!” She said, her voice unnaturally high. “What are you doing here?”

“…I live here. Or have you forgotten?”

“What? Oh no, I didn’t mean…never mind.” She replied with an uneasy laugh, flinching as she moved her hand. He frowned.

“You’re injured.”

“It’s nothing too bad. Honest. Just a cut.”
“A cut could become infected, and could either kill you or maim you.” He responded blandly and she glared. He gestured towards the hand and reluctantly she showed it to him.

“A cut? This is a deep gash. Where did you get it?”

“I was stupid and didn’t see a pointy rock jutting out when I was climbing after Fili and Kili. Jabbed my hand right over it.”

“And yet you did not tell them.”

“They would have stopped the hunt…and we needed the extra food.”

Thorin sighed and then proceeded to tear off a piece of linen from a nearby towel.

“Thorin, it’s fine. Honest.”

“I’d rather it be covered and not have a risk of being infected.” He replied, beginning to cover the scratch as she scoffed. She glanced at him, feeling a slight blush creep up on her face. She still wasn’t used to him showing kindness towards her, even though years had passed since she had gotten on his good side. She supposed she wouldn’t get used to it unless something extreme happened, but it was still an interesting twist in their relationship. She looked around, trying to focus on anything other than him as he continued to bandage her hand. It took a few minutes of silence before the bandage was completely done. He held her hand for a few brief moments before releasing her hand.

“There…” He said and then turned. She looked at her hand and then smiled.

“Thank you…”

He paused and glanced behind his shoulder and her smile grew. She thought she saw his own smile as he entered the house, but couldn’t be sure.

She looked at the bandage and her smile gentled.

Bél paused as she walked into the small shack that was Dori’s shop and frowned, cocking her head to the side.

Chamomile Tea.

Not good.

“So…what did Nori do now?”

“Oh the usual. Decided to try and thieve from another dwarf, nearly got his arm chopped off, but weaseled his way out of it.” Dori grumbled, slamming the thread drawer close. Bél winced, watching him as he stormed around muttering to himself.

“He’s just trying to make by…”

“He’s making this family name be dragged through the dirt.”

“Well normally he is pretty good at being a thief. Not that it makes it alright.” She added quickly to Dori’s glare. “But he does care about the family. In his own personal way.”

Dori scoffed at that.
“You know... back in the Shire... we have a lot of family members. One I personally disliked was Lobelia. She was an awful, *awful* woman.”

“Oh was she?”

“Mhm. She would make even the worst dwarf seem like an angel. I just hope that the Sackville’s didn’t get Bagend. That’d be a travesty.”

“And your point?”

“Well, despite hating her guts, she was still family... so I guess somewhere deep in my heart, really deep I still love her, even with her grievous faults.”

Dori looked at her and sighed.

“I mean he is your brother... despite all his faults, you can still love him, at least marginally.”

“I do... it’s just... I wish that he would stay out of trouble.”

“I don’t think Nori will ever be able to stay out of complete trouble.” Bél remarked with a frown and Dori chuckled.

“I suppose not.”

“Anyway, I’ll go pour you a cup of tea. You’ll still need it for your nerves.”

Dori watched and chuckled. She always seemed to have a calming affect on any of the dwarves she met, listening to their problems and helping them the best way she could.

Maybe what Dís had said was true... something, be it fate or something other worldly brought her to them.

He just wondered what her purpose was.

Chapter End Notes

This took MUCH longer than it was supposed to. Hit a funk with this chapter unfortunately. XD
I’m not exactly pleased with how this one turned out, but I think some chapters are going to be like that.
So I hope you like it!
“O’er the crust of hard white snow

The little feet of the reindeer go

Hush, hush the winds are low.” A soft voice sang out into the wind.

“And the fine little bells are ringing

Nothing can reach thee of woe or harm

Safe is the shelter of mother’s arm.” The voice continued as the pony whinnied and bobbed its head, the ears flicking backwards. Bél smiled, scratching her pony’s neck.

“Hush, hush the winds a charm

And mother’s voice is singing.” She continued to hum only stopping when snow was thrown in her face. “Hey!!”

“You shouldn’t be singing while riding Bél! Not that you’re a good singer anyways.” Kíli teased with a grin only to have the adopted hobbit launching herself at him. Fíli sighed as he heard the two struggling behind him and he could see Dwalin shoulders shaking with mirth and Thorin’s shoulders slump in exasperation. Nori glanced back and snorted.

“Would you two cease?!!” Thorin barked out, not even turning to look at them.

“Sorry Uncle.” Kíli called out and Fíli could hear his sister snickering slightly.

“Bél was beating him.” Nori commented and Thorin rolled his eyes.

“She was not!!”

Thorin seemed to grumble under his breath in Khuzdûl and Fíli chuckled in sympathy slowing down to get back to where his siblings were. Bél was grumbling under her breath and Kíli was looking bashful.

“You two are going to drive Thorin up the wall.”

“It’s keeps him on his toes, I suppose.” Bél responded good-naturedly. “Though did we have to have so many people?” She asked. The golden haired dwarf shrugged.

“Apparently there have been a lot of attacks from bandits.” Fíli remarked. “Thorin is just being cautious.”

“I guess that makes sense. Though Dwalin doesn’t seem all too keen that Nori is with us.”

“He’s never keen on letting Nori come with us.” Kíli remarked. “Because he has to keep an extra eye on him so Nori doesn’t take any, ‘souvenirs’.” He added and Bél chuckled.

“I guess that makes sense.” She responded, pushing her hair back. It was getting so long now, and
like any hobbit’s hair it was wild and unruly. Unlike her brothers or adoptive mother, she could
never leave it completely down and the beads that had been made for her were nearly completely
hidden in the mass of curls. Even though she wasn’t supposed to cut her hair, due to circumstances
that couldn’t be helped, they had had to cut a few inches off every now and then so it didn’t become
a hindrance to her fighting or general walking around. Fíli grinned and nudged her.

“Hey chin up. Nori isn’t all that bad.”

“I never said that.” She responded with a huff. “I in fact have nothing against him.” She retorted and
they both grin and opened her mouth to ask what they were planning.

An arrow sliced just in front of her head, missing it by inches.

They heard yelling above them and barely managed to get off of the ponies before bandits ambushed
them. Bél withdrew her dagger, parrying a blow from the bandit close to her. In the distance the three
heard Nori, Dwalin, and Thorin yell out rushing back to them.

Bél gritted her teeth and backed up for a second, allowing the man to fall towards her, and sliced the
blade upwards. The screeching yelp was clue enough the tip had made contact and the man
scrambled back, clutching his bleeding face.

“You crazy wench!!” He shrieked rushing forward, holding his blade up. She blocked, but he
pushed her backwards, and she stumbled a few steps back.

She knew the moment her foot stepped onto that part of the rock, something was wrong. It didn’t feel
right, almost as though when she had eaten too many cookies when she was young. Her stomach
flipped and flopped and she attempted to move forward however the one bandit rushed her and
attempted to cleave through her. She blocked, sliding back a bit more, gritting her teeth in anger.

The man chuckled and rushed forward at her.

His foot broke through the rock and the entire area began to crumble. Bél made a yelping sound as
she began to slide down the cliff side. She heard her brothers and friends yell, and a hand reached
out, grabbing her wrist.

She looked up and saw to her surprise Nori had grabbed her wrist, clinging to it with desperation.
The rock under him was beginning to crumble

“Try to climb up…” He growled and she nodded, trying to use his arm like a rope. She was almost
there…

The rock gave underneath Nori.

With a scream they plummeted down the cliff.

All she heard was the yells of her brothers before they vanished in the horizon of rock.

Nori groaned as he came to, in pain. Why was he in pain? Did he have too much ale at the tavern the
night before? It wasn’t like that hadn’t happened before, but this felt different.

But as he opened his eyes and saw clear skies, it became apparently he wasn’t in a tavern or in the
back of a tavern. No he was far from any town, village, or any populated life.

And it came crashing back to him.
“Bél!” He called out, sitting up quickly and immediately regretted it as his vision swam for a few moments. He gripped his head tightly as he struggled to stand. She couldn’t have fallen farther than him. She had to be around there somewhere.

“Bél! Lass can you hear me!?” He called out as he climbed up the rocks he was next to. He had to find her. He just had to.

He couldn’t think of being the one that lost her again. He’d never be able to look at his brother, Thorin, or Dís again without feeling shame. And that would be if Dori or Dís didn’t kill him.

The she-dwarrow still hadn’t quite forgiven him for losing her in that blizzard all those years ago.

“O’er the crust of hard white snow
The little feet of the reindeer go

Hush, hush the winds are low.” Nori heard faintly as he continued to scramble up the rock. It sent his heart soaring, because there was only one female in their party and Mahal willing she was alive and singing the song, not a phantom leading him to safety on his own and leaving her buried under rocks.

“And the fine little bells are ringing
Nothing can reach thee of woe or harm
Safe is the shelter of mother’s arm.”

“Hush, hush the winds a charm
And mother’s voice is singing.”

Father is coming-he rides apace
Fleet is the steed with the winds that race.”

The voice was getting louder now, and he continued climbing up.

“Come on lass, keep singing. I’m almost there.” Nori whispered, scrambling over a vein of bad rock that crumbled under his feet as he raced over it. He barely managed to get to the other side.

“Hush, hush for a little space
The snow to his mantle’s clinging
His flying steed with the wind’s abrest
Here by the fire are warmth and rest
(Hush, hush, in you little nest)
And mother’s voice is singing
Over the crust of snow, hard by,
The little feet of the reindeer fly.”

He was getting close now. The echoes were getting stronger, solid…not as distant.
“Hush, hush, the wind is high
And the fine little bells are ringing
Nothing can reach us of woe or harm-
Safe is the shelter of father’s arm
(Hush, hush, the wind’s a charm).
And mother’s voice is singing.”

Her voice trailed off as he turned a corner and saw her. She looked scraped up and a nasty bruise was already forming on her cheek.

“Bél!”

“Nori!!” Bél called out in relief standing. He noted she was leaning heavily against the rock and gave a grimace of a smile.

“Are you alright?”

“Not really…I twisted my ankle when we were falling. Hurts to walk.” She replied with a huff. He glanced at her arm and saw she was holding a bloodstained knife.

“Where’d you get that?”

