

Befitting

Von Juju-Chan

Kapitel 11:

Loki stared at the thing that had approached his hiding spot. Still did so. It wasn't solid, this he could tell but this did not make it less of a threat, quite the opposite. It simply meant he would have no chance to hurt it with one of his daggers, which actually was his preferred way to fight. Even though his magic was strong and he had spent quite some time to enhance his sorcery in the field of attacking. But, contrary to his daggers, magical attacks drained him whereas physical attacks were likely to tire him only a little, as long as he was quick enough to finish his opponent before any greater struggle even began. His ability to conjure doubles of himself made it all the easier, protecting him from most strikes. Yet this time there was no such thing possible. The shadow slowly turned to him and he knew he would have to decide fast: Trying his spells and risk drawing more attention to himself or betake himself to flight, leaving his bundle behind. It was an easy choice to make, somehow.

He concentrated, feeling the power growing rapidly in his hands. Only a bit more before there would be enough to send his blaze to end whatever was opposing him. And he was relieved this thing seemed to have no intention of attacking him, still busy to turn around. Now! The heat he omitted and forced to find its way against the shadow was almost unbearable even for himself. For a short moment the surroundings were illuminated as bright as day but Loki did not turn around to have a better view of his surroundings, focusing on his target, watching it turn to ashes by his blinding flames. Only... it didn't. Once he recalled his flames the thing was still standing there, opposing him, finally facing him so he could see it in the small brightness he held in his hand, a flame that hadn't died yet. What it was he still was unable to tell. The size and the shape of a bear but nothing like a bear at all. Nothing like anything he had ever seen actually. It lacked anything he would have expected: No limbs were to be seen, neither was there a face or even something like a head. And he could see right through it as if it wasn't real.

"What are you..?" He whispered, more to himself than to the thing he faced. He expected no answer and got none. But he eyed the thing closely, not daring to let his gaze wander off. It didn't attack him. It didn't do anything but existing there. Neither of them moved, not even the noises Loki heard caught any of his attention. It was as if he was drawn into the shadow, enchanted and unable to do so much as blink. And without wanting it, he put forth his hand, brought it closer to the thing, the small flame emitting its soft light onto the shadow and where its beams reached it, it ceased to be viewable. Closer and closer Loki brought his hand until it was where the shadow would already have begun but had vanished due to the light.

“What in the name of Yggdrasil are you?” Loki tried again, this time a little more secure. In the end the thing had made no attempt of doing anything at all. He still didn't trust it, of course, but his fear was slowly fading and opened the way for his curiosity. A moving shadow that wasn't cast by anything and still vanished as soon as it was met with light. It seemed to be harmless so far. Of course he did not dare to turn his back on it, instead he took a step closer. Nothing. One more step. And one more. But nothing happened save for the thing becoming seemingly more transparent until he was so close it appeared as if he had only dreamt of it being there. And maybe it still was there, he reminded himself, only no longer visible. With a quick jump he re-entered the cavern and turned around the very moment he did so. There were truly many more shadows wandering around and 'his' shadow was becoming visible once more. But somehow Loki no longer felt threatened by its presence. He was safe from those shadows as long as he had light, at least that was what he felt deep inside. So he lit up a small fire to keep him warm and to be his shield in the darkness. Loki sat down, his back to the cold stone behind him, his eyes firmly on the cavern's exit. How had he not noticed those manifold shadows before? And where had they come from? He couldn't find rest with all of his thoughts revolving around the things he saw just outside of his hiding spot. Had he not been so strained from his way here, he would have gone outside to learn some more about them, but he was tired and drained, a little frightened and desperate, yes, but most of all he was too tired to care. Not now, that he knew there was no imminent danger. He sighed gravely and found his hand resting on the amulet Frigga had given to him. Once more he felt himself relaxing. This tiny piece of metal somehow eased his mind and he noticed the small, sad smile that had managed to snuck onto his face. If only everything had turned out different. What would he be doing right now? Probably he would be sitting with his family right now, he guessed. Had he truly been a son of Odin... everything would have been different. Maybe even he himself would have been more like they had expected him to be and less of the monster he was. A fierce warrior like his brother Thor, they would have fought side by side. Alas, he had been neither son of Odin, nor brother of Thor and a prince of Asgard only by title. Had the allfather's decisions not proven his assumptions correct? It was one thing to banish a prince of Asgard to a realm within Asgard's grasp and with a way to redeem himself. It was something else entirely to cast aside one called a prince of Asgard, so far away from everything he had ever known, neither expected nor wanted to return. All he had been given to remember was the tiny pendant he so desperately clung to without even paying heed to it. He felt as if deep inside his heart a voice had begun to sing. He knew the one, he had spent aeons with her. And right now he felt as if he was back in his chambers, in his bed and his mother would sing him to sleep. Lies, all lies, he kept reminding himself. Still he became slumberous and the shadows outside became less and less distinguishable. With his last remaining alertness he conjured a barrier between himself and them, so they wouldn't get him while he slept. The next thing was blackness once more.