“I found the knife that belonged to the bandit. Seems he lost it on the fall down. I lost mine too, so I wanted to have something to protect myself.” She explained, handing the knife to him. He examined it. “Wonder where he went.” She commented absently.

“That doesn’t matter. You’re alive and that’s what counts. Your brothers would never forgive me if you were dead and I couldn’t find you.”

“It’s not like it was your fault.” Bél reminded him as he picked her up and situated her on his back. “The bandit tackled me and the rock gave out, it’s not like you could have stopped it. Besides, you tried to pull me up.”

“It doesn’t matter Bél. Us dwarves are thicker skinned and heavier boned.” Nori replied. “Even though you can take care of yourself, hits that would just leave a bruise on us could break something in you.”

“So?”

“So?” Nori repeated in amazement.

“I’m not made of glass you know. I’m going to have to fight occasionally, whether my brothers want me to or not. I will not be a damsel all the time.” She stated with a huff. Nori chuckled as he walked quickly down a ravine.

“Oh?”

“Mhm. It’s highly improper and rude.”

“I suppose that is true.” He conceded. “And it is quite clear that you can most certainly take care of yourself. That was some excellent blocking there, lass.”
She chuckled.

“It was wasn’t it?” She stated with a grin and he smiled slightly, silently jumping over another area of crumbling rock. “I must say, I think any other hobbit would faint at the idea of fighting someone twice our height.”

“They don’t know what they’re missing then.” Nori replied as he drew closer towards the entrance. And he could hear yelling.

Loud, loud VERY loud and desperate yelling, which turned joyous when they were spotted.

He glanced at Bél who was smiling tiredly, almost in exasperation.

They had made it.

Chapter End Notes

Welp I *FINALLY* got this chapter done!! I swear! Nori is about as elusive for me to write as he is at getting away with thieving xD

And I couldn't think of a way to incorporate his thieving for a scene with Bél, so I thought this was good. Showed the soft side of Nori.

Anyhoo that is an actual Norse lullaby I found so I thought it worked!
Ori wasn’t a dwarfling.

…Okay in all intents and purposes, yes he was just that, however he didn’t want to be treated like one. He was older now.

But apparently Dori didn’t see it like that.

He didn’t even understand why he had had to listen to a ten-minute lecture. He had gone over to the Durin household a dozen times. And he was just bringing Bél a book so she could have something to do since she was stuck at home with a badly sprained ankle!

But listen to one he did.

“Don’t talk to strangers, Ori. Don’t take anything that isn’t yours Ori.” He mimicked. “What am I, an infant?” He grumbled then sighed. Well it wasn’t all that surprising, he supposed. Dori had always been the ‘mother’ of the three brothers. It was just a part of his nature. Though it wasn’t any less annoying.

“ri…Ori? You in there?”

He jumped and looked up to see Bél leaning against the doorway, one ankle slightly raised a bemused expression on her face.

“O-oh right sorry. Here, it’s that book you wanted to read.”

“Oh thanks.” She replied, taking the book eagerly. “So…what’s on your mind?”

“What makes you say that?” Ori replied and Bél looked bemused.

“You were standing in front of the door for three minutes frowning. And it took you a minute to notice I was standing there.” She informed the redhead dwarf. “So? What’s wrong?”

“It’s Dori.”

“Ah, come in, come in.” She replied in a dramatic fashion, gesturing inside. “And let me hear your complaints.”

“It’s just…I love Dori, but he be so overbearing at times. I’m not invalid, I can take care of myself.” He complained and Bél watched him and then smiled slightly.

“I think that’s just an older sibling thing. Should have seen Fíli and Kíli after this. I’m actually relieved that Thorin took them with him to the blacksmith.” She replied with a snort.

“I know, but…I can’t tell him that it annoys me. I mean he’s been there since Amad died and all, but…”

“You’re allowed to be annoyed.” Bél replied. “But I’m not sure if not telling him is a good idea, really you should tell him. I mean if it bothers you wouldn’t that be better?”
“It would upset him so much.”

“Or it might not. It’s not like you’re saying you want him out of your life forever. Besides, the apprenticeship for being a page is going to take a lot of time for you. He can’t always be there to hold your hand.” Bél remarked, flipping through the beginning of the book. “He’s your big brother, not your mother.” She responded and he sighed.

“I suppose you’re right.” He muttered and she beamed.

“But of course Ori.” She stated with a grin. He chuckled, pushing his hair back. “Thanks for the book, I’ll be sure to bring it back once I’m done.”

“It’s never a problem. It’s kind of nice to have someone to talk to about the books other than Balin.”

“Why don’t you write some of your own? I’m sure it’d be nice.” She remarked and he flushed.

“Oh no, I couldn’t!”

“Why not?” Bél asked in confusion. “You’re apprenticing to be able to write.”

“To document not write my own works.”

“I think you should try it out.” She suggested, tapping the book. “If you want I can read the manuscript beforehand. You’re an excellent writer, Ori. I think it’s worth a shot.”

“I-I-I…” He kept sputtering, before standing quickly. “Got to go!”

She laughed and waved goodbye as he hurried out. “See ya Ori!”

He blushed the entire way home. When he spotted Ori, her comments about that surfaced again and he sighed and went to his eldest brother.

It seemed that yes, he would need a talk with Dori after all.

“Amad wants us to do what?!”

“Ask Bombur to make a roast I think. It’s Thorin’s birthday soon, Bél, come on.” Kíli remarked with a grin.

“It’s not my fault. He doesn’t really announce it, and you know that. Besides I just wanted to clarify what Bombur is making.” Bél remarked with a tsk, cuffing her brother in the back of his head. “Sides I plan on helping him cook.”

“Is that right?”

“Mhm.” Bél remarked. “It’s nice to learn how to cook some meals and teach some recipes.

“Ugh…it’s so boring though.” Kíli complained.

“Just because no one is bashing their heads in with cooking, doesn’t mean it’s not fun. Besides… who can say there hasn’t been any bashing heads.” Bél remarked with a grin.

“Since when did baking ever involve bashing someone in the head?”

“You clearly have never met people in a fierce argument of what type of spice would be used for
seasoning.” She replied with a grin. He rolled his eyes as they continued to walk towards Bombur’s house. They could hear children laughing as they drew closer and all of them braced as several dwarflings took notice of them and beamed happily.

“It’s Bél!!”

“Bél!!”

“Fee, we’re chopped liver to them.”

“That we are, little brother. That we are.” Fíli said with a sigh. Bél chuckled and then continued inside.

“Bombur?” She called out.

“Kitchen!”

“Of course.” She mumbled with a grin and headed towards the kitchen area, listening to the laughter of the dwarflings. It apparently was rare to have three dwarflings, a blessing of Mahal.

“Well there’s the wee lass!!”

“Bombur, I’m far from wee.” Bél remarked dryly and he chuckled loudly. “I’ll be turning 30 next year.”

“Yes, yes. But you’ll always be one of the wee lasses.”

“So Amad wanted to ask if you were willing to make one of your roasts for Thorin’s birthday.”

“Ah! I see!! Well I don’t mind…it will be an addition to the Durin’s day treats I’m making.”

She hummed as she went to where he was standing, watching him knead some dough.

“Rolls for Durin’s Day?”

“Aye.” Bombur remarked rolling it. Bél grinned and pulled her sleeves up as he gave her a piece to roll. She began to hum softly again, a simple song that hobbits sang that still stuck in her head. Bombur glanced at her as she began to make designs in the dough.

They had had a few adventurous hobbits roam close to the mountains in the years. If they had spotted her, clearly they didn’t recognize her. She didn’t seem to recognize them either, leading them to believe they weren’t hobbits of her family…or rather ones she didn’t want to be seen.

Still…

“Can I ask you something?”

“Yes?”

“Your 30th birthday, that’s when you’re considered an adult, correct?’’

“Hm? Well yes…in Hobbit years, I suppose.” She replied, frowning in thought. “But I’m not sure if Amad or my brothers would be willing for me to be considered an adult.” She added and Bombur chuckled.

“That is true.” He replied, glancing behind him to see Fíli and Kíli surrounded by his children, mock
fighting, before returning his gaze on her. “But it is considered a great celebration?”

“I suppose. Usually the coming of age party is when girls are presented to eligible bachelors.” She stated with a huff. “But I don’t think that will happen anytime soon.” Bombur smiled gently, watching as she looked back at her roll, her cheek puffing out as she thought.

“You never know lass, your One could be just around the corner.” He stated and she snorted.

“A dwarf who will have a Hobbit as his One. I don’t know if he would consider it a blessing or a curse.”

“Lass, you have proven yourself to be just as strong as a dwarrowdam in every occasion thrown at you.” Bombur refuted, looking at her.

“That won’t mean it won’t be strange for the dwarf trying to court me.”

“You never know lass. You never know.” Bombur remarked and she snorted, continuing to roll the dough into manageable rolls and then began to knead small designs into the bread. Durin’s Day as she had quickly found out when she had been first adopted was a particularly festive event for dwarves. When she had found that out, she was known to help Bombur with cooking. Partially it was because that wasn’t something one could completely mess up in setting up the festivities, another because cooking had always been a relaxing type of thing for her. If he remembered correctly, it reminded her of when she would bake with her mother.

He wondered how her family would react to her being raised by dwarves. Surely it would have been shocking for them, but from what she had told them, her mother would have been amused.

Then came the idea of Gandalf.

What if the grey wizard had stumbled upon her? Would he have taken her back to the hobbits, taken her with him, or allowed her to stay?

Glancing at where the two sons of Víli were…he highly doubted the wizard would have gotten her far without them attacking him.

“Kíli Durin, if you even try to grab a cookie, I am hitting you in the head with my bow.” Bél suddenly called out and Bombur glanced behind him to see the younger of the two trying to weasel a cookie, but had frozen. Bél turned to glare.

“But Bél!!” He whined as she stormed over and grabbed him by the ear. Bombur laughed and turned back around as he listened to her scolding.

No….she was just fine where she was.

Thorin awoke quickly and abruptly, a scream lodged in his throat. He panted hard, staring around. The smoke and the smell of burnt flesh slowly faded, replaced with sturdy stonewalls, his dresser, his blade. He was in his room.

He was silent and still for a few moments, waiting to see if he had yelled out loud. When Dís didn’t come rushing in, he breathed a sigh of relief before standing. He knew he needed to do something else at the moment than lie down and sleep. He wandered around slowly, making sure to be quiet around Dís’s door. It wouldn’t do him any good if she fussed over him after every nightmare. He rubbed his face, glancing out the window to see snow slowly falling. He also spotted a figure standing out on the balcony. He slowly pulled out a dagger out and went to the door. The balcony
was small, but still a perfect place for someone to sneak in.

He nudged the door opened and hurried out, dagger ready.

Bél looked at him in surprise and then her shoulders relaxed.

“Oh, I didn’t know you were awake.” She stated as his stance calmed.

“What are you doing out here?”

“Watching the first snow fall.” She repeated sheepishly. “I’ve been doing this every year, but normally no one is awake.”

“Every year?”

“It’s a way to greet my parents.” She replied gently, pushing a strand of curly hair back. He remained silent. “They died in the snow…and I met you all in the snow…so…I know it seems silly, but I feel like this is a way they tell me they’re watching over me.”

He was quiet, watching as she grew flustered with his silence.

“I know it seems silly!!” She reminded him and he shook his head.

“No. It’s not.”

She looked at him.

“In dwarven culture, we remembered the loved ones we lost in stone, carving their images into it. But so many died…we never had enough resources for that. But…Hobbits are different aren’t they?”

She chuckled, pulling the shawl tighter against her.

“We bury them into the ground during the spring on a bed of flowers. Depending on the person there would be a different meaning.” She explained but shrugged with a somber smile. “I wonder what flower they chose for my father. I mean my parents died in the snow…my mother vanished in a river. I can’t imagine what flower they would have chosen for him.”

“So the snow…”

“Normally we remember those who left us by planting the flower that we lay them in our gardens…so…since my parents died in the snow, I remember them on the first snow fall.” She explained.

“It’s a fine way to remember them.” He finally agreed and she smiled. In the lantern light she seemed vulnerable in many ways. A contrast to the image she showed in the daylight. She looked at him and smiled, before noting he was only in his sleepwear. She pulled off a scarf and grinned, wrapping it around his neck. He looked at her, curiously.

“Don’t need you getting a cold. Amad would be rather annoyed with that.”

“Don’t remind me.” He mumbled and she laughed.

It was a nice laugh.

He blinked in surprise at the thought. Why was he thinking about something like that? She was family and he had heard her laugh before this.
“Well…I better get inside. I don’t have the same type of skin you dwarves have and I’d rather not freeze.” She remarked with a smile. “Good night.”

“Good night.” He stated and she turned and hurried back inside, and he watched as her hair bounced slightly. He sighed, rubbing the back of his neck and stared out into the night.

What was happening to him?

Chapter End Notes

Just gonna place this here.

So in this chapter there is a bit of time jump from the Ori scene to Bombur and Thorin's scene. Why? Because I can
Gimli grinned as he dodged the blade, catching it with his axe. Bél jumped back twirling the blade in her hand.

“Nice dodge, Bél!”

“Thanks!”

“Not good enough though!” Gimli yelled swinging his axe at her. She jumped away, cartwheeling further before sliding a bit. She grinned, twirling her blade again as she jumped over the axe with gentle steps, shoving his helmet down over his eyes, cackling as she watched him wrench it off.

“You move like those tree-shaggers!”

“I’m just faster than you.” She sang with a laugh, jumping over him and pushing his helmet down. He wrenched it back up, dodging the blow. But another step and a dagger was placed at his throat.

“Cheater.” He grumbled, lowering his axe.

“Sore loser!” She laughed, panting slightly, moving away and sheathing her blade. She walked to the benches at the outer ring, sitting down and taking a sip out of her water-skin. Soon after Gimli joined her, sitting down on the ground next to her.

“Yer getting better at fighting. Still not as good as me though.”

“I just beat you.”

“Beginner’s luck.”

She chuckled again.

“Yer gonna be turning 30 soon.”

“Mhm.”

“Ain’t that the hobbits coming of age?”

“Mhm, though I doubt that would stop Fíli or Kíli from treating me like I’m younger than them.” She responded, taking another sip from the water sack. He chuckled, glancing at her.

“So…does that mean yer gonna wait till you’re of age for us dwarves before trying to find yer One?”

“Ha!!! Like a dwarf would want a hobbit for a wife, even if she was raised by other dwarves.” She asked, looking at Gimli, who shrugged.

“Stranger things have happened. ‘Sides, Mahal probably has something planned for you.” He responded and she rolled her eyes.

“Yeah, well if that’s the case, he better have a good reason.” She replied and Gimli laughed.
“Thorin…”

The called dwarf looked around in the darkness.

“Thorin, your One waits for you.”

“Who is this?” He bellowed, reaching for his blade, but found to his shock that it was not by his side. There was soft laughter, like stones tumbling down a mountainside. It was almost comforting.

“I am who I am.” The response came and he swallowed as voices echoed softly around him, repeating the phrase over and over.

“She waits for you to find her, Thorin. Your One.”

“And who is she?” He called out, looking around at the echoing voices. The laughter sounded again, soft and all knowing. “Answer me!”

The voice was quiet and the world was once again silent and dark.

Thorin awoke, sitting up in bed, staring at the opposite wall.

His One?

Clearly he was hoping for too much. He couldn’t have a One. How could he have earned something so sacred after all he had failed to do, all those he failed to save. Sighing and pushing his hair back, he flopped back onto the bed, staring at the ceiling as the light from the moon lit the room in its soft glow.

A One…

Such a dream could not be offered in such a manner.

He closed his eyes again, willing to fall asleep and be free of such childish dreams.

Music echoed in the air, mingling with warmth of laughter and the crackling fires adding to the delicious scent of both dwarven and hobbit dishes in the air. Ale was flowing happily and good cheer filled the air as Bél’s 30th birthday celebration continued. Thorin watched as the hobbit was dancing with his nephews, laughing merrily as the pair spun her around, their grins nearly identical. She let out a joyous squeal as Kili lifted her and spun around, laughing loudly.

“Honestly Kee!!” He heard her yelp and his youngest nephew merely grinned. He rolled his eyes, leaning against the wall.

“Coin for your thoughts?”

He glanced over at Dáin who had walked over to him, a curious look on the redhead’s face.

“Nothing much, just observing. I don’t dance.”

“Darn shame. Maybe we should find you a harp to play. Bél would certainly like it.”

Thorin cast a look at his cousin who shrugged. “Just a thought.”

“No.”
“Spoilsport.”
Thorin chuckled lowly.

“It’s interesting being here again.”

“Different from the Iron Hills?”

“Oh like you would not believe.” Dáin replied with a chuckle, glancing over at the dancing siblings. “Got to say, I’m glad that the lass did so well here. Sometimes it’s hard for people to get used to a new culture.”

“Hobbits are rather inventive on that topic of accepting cultures.” Thorin admitted and Dáin laughed.

“It’ll be interesting to see what lad winds up stealing her heart.”

“There’s no guarantee she will even desire a One, Cousin.” Thorin replied evenly, though strangely a jolt of jealousy had sliced into him, cutting deeper than any blade.

“True, but I haven’t heard of many hobbits not marrying.” Dáin replied, taking a sip of his ale while Thorin quietly conceded on that comment, though it unsettled him. Thinking about her marrying anyone was a strange notion. And she didn’t need to marry anyone, something hotly argued within him. He remained quiet, allowing Dáin time to go and get some food, and escaped into the cool night air. He stared at the stars, unsure as to why he felt such rage at Dáin’s suggestion of Bél marrying another dwarf. She had every right to do so. She was not an object for him to covet away. Barring that Dís, Kíli, and Fíli would kill him for trying that, or the fact those three alone would be a barrier against any possible partner.

And yet the jealousy grew at the idea.

“Thorin?”

He turned in surprise, to see Bél standing at the doorways entrance, her cheeks red and breathless as she smiled brightly at him.

“Bél.”

“What are you doing out here?” She asked, chuckling softly. “Music too loud?”

“No, just needed some air.”

“Ah I see, the smell of food and ale too much for the dwarf.” She teased and he rose a brow at her. She stuck her tongue out impishly, before glancing back at the cacophony of sounds behind her.

“You should head back, the party is for you, Lass.” Thorin commented and she chuckled.

“Are you going to come back?”

“In a little bit.”

“Promise?”

“My word is my honor, milady.” He replied and she laughed, covering her mouth.

“I suppose I’ll have to take you up on it. Never doubt a dwarf’s honor.” She finally replied with a coy smile that lit up her eyes. A strange tremor passed through Thorin, startling him for a moment,
though he showed no reaction. He stared at her as she hurried back to the music and warmth inside, he remaining out in the mountain air.

No…it wasn’t possible.

“She waits for you to find her, Thorin. Your One.”

He turned around and stared at the moon before shaking his head.

“Mahal, what is happening to me?”

Chapter End Notes

well...it's been quiet awhile hasn't it >.>;;; sorry.

With my final semester starting at the time, plus a writer's block...it was not intended XD

Even this chapter was harder to complete....

*crickets chirp*

Hope you enjoy it!!
“Bél…”

She turned towards the voice, blinking in confusion. There was a light in the distance, her name being whispered over and over again.

“Bél…Bél…”

“Who is this?” She called out.

“Your One is looking for you...he is searching for you.”

“My...my One?” Bél gasped in shock. That couldn’t be possible. She didn’t...She couldn’t-

“Bél!!”

The hobbit awoke with a gasp sitting up, and rubbing her head.

What a strange dream.

“Bél? Are you awake?”

“Yes Amad! Coming!” She called out and hurried out of bed, pulling on her clothes and shoes. Her One? Impossible. It was totally impossible.

Ludicrous.

“Bél, could you be a dear and bring your brothers and Thorin lunch?” Dis asked as Bél walked down the stairs, tying her hair back. “They forgot it when they went to forge.”

“Of course Amad.” She said with a smile and Dis smiled in return. She took the basket and left the house, humming softly. The streets were lively today it seemed, the dwarves soaking in the sun before the chill of the mountains returned. She hummed softly as she hurried to the forge, spotting the wisps of smoke coming from the chimney. She went inside, the heat of forge stifling. But it was something she was used to visiting at this point, and sighing she walked further in.

“Kíli! Fíli! Thorin, I’ve brought some lunch!” She called out and she heard footsteps and Kíli whooping with glee.

“Food!!”

“Honestly, are we positive you’re not the hobbit?” Bél remarked dryly as she held out the basket and the dwarrow took it eagerly.

“We haven’t eaten since breakfast,” Kíli pouted, “and working in the forge tend to gets me extra hungry.”

“I guess that’s why Amad packed extra then.” Bél replied with a smirk and Kíli grinned, before taking a bite of a sandwich. She rolled her eyes, before glancing over as more footsteps sounded and Thorin walked out of the back of the forge.
She felt her cheeks heat up and she quickly zoned back into Kíli and Fíli’s conversation, trying to ignore Thorin.

It was just because she wasn’t used to seeing them shirtless. No that wasn’t accurate. Fíli and Kíli were respectively in a state of partial dress as well and she wasn’t flushing because of them. She cleared her throat, before shaking her head, unsure and rather unwilling as to figure out why she was so bothered by it.

“So what are you making?” She finally asked and Kíli snorted.

“Arrowheads, swords. You know the usual.” He replied, taking a bite out of his sandwich. She rolled her eyes, ignoring the sudden jump of her heart as Thorin snatched a sandwich as well, beginning to eat it. He glanced at her, before looking away as well. She prayed he wasn’t upset with her. She was saved from possible further embarrassment as a dwarf ran in, huffing and puffing loudly.

“Thorin, there’s a wizard here!”

“A wizard?” Thorin asked, brow raised in confusion.

“Aye!”

Bél frowned, looking at her brothers in confusion.

“Kíli. Fíli. Get Bél back to your mother.”

“Yes, Uncle.”

“I’m not defenseless, you know.” She snapped and Thorin looked at her. Almost strangely, before looking away.

“Your mother would have my hide if any of you were harmed.”

“It’s a wizard. Not an orc.” Kíli replied.

“He has a point, Uncle.” Fíli added, and the dark haired dwarf glared angrily, at them.

“So help me…”

“Thorin…we’ll go.” Bél replied and Thorin looked at her with a glare, which she didn’t back down from.

“He’s a wizard.”

“Not all wizards are good, Bél.”

“I know…but it’s better to have back up rather than going alone.” She replied, and inwardly he agreed, though he wasn’t happy about it.

“Fine. But the moment I sense trouble, you three go for help. No questions.”

“But…”

“No questions.” He said again, and finally the three complied and after pulling their shirts back on,
went down the path towards their home. They could hear Dís talking to someone but it was only when they turned into the kitchen did Bél pause in surprise at the voice and the wizard stared at her as though he had seen a ghost.

“Gandalf?”

“Billanna? It...cannot be…” The wizard said, almost stunned. “Is it really you? I was told…”

“I survived, Gandalf.” Bél replied softly with a smile. “Mother protected me. And the Durin’s saved me from orcs.”

“Why was I not informed?”

“Finding you would have been incredibly difficult, and I was safe here.” Bél replied slowly. Gandalf took a sip of tea, contemplative.

“Tell me what has happened since that day, Billanna, if you would.”

“Her name is Bél.” Kíli said, standing in front of Bél who sighed in exasperation. “I don’t know how you know my sister, but-”

“I know your sister because I knew her mother.” Gandalf replied, almost in good humor. “I am Gandalf. Gandalf the Grey.”

Everyone blinked and Gandalf smiled.

“I think some stories are in need to be told.” The aged wizard muttered and Bél slowly nodded.

---

It had been an interesting night, Bél concluded as she changed into her nightgown. Gandalf had relayed that when he had come to visit Hobbiton, he had been informed of her parent’s death and her believed passing, that the only remains that were found was of Bungo, and Belladonna’s blade. And as had been hypothesized, while there had been a small search party, they had been presumed dead. Bungo had apparently willed Bag End to Gorbadoc Brandybuck, much to Bél’s relief, as she couldn’t imagine her family home being given to The Sackvilles. In turn, Bél had told Gandalf what had happened the day her parents were killed, how the orcs had kept her for whatever purpose that they wanted her for, up to the point where the dwarves had found her. He was quiet as she told her tale, quiet and seeming to be lost in thought.

“It is a relief to know you survived, Billanna…”

“Bél …” She had interrupted softly and Gandalf let out a chuckle before nodding.

“Fully accepted your here, have you not?”

Bél smiled softly, pushing her hair back and standing up.

“So...you knew Gandalf the Grey?”

She jumped a bit, before looking to her left and saw Fíli and Kíli standing there, almost sheepishly.

"You two gave me a fright!” She teased, but the smile slid off of her face when they looked at her glumly. “What? What is it?”

Fíli and Kíli looked at her and then at one another, as though goading before Kíli sighed.
“We never asked you when you got older…” Kíli muttered, looking away guiltily. “I mean…if you wanted to go back to Hobbiton, we-”

There was a yelp as Bél cuffed the both of them in the back of their heads.

“You morons, do you really think I’d be comfortable living in Hobbiton at this point?” She asked as both dwarfs looked at her, and she placed her hands on her hips. “I’ve spent far too long with you lot to ever feel comfortable in the vast peace and quiet of Hobbiton, even if I do miss it occasionally.” She said with a smile on her face. “He did ask if I wanted to go along with him, but I politely declined. I’m your little sister. Sadly, you are stuck with me.” She said with a huff and a smirk. Both dwarfs looked at one another and grinned.

“Why did you come here Gandalf?”

“I was friends with your father, and had hoped…”

Dís looked at Thorin, watched as his back straightened and stiffened.

“He vanished after the battle…many said he lost his mind. No one has seen him since.”

Gandalf was quiet for a moment, smoking his pipe has he stewed over that information.

“I see…” He finally muttered, before looking towards the stairwell. “In any case, I am glad to have traveled this way, and finding the child of another friend…” He trailed off. “I had asked her on whether she would prefer to travel with me…”

“You-”

“However, she earnestly told me she was perfectly content here.” Gandalf continued, taking a long drag of his pipe again. “And I will not disrupt her life once again.”

Good, Thorin thought angrily. Good that she had denied going with the wizard. His One did not need to be traversing the Middle Earth with some wi-  

Wait...what?

He blinked several times, rewinding the thought in his head over and over again. His One. His One. His One...was Bél ??

His throat went dry, hands grew clammy, because sweet Eru, there was no way...no way that what he just thought could be true.

He glanced back at the door, before walking briskly down the stairs, and out the door, ignoring his sister and Dwalin.

Mahal, he needed a drink.

“Thorin?” Dís called out confused, only to hear the door close quickly. Dwalin frowned.

“I’ll go and join him...wherever he’s going.” Dwalin muttered and Gandalf quietly stared at where Thorin had been, a curious expression on his face.

The pub was filled and teeming with energy and jovial attitudes, laughter echoing through the hall.
However, it seemed the joviality did not quite reach one dwarf, who sat at a table alone, staring at his barely touched drink.

“Alright, care to tell me what’s wrong with you?” Dwalin asked as he sat down next to Thorin, who was staring at his mug.

“Nothing.”

“Right, and Dís is a lass that will skip merrily into a dress shop.” Dwalin retorted as Thorin threw a glare. “I’m not blind, Thorin. You seemed stunned when you left.”

“I...I’m not sure. It’s not possible to even think Bél is my One.” he finally remarked. There was silence between the pair as the sounds of the tavern filled the air.

“Well...that would make for an awkward dinner conversation.”

“Sweet Mahal, you don’t say?” Thorin snapped, looking at his brother-in-arms.

“Is she?”

“I don’t know.” He muttered.

“And if she is? What are you going to do about it though? You can’t avoid it forever.”

Thorin sighed, looking down.

“I don’t know Dwalin. I don’t know.”

Chapter End Notes

Well hello everyone *crickets chirping*. So sorry for a long wait. Had two things working against me...one was a bit of an art block, as I have certain idea for points in my story and then have to fill in the rest as it progresses XD, two was I had surgery in November and was working through that. I'm good now, so no worries!!

So some things are moving along in this. Now instinct took over Thorin briefly, but that doesn't mean he's going to accept it full out. And Bél seems to be just as confused.
Thorin inhaled slowly, filling his lungs with the brisk autumn air, glancing back at the caravan that was situated in the field below. It wasn’t smithing, but it would bring enough coin for the family so he would deal with it. He glanced back as a portly man sauntered over to him.

“Ser...Oakenshield was it?” The man huffed.

“Aye.” Thorin responded, a brow rising.

“Of course...I’d like to thank you for taking this task. We’ve had issues in the past of raiders and thieves.”

Thorin kept quiet as the man ranted and raved about those who would threaten to steal from the caravan. Truthfully he didn’t understand why anyone would find thread and cloth a great virtue to steal, but he kept his opinions quiet. He glanced to where the rest of his kin was, spotting Bél immediately as she conversed with Fíli and Kíli.

“I...I’m not sure. It’s not possible to even think Bél is my One.”

“Well...that would make for an awkward dinner conversation.”

“Sweet Mahal, you don’t say?”

“Is she?”

“I don’t know.”

“What are you going to do about it though? You can’t avoid it forever.”

“I don’t know Dwalin. I don’t know.”

He sighed, pinching the bridge of his nose. It wasn’t possible. It wasn’t humanly possible for her to be his One. Even if she was...should he even act on it. Yes, she was kin to Dís’s family...and though it wasn’t unheard of adopted dwarrow to marry to another member of that kin after discovering their One. Not everyone that was kin was blood related...but Bél...

Bél...

"Mesem"

His thoughts were broken when he saw that the mortal man did as well, frowning.

“A hobbit lass?” The human asked, looking at Bél as she counted her arrows in her quiver.

“Yes?” Thorin replied, looking at his employer suspiciously. “Is that going to be a problem?”

“Well...no, but aren’t Hobbits known for being...well...non-confrontational. Wouldn’t she just slow you down?”

“Bél is part of my kin, Ser.” Thorin responded coolly. “Insulting her, is insulting the rest of us.” He
warned and the man’s face turned an interesting shade of red.

“Oh...apologies.”

“We will transport you and your caravan, Ser.” Thorin replied and bowed slightly. “Now I must converse with my kin.”

“Ah...yes. Of course.”

Thorin walked over to where the rest of his kin was, frowning.

“What’s wrong Uncle?” Kíli asked and Thorin sighed.

“Nothing. For this trip, I want you three to stick together in the center. Dwalin you and I will take the front. Nori, Bofur, you’ll take the back.”

“Aye.”

Bél glanced at Thorin, who was staring back at the men of the caravan.

“Is everything alright?”

“Yes...it’s just going to be a long mission to the Port of Forlond.”

Bél stared at him before shrugging.

How bad could it be?

Apparently it could be rather bad. Horrid, actually.

Thorin’s reasoning for being annoyed with the men quickly became apparent. If it wasn’t the racism directed at the dwarves, it was the misogyny that Bél was facing.

The men simply couldn’t believe that a woman could defend herself, could fight rather efficiently with a bow and blade.

It was simply unheard of for them.

“I honestly don’t understand how they shouldn’t expect to be attacked.” Dwalin groused as they stood guard late one night. Bél glanced at him.

“If just the men are expected to fight, and women to cook and sew clothing, what happens if the men are injured? The lasses wouldn’t be able to defend themselves.”

Bél snorted in agreement, taking a sip of her tea.

Dwalin opened his mouth to complain some more, when suddenly he went quiet, hand on his axe.

Bél could understand why.

It had grown too quiet. The insects, the snores, everything. It was as though the world had frozen.

And the air had grown thick.

Bél stood, withdrawing her bow and notching an arrow to it. She was silent, eyes scanning the darkened woods. Suddenly she aimed and fired.
A scream echoed from the trees, before being drowned out by furious yelling.

And they were upon them.

Dwalin swung his axe, hitting a bandit square in the chest. In the distance, she could hear Thorin and the others awakening, but she didn’t pause, dodging a man with a blade, smashing her bow into his arm, swinging around, impaling him with an arrow, rushing around his body, hearing only the faint gurgling as she raced to cover Dwalin’s back. She heard an arrow whiz and a thud filled the air and she chanced a glance over her shoulder to see another bandit being felled by Kíli’s arrow.

“Damn, bitch!!”

She dodged a blade, quickly withdrawing hers to block another swing, parrying the third swing, shoving the man backwards, swinging her blade up. The metallic echo of the two blades echoed amongst the chaos and Bél gritted her teeth, rushing after the bandit, ignoring the shouts of her kin.

She stumbled into a clearing, empty.

“Where in Mahal did-”

She saw a shadow behind her, and ducked to escape.

But she wasn’t quick enough and her upper back burned for a moment as she somersaulted to get away. She looked over her shoulder as the man glared at her with a dangerous sheen covering his eyes,

“You...you killed my brother.”

Bél remained silent, dodging another swing of the blade, blocking it and shoving it backwards. The man cursed and smashed his foot into her gut. She gasped and rolled on the ground, trying to catch her breath.

“I’m going to run my blade down your throat, you little-”

A blur jumped over her, and the man screamed. Then the scream was changed into a gurgle. She scrambled up and turn around.

And it was as though her legs and arms had suddenly become stone as she stared at the large warg currently feasting on the unlucky bandit. Run...she needed to run, but that thought was stuck, unable to get a command to her legs.

The warg jerked upwards, the man’s intestine stretching up in its jaw, snapping in half at a hard tug. It looked up and at her, blood dripping from its muzzle.

And growled.

And suddenly she was just a hobbit from Hobbiton watching her father be mauled by the creatures, watching her mother disappear into the frozen river.

And she couldn’t move.

The warg stalked forward, and still, she couldn’t move.

It lunged.

An axe smashed into its side, pushing the warg’s momentum to the side, barely missing Bél. She
looked to her right and saw Thorin had barely stopped running from tossing his blade forward, withdrawing his axe from his back as the warg spun to face him, only to be met with an axe to the face. It yowled loudly.

“Bél!!”

She still didn’t move.

“BÉL!!”

And suddenly she was as she was shaken violently back and forth and she blinked several times. Thorin’s face was now the only thing in her sights.

“Thorin?” She muttered in confusion as he spun around and blocked an attack from the now injured warg, grunting in exertion.

“Kendar!”

Bél’s heart skipped a beat as her head ached. Kendar? Who in Eru was Kendar?! Who-

“Nun’anu’!!!”

She turned around to see Fíli and Kíli, followed by the others.

“Fíli! Kíli! Get Bél back to the campgrounds.”

“Thorin-”

“No arguments, Bél!” Thorin snapped and the two brothers, practically picking her up and running back towards the camp. The wargs howl echoed through the trees, before being strangely cut off as they reached the campgrounds, the men of the caravan surrounding the wagons, while the women hid, whispering and whimpering.

“Is everything alright?” One man gruffly asked.

“We’ve taken care of the bandits.” Fíli responded and while he began to relay the information of the attackers, Kíli walked Bél over to their tents, spinning her around to see if there were any wounds.

“Are you alright?”

“I’m fine.” She assured the dark-haired dwarf with a smile. “Just a little stunned, and a bruised ego.”

“Yeah. It’s one crazy party.”

“Oh please...it’s nothing like Dori’s birthday party two years ago.” Bél replied and Kíli shuddered for a moment, remembering that particular party. The trio looked up as the older dwarves came back, each looking slightly disheveled but no worse for wear.

“The warg is gone.” Thorin responded, spitting on the ground.

“What is a warg doing so far here?” Dwalin muttered as humans began to chitter nervously around them.

“From the way it looked, it doesn’t have a master.” Nori replied, and the relief was widespread. “It was starved, and probably desperate for food. It’s probably a good thing the bandits did attack. We
wouldn’t have sensed the warg if the bandits hadn’t become its meal.”

“Aye.” Bofur replied. Thorin was silent, as he glanced at Bél who was watching the group, rubbing her shoulder lightly as though to ease the ache from her back.

Stupid...absolutely stupid.

She had frozen like an infant over a blasted warg.

Cursing herself she peeled her tunic off and worked her small cloth off, wincing at the slight ache on her shoulders, contemplating how she was going to reach the wound, when she heard footsteps. Turning around, her face turned burgundy as she saw Thorin walk around the large oak tree.

“Thorin!!” Bél squeaked, covering her chest as she stared at the dwarf, who was frowning, but not one of embarrassment, or even disappointment. It was one of...concern?

“You’re injured.”

“I’ll be fine. It’s just a scratch.” She murmured softly, her cheeks burning. Soon it felt as though her face was melting as callused fingers glanced over the back wound. She swallowed and steeled herself.

“See? Perfectly fine.”

“I’ll get some ointment.”

“Oh don’t do that. It’s—”

“It may become infected.” Thorin responded. “And if you get sick, granting that Fíli and Kíli don’t kill me first, Dís certainly will.”

She huffed, before sitting down on the rock, back facing him as she heard him rifling through a bag.

“...Did you come prepared?”

“Perhaps. You were hiding it admirably, but were rather stiff when you walked out.”

She huffed lightly, rolling her shoulders and hissing at the slight burn that coursed through her muscles, before hearing him walk back over.

“Adrenaline can only hide the pain for so long. You could have told us.”

“Fíli and Kíli would jump down my throat with worry. I love them, don’t get me wrong...but it really is just a scratch, and—”

She hissed again as he slathered a cool ointment across the wound, dropping her head forward as she bit her lip to stop the cry that begged to leave.

“Just a scratch?”

“Oh enough.” She grumbled and heard a snort. They were silent for a few moments, lit only by the torchlight.

“I’m sorry…”
“For what?”

“Freezing when that warg attacked me.” She clarified softly. “You almost died because I froze. It’s...it’s been the first time since my parents were killed that I’ve seen a warg. It just...”

“Brought up bad memories.” Thorin finished, continuing to slather the ointment on. She winced, but it was not of the ointment this time.

“You must think I’m being silly.”

“Far from it.” Thorin responded and she looked over her shoulder at him as he placed gauze on her back. “It was a traumatic event, Bél...something not even our kin can completely heal. It’s a healed scar, but sometimes it can be prodded.” He explained, looking up at her. She felt her cheeks flush and she looked away.

“You’re strong Bél, do not ever see yourself as any different.” He said, standing up. She nodded slightly, though unsure if he saw it as his footsteps gradually disappeared. Her heart skipped a beat and she shook her head. She’d have to watch the wound on her back. Maybe something was on that blade.

Why else would her heart begin to ache?

"Kendar..."

Chapter End Notes

Nun’anu’=tiny sister
The Dark of the Night

Chapter Notes

Word of warning. It gets slightly dark in this chapter. NOTHING horrible. Just dark.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

If anyone had told a young Billanna of Hobbiton that at thirty-three, she’d be an adopted kin member
of a dwarrow family, and hadn’t stepped into the Shire in more than a decade...she honestly would
have laughed. She would have suggested that person to leave if they had also said that she would be
hunting for game bigger than trout from the Brandywine.

And yet here she was, silently stalking after another rabbit careful to mind sticks and dried leaves.

And she was alone, as Kíli and Fíli had gotten into trouble for another prank.

Honestly, she sometimes preferred being alone.

Everything became a competition between her, Kíli, and Fíli. Even if she was practically raised by
dwarfs...she was a hobbit. Carrying a deer was basically impossible for her, so she always lost.

And Thorin…

She slowed for a moment, staring at the knot of the tree in front of her, feeling her face burn.

She didn’t really know what to think about him.

The last three years had become almost awkward between the two of them. Clearly he wanted to tell
her something, but always held back, ignoring her question if something was the matter. And that did
little to answer her own heart skipping, the name Kendar whispering, almost tauntingly, in the back
of her mind whenever she glanced at his back. Sighing to herself and rubbing her face to rid of the
soft burning, she continued on her way, hopping over stones lightly.

She paused however when that foreboding feeling returned. It felt the same as whenever something
was coming. Something bad.

She spun around, barely dodging an arrow whizzing by slicing her arm, scrambling backwards as tall
forms with large blades appeared from the brush.

“Ye idiot! No killing!” A voice rang out from one and she spun around, dodging a blade that sliced
through the air, hissing as it clipped her forehead. She kept spinning around, trying to find an
opening while wiping the blood from her eye, choking as one grabbed a handful of hair and her
necklace, giving it a hard yank. Screaming, she pulled back and the man let go. She felt the necklace
give, apparently torn from the fight. She struggled to regain her breath, her vision growing fuzzy.
She cursed. It seemed that the arrow hadn’t been an attempt to kill her. It had been laced with poison.

She was outnumbered, surrounded, under a surprise attack, and now struggling against a poison’s
effects.

She blocked another blade, flinching at the sheer force of the blow. Just one. She just needed to push
one out of the circle and she could escape and at least find a place to hide as the poison worked
through her system.
Her vision grew blurrier and she stumbled, barely blocking another blow from a club. A shadow fell over her and she turned, her reflexes slowed.

All she saw was the split second dark shadow of the hilt of a blade coming down, before stinging pain numbed the rest of her body and she fell forward into the mud, entering the darkness as she fell forward and down into its welcoming embrace.

Thorin paused at the sudden bout of queasiness passed through him quickly.

Strange.

“Uncle, have you seen Bél?”

Thorin glanced up from the anvil, frowning at his nephew.

“She was going out for a hunt, Kíli.”

“But that’s been hours.” Kíli replied uneasily, glancing out towards the forest line.

“It might not be going well, Kíli.”

“Maybe…but we’ve been feeling odd…like something is wrong.” Kíli said.

“We?”

“Fee and I. Something’s wrong Uncle, we can sense it. We’re going out with Gimli to go search since you haven’t seen her.”

“Kíli–”

“Please, Uncle?” Kíli asked in desperation. Thorin frowned, staring at his nephew, and slowly, that feeling seemed to come back full strength.

Warning him.

He had only felt like that when…

“Give me a moment to get Dwalin. We’ll join you.” Thorin said, standing, putting his tools down.

“Really?”

“Aye.”

“Alright, we’ll meet you at the village’s exit.” Kíli replied quickly, turning around, and hurrying towards the house again. Thorin watched his nephew go, unsure if something was wrong…and how much danger they were going to be in.

His answers were unfortunately not answered even as they started their search, and dusk began to set in.

“She should have come back by now.”

“Maybe she’s at home…and she just…actually got into a hunting mood and was late?”

“Fee, this is Bél.” Thorin heard Kíli remark dryly. “Disregarding the fact she can only carry a few rabbits, squirrels, or birds at most and that means that there’s no way she could carry a deer or
anything bigger, she only hunts till the beginning of sundown. And she’s never late. Never.”

The older brother finally conceded agreement as they continued to look through the forest. Gimli was nearby, though a bit slower. Likely because the Sons of Durin were her close kin and though hiding it well, were slowly growing more and more worried about her absence.

“Where is your One, Thorin?” A voice taunted and Thorin shook his head. No. She couldn’t be his One…she’d never accept it.

“Fíli, Kíli…that necklace Bél always wears. What does it look like?” Gimli suddenly called out. Thorin glanced at his nephews who had both looked up, panic flooding their features, and they hurried over, crowding around their friend. And just the look on their faces, the color leeching out of their cheeks, was an answer to Thorin, who walked over to them with Dwalin, lifting up the lantern to see the necklace.

It was hers, no doubt about it. But that wasn’t what sent a chill through Thorin’s spine.

It was the leather that held the jewel at the end that caused ice to settle in Thorin’s stomach and flood his veins. The knot hadn’t come loose, nor had the leather merely broken in one of the few spots that looked worn.

It had been torn off.

The leather was sticking out in awkward angles right under where the knot, which normally held the necklace tied, sat and some of the leather was edged with drying blood.

“Bél…BÉL!!” Kíli suddenly cried out standing up, looking around frantically, Fíli not far behind in their now desperate search for their sister. Dwalin lifted the lantern to look around. Thorin slowly tore his gaze from the necklace and observed the ground. His brow furrowed and he shoved his lantern down, as though thinking his eyes were seeing things.

“Maker’s above. Those are Bél’s!” Gimli bellowed pointing at the footprints. No doubt about it, the size was small and the impression light, as she was whenever she hunted. But there were other steps, ones that weren’t theirs and certainly not an animal’s print.

Man.

His stomach gave an unusual turn as he spotted the prints of Bél twisting around, several of them smothered by the man’s footprint. Then Bél’s footprints vanished and were replaced by drag marks. Bél had been attacked and if the imprints were a clue, stolen.

“No…” Kíli whispered, as though hoping that this was some form of a cruel, cruel prank. That something or someone would tell him that this was a joke.

But nothing answered him.

Nothing could.

Slowly she awoke to the familiar chill of night, a crackling fire echoing in the ache of her mind. Sluggishly she opened her eyes, expecting her room, Kíli and Fíli plotting some type of prank. Instead she awoke to a campground filled with men, all disgusting and dirty, each one worse than the previous one. Several curses ran through her head, and she closed her eyes quickly to appear to still be out as one glanced her direction.
Too late it seemed as she heard one of the men snort.

“Looks like our guest finally woke up from ‘er beauty sleep.”

She swallowed heavily, as footsteps reverberated in the earth around her and she finally opened her eyes, glaring defiantly at the men above her.

“Such an ugly s’pression. Keep tha’ up an’ it’s gonna be st-”

She swung her leg out, catching the one closest to her legs off guard. She scrambled up, dashing towards the opening, only to yelp as her hair was violently tugged back and she was pulled back into the group.

“Stupid brat!” One man hissed and before she could react, a swift jab into the gut left her gasping and the world spinning. They lifted her head and her vision spun.

“See what you get girlie? Don’t play fair, we don’t-”

Another yelped as she bit down on his thumb, apparently slow to learn to keep out of reach as possible from her.

“You-”

“Don’t hurt her too much boys.” A voice called out and every man seemed to freeze, even the one about to smack her. “She’s going to be a pretty penny if her face isn’t ruined.”

“Right Boss.”

“And you are?” She managed, staring at the man as he smirked.

“They call me Samwyck. But I have to say…” the man said, meandering towards the group with a casualness that made Bél’s stomach turn, “I’m far more interested in you than me...I’ve never seen a hobbit this far west. I daresay I thought Hobbits were just a myth.”

“Then how do you know I’m one?”

“The feet are a good indication. Besides, I’ve been around enough of those disgusting dwarves to know you’re not one of them. Too short to be a human, and far too pretty to be an orc.” He commented, lifting her chin with a finger. She snarled, jerking her face out of his touch.

“Such a pretty face. Marred by that ugly expression. Maybe we should pretty that up?”

Her response was a swift kick into the man’s gut, and he stumbled back. However, he merely grinned, and a smack echoed in the campground. She shook her head dazed, blinking as he tugged at the braid that held Kíli, Fíli, and Dís’s beads.

“These are dwarven.”

“What of it?!”

“Now what is a pretty little hobbit doing in a den of hairy, dimwitted dwarves?” He asked, tugging the braid a bit and she winced as he sniffed it.

“I see….You reek of dwarf, Princess.” He said, nosing aside a strand of sweat damp hair. “Whom have you been rolling around with lately?”
She kicked with both feet this time and he fell backwards.

And she was dropped, falling to the ground with a thump. She grunted and scrambled up, pushing the braid back, anger at that being touched by this filthy person.

“I’m afraid, you’re not my type.” She spat, trying to sound braver than she felt.

“Ah but you’re more my type.” Samwyck purred grabbing her wrist again, and pulling her to him. Her limbs unsteady from the lack of use through the days before, followed the pull and cried out as he pinched skin. “I’m certain your dwarrow lover agreed.”

For some reason Thorin flashed into her mind, but she shook it out of her thoughts. Not right then.

“They’re my kin, not my lovers!! And they will kill you!” She growled out, trying to ignore the group tightening around her. “If I don’t do it first.” She hissed out.

The men laughed.

“Kill us? How is a little runt like you going to kill all of us. Unarmed...alone.” One man cooed, jeers now filling the grounds.

“How about a wager then, Princess?” Samwyck suggested with a sneer. “You beat me, we’ll let you go. I beat you, you get to come with us. I’m sure someone in Rohan would want a little specimen like you. If you live that long that is.”

“I’d sooner die than go anywhere with you.” She snarled.

“That could be arranged.” He hummed and his men jeered. She eyed Samwyck warily, going into the position Dwalin, Thorin, and her brothers had shown her: both her fists raised up with her knees bent and her feet apart. Samwyck watched her in amusement, and ugly grin warping his mouth and he bent mockingly forward, seeming to suggest the first punch for her. She realized that she was entertaining him, giving him and his men a laugh.

It pissed her off.

She lunged forward. Her right wrist rotated as it flew, smashing head-on into the grin. He hadn’t even had time to see her move. Samwyck stumbled backward into the wall of men, slapping on hand to his mouth to cover a split lip and two broken teeth as she shook her hand to relieve the stinging pain. The laughter stopped in an instant as blood leaked from between his fingers to drip on the forest floor. He gaped at her, eyes wide in shock and anger. Apparently he hadn’t been expecting her to actually know how to fight.

Clearly and despite his boasting, he had never actually been up against a dwarf.

“You crazy bitch!” Samwyck spat, spraying a mixture of saliva and blood across the wood. Bél offered no response, just staring at him.

He wiped his stained hand on his trousers before starting forward his hands curling into fists. He looked like a deranged boxer, eyes barely focused and blazing with fury. She had finally fazed him and anger was getting in the way of his focus. That was good for her.

She dodged him on the right. “What’s wrong?” she asked, lunging to the left just in time to move away from a next punch. “I thought this was your idea of fun.”

“I’ll deal with you harshly for this when I’m done-” he started to say, but the rest of the threat came
out as a grunt as she slammed her foot into his crotch. Samwyck bent over, clutching himself as he turned half away. Rotating her hips, she whipped her right leg around, kicking him in the face, being careful to use the inside of her foot to protect her toes. The awkward angle blunted her kick, but it still did the trick. He fell backwards with what looked like a broken nose. She couldn’t tell as he was covering her face. She honestly didn’t really care as she dashed through an opening of stunned humans, running full speed out of the camp.

That infuriated him even more.

“GET HER!”

She had barely made it into the shadows when she heard the cacophony of the bandits rushing after her, some apparently grabbing their weapons. Inwardly she cursed. Her dagger, her bow and arrows...all were gone. She was weaponless, exhausted, and still dizzy while the men were relatively in good health, some armed, and a good several feet taller than her.

She was stuck between two hard places.

Diving behind a bush, she scrambled to hide behind a tree and keep her breathing quiet as footsteps raced past her. She remained as still as possible, straining to hear anything over her heart. Silence seemed to answer her and she stood, slowly peeking out. She needed to find a way to get home. They couldn’t have gotten too far from Ered Luin. She just needed to find a landmark or something and she’d be-

A hand shot out of the shadows and grabbed a fistful of her hair, twisting it around in its palm and yanked her back, throwing her to the forest floor, slamming her left side onto the ground and she screamed. The scream only lasted a few seconds as the hand wrapped around her neck tightly. She choked violently, digging her nails into his knuckle, kicking to try and get him off, which proved to be in vain. Samwyck’s bleeding face appeared over her, ghostly and eerie in the illumination of the moon and much more frightening as he leered at her, dripping blood on her face as he looked at her wide eyes, listened to her choking sounds, drawing his right arm back before slamming it into her cheek.

Pain erupted in her face, as light exploded in her eyes. She opened her jaw and closed it to make sure it wasn’t broken. It wasn’t, and her face was still intact but by Aule, did it ache.

“Oh so tough now, are you hobbit?”

“Rukhsul menu!!” She wheezed, choking as his grip tightened on her throat

“I’ve had just about enough of your mouth.” He said. She glared angrily.

“Funny, I thought it would be my fists.”

“Don’t flatter yourself, Princess.” He spat, tearing her under-bust open and pulling the shirt up a bit. “Compared to my father, you hit like a toddler.” He growled out.

“Not bad for a she-hobbit though.” She stated, trying to drag his hand off of her throat, ignoring the pain as he squeezed again.

He glared at her. “I’m done playing. You’re risking your life every time you open your mouth. I can live without some extra pocket change.”

“I wasn’t raised to hold my tongue, you beardless daft! You weren’t either! I’m surprised you stayed. Wouldn’t you rather go and lick your wounds?” She asked as he pushed the bodice farther up. Her
cheeks warmed further in rage and humiliation as she swallowed. “Maybe make something to soothe that kick to your groin?”

“I’d rather make you pay for my nose.” He growled out.

She swallowed thickly. “Don’t forget about your teeth.” She hissed out.

Samwyck’s eyes narrowed and he straightened, running his tongue over newly jagged teeth. His face turned purple with rage. He apparently hadn’t even noticed them. Before she could brace herself, he punched her again, on the same side of her face.

“That...That was for my teeth.”

Tears blurred her vision, and fell when she blinked. Her vision darkened, and she warred with consciousness as desperation kicking in and she flung one hand out, searching for something to grab onto, finding a rock and swung it back, hitting him in the face again. He let her go for an instant, but grabbed and spun her around as she tried to stand, twisting her arm behind her back and slammed her onto the ground. She sucked in a short breath as Samwyck pulled up on her elbow and pain exploded in her shoulder. He shoved her face-first into the dirt. Aiming blind she kicked backward, her heel connecting with his shin. Samwyck cursed and yanked her arm up farther. Fresh pain ripped through her shoulder and she sobbed in agony. He seemed to enjoy that as she dimly heard a chuckle.

Panic took over.

She just wanted her brothers.

“FÍLI!!! KÍLI!!!” She screamed, startling the man above her. “Fí-mph!”

“Now, who would those two be?” Samwyck asked above her, pressing her face into the dirt. “Your lovers? Didn’t your mother teach you to not visit so many men? It can be seen as-”

Whatever his taunt was going to be, it was cut off as seconds later, two pairs of hands grabbed Samwyck by the shoulders and with a hard yank and harsh yell, his weight was thrown off of her. Bél raised her head and saw her brothers had arrived and were now in a brawl, if she could call it that, beating Samwyck into a bloody pulp. Numbly she struggled to sit up wrapping her other arm to cradle her injured arm. Her vision was getting darker, and she shook her head, trying to stave off the fingers of unconsciousness. There was the sharp, dull sounds that could only match that of her brothers’ boots slamming into Samwyck, mixed in with cursing both Westron and Khuzdûl and the sickening cracks that came with bone breaking with screams echoed into the air. Thorin came racing in seconds later as Bél struggled to stand, his blood running cold at the sight of her condition.

He hurried over to her, catching her as she stumbled forward.

“M’fine. Don’ worry...” she murmured through bloodied lips and his anger began to boil.

Whatever the case, she needed to get home. He would deal with the men that had dared to harm her.

“Fíli! Kíli! Enough. Take your sister home.” He ordered, his voice sharp as he tried to curtail the explosive temper that yearned to come out. It would, but not at that moment. She didn’t protest, and the orderedstopped the two brothers assault and they turned, ignoring Samwyck’s pained moans.

“Bél! Bél, come on.” Kíli whispered as they rushed past their uncle and over to her. Kíli cupped her face gently, trying not to touch any bruised area, but there seemed to be very limited space available. Her non-swollen eye stared blankly at Samwyck, and glazed over with pain and tears. His heart
broke as he gently pulled her from his uncle’s grasp. “Hey, it’s okay Bél…It’s okay. We’re here. You’re safe.” He whispered soothingly, pressing his forehead to hers. Sluggishly she returned it, before she slumped forward into Kíli’s hold. He picked her up, cradling her as Fíli looked at her over Kíli’s shoulder, before tugging off his coat.

“We need to get her to Óin.” Fíli finally said, pushing her hair back from her forehead. His younger brother nodded, feeling her weakly grip his shirt and after they made sure that the others could handle the rest, hurried out of the accursed room. Thorin watched them leave, rushing past Dwalin and Gimli, who stared at the small form in Kíli’s arms stunned for a moment, before both dwarves returned their gaze to the quivering form that was Samwyck. Thorin strode forward, pulling out his blade.

This would be justice enough for what this bastard had put him, his kin, and Bél through. He would be the judge and the jury for the creature that had dared touch his kin.

His One.

His Mesem.

---

Thorin didn’t run back to his home. No…he simply walked incredibly fast. And nearly broke the door as he flung it open.

“How is she?” Thorin asked as he walked in, Dís standing up.

“Óin is still checking her.” Dís explained gently, biting her lip. “The men who attacked her?”

“Dealt with.” Thorin replied coolly.

“…Fíli and Kíli are outside.”

“They aren’t in there?”

“They would have been…but Óin said they would get in the way.” Dís murmured, biting her lip. “After that, they…they said they wanted to be left alone…but…”

The silent plea was heard.

This wasn’t something a mother could talk to two boys…two brothers…especially since she hadn’t been there at the rescue. In all honesty, it was a good thing she wasn’t. Thorin nodded and then walked down the stairs and exited the back and easily spotted the pair staring out into the darkness. It was silent, eerily silent. The only sound was the creaking from where Kíli’s leg was shaking and bouncing on the wood of the porch.

“Boys…”

“Don’t.” Fíli forced out, not even looking at his uncle. “Don’t say it isn’t our faults.”

“None of us could have known snatchers were nearby, or they would target her.” Thorin explained, his voice uncharacteristically gentle.

“One of us normally goes with her. She wouldn’t have been alone.” Kíli explained, his voice tight and watery. “She shouldn’t have been alone.” He added, his voice now barely a whisper.

Thorin was silent for a moment, before he walked over and sat in the space between them and then he pulled the two to him.
“You two were the ones who sensed something was wrong, before any of us felt the same thing.” Even him, he almost added. The bonds of a sibling, blood related or not was strong, he mused to himself. “If you hadn’t insisted on going out and looking for her, and we had only noticed a while ago that something was possibly amiss…”

He trailed off his thoughts wandering. She would have already been sold…likely abused by more men before they had even found her. And he didn’t know if he could handle seeing her like that… Maker’s above he didn’t want to think what the two of them would have done if they had seen that. Thorin could still remember their expressions when they had heard Bél screaming for them in the darkness, both rushing into the trees despite his and Dwalin’s orders to stay when her voice was cut off sharply. It was up to the imagination to guide Thorin with what his nephews thought they were going to come across. He gripped their shoulders tightly, drawing them close.

“You two didn’t hesitate to rush in to protect her. You two are her brothers…and she wouldn’t see it any other way.” He explained. Kíli let out a choking sound as Fíli inhaled sharply. “Do not blame yourselves.”

“…What if we came too late?” Fíli croaked.

“We didn’t.”

“You sound so sure, Uncle.” Kíli muttered, wiping his eyes. “Why?”

Thorin sighed, unsure how to tell them. He could sense things. A few things since she was his One whether he admitted it or not, they were not a lot, but there were a few. And that type of pain he would have felt sharply. But explaining that to two protective brothers, who at the moment were distraught with what had possibly happened was bound to not be welcomed.

Thankfully Dís came out at that moment. Both boys turned.

“Is she…?”

“Óin says she’s fine. She has a few lumps on her head, an inflamed shoulder, a swollen eye, and is bruised up, but she’ll be okay.” She explained and all three pairs of shoulders slumped. “She’s asking for you two.” She added and the brothers were up and gone back into the house before she had even finished the sentence. Dís looked at Thorin.

“Are you alright?”

“I am fine.”

“Thorin, did I ever tell you, that with me you are horrible at hiding your feelings?” She asked. “Something’s been bothering you for a few years now, and though I asked Dwalin, he said to leave it be. And I have, but that expression on your face when you got back…there’s something about Bél you aren’t telling me.”

“…Do you remember The Tale of Denar the Carver and His Wife, Náv?” Thorin finally asked with a sigh. Dís cocked her head to the side, unsure where her brother was going with this.

“Of course I do. Denar was a legendary stone carver from the Grey Mountains and though women of the kingdom vied for his attention, he took no notice of them because he was so occupied with his craft, but in time, the joy he took in his work faded, and he began to long for a wife. And though he met with a lot of women, none moved his heart. So he sent for a block of marble and he went at it with file and chisel. Day after day he carved, until finally in the moonlight he finished the statue before collapsing, and though you told me it was never known whether it had been his skill or Mahal
himself, the statue of the dwarrowdam came to life and nursed him back to health. They were married and together for all their days, and there is where the modern tale of the idea of finding your One came from.” Dís paraphrased, her brows furrowing at her brother’s uncomfortable look.

“So yes, you do.”

“Well yes, but what does that have to do with-” Suddenly it clicked and Dís looked at her elder brother who was shifting uneasily on his feet. “Bé…she’s…she’s your…”

“I believe so… I mean… She’s my One… yes…but I don’t…yes.”

“No… how do you know?”

“… Her secret name… is Mesem. Mesem Nanging Aban, isn’t it?” He said, his voice soft and barely audible for only his sister to hear who gaped at him.

“How long… how long have you known?”

“… Since she was 30.”

“Thorin, that was 3 years ago!!” She hissed out.

“How was I supposed to tell you, the boys, or her?” He snapped back. “In dwarf years, she’s still nothing more than a young adult, if that!”

“In Hobbit years she’s of age, Thorin. If we made her begin courting when our culture deems it a good time to court, she’d be the same age as a man in their middle ages. Both of the boys know that.”

“That doesn’t make things easier, Dís.” Thorin said heavily. “Fíli and Kíli will not-”

“Is it really them that you’re worried about accepting it,” Dís asked, “or you?”

Thorin grew quiet, staring at his sister as she sighed and turned pausing at the door.

“There’s nothing wrong with falling in love, Thorin.” She said gently, looking back at him for a moment. “There’s nothing wrong with it at all.”

And with that she vanished back into the darkness of the home.

Chapter End Notes

Rukhsul menu-son/daughter of an orc

Hey guys *crickets chirping* Sorry for taking so long with this chapter.
“Fíli, Kíli, I’m fine.” Bél said as she watched her brothers pulling out the particular fabric she had been intending to use. “Really, you two don’t have to worry about me.”

“We don’t mind.”

“I know you don’t mind, but Thorin probably needs you two.”

“Thorin will make due at the forge. He’s done it before without us. You need a little more help.” Kíli replied, and Bél rolled her eyes, wincing as she rolled her shoulder still wrapped in the sling. “See?”

She grumbled, sighing as she watched her brothers collect her materials for a dress. Ever since she had been attacked they were mother henning her. While she had found it endearing in the first few days after the attack, it was growing to be an annoyance. Still she bit her lip, keeping quiet. She couldn’t blame them for their worry, could she? Any later and things could have been much worse for her, and she knew they blamed themselves for her even being in that predicament, even though she didn’t share that sentiment. Sighing she took her sewing basket and sat down, wincing at the throbbing ache on her shoulder. It was healing perfectly fine...but the colder weather was not making the ache any better. Maybe she would ask Óin for something to make into a salve.

“Are you alright?”

Bél glanced at her brothers, annoyance sparking a bit further as she sighed in exasperation.

“I’m. Fine.” She said, trying to be as calm as she could. “Really, I am.”

The two dwarrowmen looked barely convinced.

“I’m not going out hunting at the moment. At worse, I’ll prick my finger.”

“Still…”

She glared at them, clearly not happy with the remark, and they went quiet, clearly spotting that they were poking a sleeping dragon at best. Yes the attack had happened, but she was still alive and relatively unharmed. She had stalled long enough for them to find her...why couldn’t they understand that? She inhaled and exhaled slowly, turning to find a needle and some thread.

Calm...calm...she must remain-

“Bél?”

“Oh Aulë, WHAT?!” She snapped turning around in a huff. Her face instantly burned as she saw Thorin at the entrance of the shop, her brothers now strangely not here. “Oh...I’m sorry.”

“...I can leave if you-”

“No! No, it’s alright. I’m sorry, I just thought it was my idiot brothers.” She responded with and huff and the corner of his mouth twitched. She blinked.

“They worry.”
“They shouldn’t.” Bél responded shortly. “I mean, I know it scared them...and I don’t blame them for that. But I’m in Dori’s shop, not in the woods.”

“I can’t blame them entirely.” Thorin responded and Bél huffed.

“I’m not saying I blame them.”

“I know. Still, give them some time. Dwarrowmen are protective of their kin as is, a younger sister is bound to bring along a stronger desire to protect.”

“Is it the same for you with Amad?” Bél asked and Thorin sighed.

“Given Dís and her ability to find trouble in the strangest of places, yes. But I’ve grown used to it. The two of them are going to have to do the same.”

Bél huffed, pushing her hair back, wincing slightly.

“Shoulder still troubling you?”

“It’s just sore. The weather probably isn’t helping,” Bél replied, cheeks flushing. “It’s fine.”

She barely managed a squeak as Thorin strode closer, eyes staring at her like a desperate man with an unquenchable thirst, burning right through her.

“Have Óin make an ointment for it.” Thorin remarked.

“S...sure.” She managed, her throat suddenly dry. Thorin didn’t move, instead choosing to stare at her longer, a hand rising and pushing a strand of hair back. Her heart crawled to her throat, her cheeks on fire. She exhaled shakily.

_The fog was parting, a voice whispering a name she had never heard, but had always known._

“Ken-“

“Hello? Anyone here?”

The two parted as though they had been burned, Bél’s face burning red.

“C-coming!” She called out glancing at Thorin as she hurried to the front of the shop. He was staring at the place she had been standing at originally as though she had never left. She swallowed, trying to calm her racing heart, but nothing seemed to quell the thundering hooves inside her chest.

_It was dark again, a slight breeze rustling through the trees as Bél looked around. Given the lack of fear, she knew she had to be dreaming, which was a surprise. Any dream that was held in the forest was a nightmare for her...running away from the orcs, trying to run through the trees to save her parents as they screamed for her, and now tall shadows pinning her to the ground, laughing and jeering echoing all around them._

_The forest...the forest was never kind to her. So why...It took her a few more moments to recognize this place. It was...the Shire? Tears burned in her eyes as she remembered everything that was around her and what it held for her. How she had once sat in these fields staring at the blue sky and the white clouds. She could spot where she took her first steps, where her father had worked on a swing for her. In the distance she could spot the fields that she and her mother would run around in, racing each other to find the ripest berries for pies and jams._
Why was she here? Why?

“Billanna, my beautiful child who is protected by my husband’s people.”

She spun around and blinked as a tall woman strode from out of the of the forest line, a soft glow resonating around her being, long brown hair fluttering behind her. The trees seemed to bend to her, flowers grew around her feet and animals stood around her, their gazes almost to the point of worship.

The woman smiled gently.

“Hello my child.”

“Who are you?” She heard herself asking before she could stop herself. “How did you know my old name?”

“It was the name whispered to me through the trees on the eve of your birth, Child. And I hear all of my subjects.”

“What does that mean?”

“Have you not recognized me, my child?” She replied with a chuckle. “My husband’s children were always prone to discuss his works over mine.”

Finally it clicked.

“Yavanna.”

“Such a smart, youngling.”

“F-forgive me. It’s been-”

“Peace, I merely jest.” The goddess said, sitting and patting the ground next to her. Bél blinked before hesitantly sitting down next to the mother of her people. She gulped, wondering why she was dreaming of Yavanna.

Was this actually a dream?

“You have had quite the journey, far more than I ever wished for my creations.” Yavanna said after a brief moment of silence. “Yet, you are resilient and strong, far stronger than I ever dreamed of.”

“Is that...bad?”

“No, it means you will survive the tests that lay before you.”

“Tests.”

“The path you walk will be an interesting one, fraught with challenges and tests...far more than I had ever planned for one of my children. But my husband’s people shall help you. As will your One.”

“My One? Yavanna-my Lady-I don’t have a One.” Bél suddenly blurted, her cheeks burning as the goddess looked at her with something akin to amusement. “No one, no dwarf would want a hobbit for a wife, even if I was raised by them.”

“That is not true, My Child.” Yavanna whispered and the voice seemed to travel through the wind
into the trees, rustling gently. Bél blinked as Yavanna bent down and pressed a kiss to her brow, giving her a gentle smile.

“You just aren’t looking in the right place.”

She awoke with a start, exhaling loudly as she looked around. She was no longer in the Shire, but was in her room again, stone walls reach upwards, a soft breeze coming from the ornately carved windows. She looked around and saw Fíli and Kíli asleep in their own beds, snoring lightly. Something long forgotten twisted in her stomach and she sat out and quietly got out of bed, tiptoeing out of the room. She wandered down the hall and exited onto the balcony, exhaling softly into the night air. It was both calming and exciting, kind yet cruel.

She hadn’t thought much of her old home, her birthplace. Not since she had grown to love the rough and tumble nature of the dwarves, grown far too used to their nature to never truly be happy back in the Shire.

Since she had accepted she would never be happy as merely a hobbit.

Still she had her moments. She kept a small garden...the dirt pressing in her toes something far more comforting than walking around on solid rock. She enjoyed walking through the small patches of forests nearby, though lately that offered a different fear she would have to get over eventually.

But still, she missed her old home, even with the few reminders.

“You need to figure this out, Bél.” She muttered to herself.

“Figure what out?”

She spun around with a squeak, her face flushing as Thorin entered the small veranda.

“Oh things...you know...er...gardening things.” She replied with a gulp, her face burning and ever glad that it was night.

“You need to figure things out in the middle of the night?”

“Oh well...you know...these things...well…” She trailed off and then groaned slightly. “Alright, alright, I lied.”

He snorted lightly and she glared at him.

“So what brought on this night time walk?”

“Just...I had a strange dream, and woke up homesick I suppose. Though I wouldn’t really call it homesick, maybe just nostalgic.”

“Dream?”

“Mhm. I dreamed of the Shire.” she replied, keeping the part of Yavanna out. There was no need to have him worry for her safety...or question her sanity, she mused. “It’s been awhile since that occurred, so it just startled me. It’s silly, I know.”

“No it isn’t.”

She looked at him as he walked over to her, standing next to her.

“I still dream of Erebor. I can still remember the halls, the glistening chambers, the happiness, and
those who are lost…” He trailed off glancing at her. “It is not a silly notion to miss home, even if you can never go back.”

She sighed.

“I suppose.”

“You do not need to carry these burdens, Bél.” Thorin said gently. “My sister, your brothers…your friends and kin, we will always be there to listen if something is troubling you.”

“Even you?”

“Even me.” He replied after a moment of silence and she looked away blushing gently. She looked at him as he raised his hand, almost as though he wanted to pull her close, but thought better of it, and his hand fell back to his side, and he purposely looked away from her.

“I...best be going.”

She blinked in surprise, hadn’t he just said that he would be there to listen to her woes? However, staring at his face, she noted it seemed to have darken in color. Maybe he was becoming ill? But as she stared at Thorin’s turning figure, a name that had been blurred in the back of her mind, foggy and unclear came to the front of her mind, unbidden. As though a veil had lifted or a fog had parted, the name became clear. The name that she had heard years ago from the bandit attack.

And now Yavanna’s words ‘‘You just aren’t looking in the right place.’ became clear. And the name spilled out before she could stop herself.

“Kendar?”

Thorin froze, stiffening as though cold water had been splashed over him and he slowly turned, staring at her.

“What did you say?”

She glanced at the ground, suddenly shy, before looking at him and swallowing roughly.

“Kendar.”

_My Kendar._

Chapter End Notes

I llllliiiiivvvveeeeee!!!!

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!