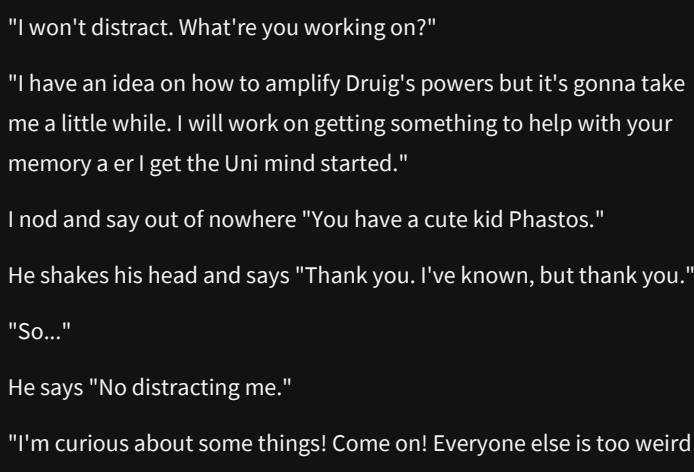


liability

“They say, ‘You’re a little much for me. You’re a liability. You’re a little much for me.’”



I wander to find Phastos, yawning as I approach his little lab. I sneeze as I enter and he says “Go away if you’re gonna distract me.”

“I won’t distract. What’re you working on?”

“I have an idea on how to amplify Druig’s powers but it’s gonna take me a little while. I will work on getting something to help with your memory or I get the Uni mind started.”

I nod and say out of nowhere “You have a cute kid Phastos.”

He shakes his head and says “Thank you. I’ve known, but thank you.”

“So...”

He says “No distracting me.”

“I’m curious about some things! Come on! Everyone else is too weird to tell me non-sappy things about me and I wanna know the real details.”

He groans and says “Fine. I’ll give you 3 questions.”

“No way! 10!”

“Zero.”

“5!”

“Fine.”

I smile and say “okay. So, how did Druig and I start dating?”

He says “That’s not a question for me. That’s a question for Druig.”

“Okay fine that doesn’t count as a question then. So can you explain my powers to me?”

He nods and says “You shoot cosmic energy from your hands and you can fly.”

I gasp and say “I can fly?! No fucking way!”

“Language!”

I laugh and say “Oh my god I can fly? Show me how!”

He sighs and says “I’m not the one that can fly, talk to Ikaris if you want help flying.”

I smile and say “He’s kind of a jerk right?”

“You two always butted heads. Ever since we arrived on the ship. He attempted to woo you and you didn’t even give him a second glance.”

I laugh and say “Good. He seems grouchy. Doesn’t really seem like someone I’d vibe with.”

He shakes his head and says “You were closest with Makkari, Druig, Thena, and Gilgamesh.”

I nod and say “Oh.”

He looks to my saddened expression and says “I can teach you some asl so you can communicate with Makkari. At least partially.”

I nod and say “If she ever comes back from her run... I think I really upset her.”

“The situation upset her. Not you.”

“I am the situation.”

He sighs and doesn’t disagree with me, he says “Here. Okay, this means I love you in asl.” He moves his hand and then grabs my arm and mirrors his actions.

“Just keep practicing that. Once you get that down I’ll teach you other simple movements.”

I move my hand, signing it poorly but getting there.

He moves his hands around creating more of the uni mind. I laugh and say “I’m getting the hang of it!”

He looks up and says “You’re signing the letters, here. Just do this.” He pushes some fingers down and I look at it with my face scrunched up.

“Rock and roll?”

He laughs and says “I mean... it means I love you in a simpler form. But yeah... I guess it does mean rock on.”

I laugh and say “Can you teach me some sign language that’d I’d actually have the opportunity to use? I don’t know how many people here I’ll be telling I love you to.”

He chuckles and says “Yeah here. This ones simple enough. I would like some water”

He models the asl and then helps me with the movements on my hand. I go through the motions as he focuses on his invention

“You must be very thirsty.”

I turn to the voice and see Sprite. I smile to her and say “I got it right?”

She nods and says “Yeah. You’re trying to learn asl?”

I nod and say “Phastos was teaching me a few of the basics. You’d think this would be muscle memory too.” Sprite says “You really should be teaching her how to sign the curse words. Those were her and Makkari’s most signed topics.”

I chuckle and say “Hehe. Teach me bitch in asl I have so many people to call that.”

Phastos says “I’m not teaching you that.”

“Come on. It’d be entertaining! I’ll call Ikaris a bitch for you.”

He sighs and says “Call Kingo it and we have a deal.”

I smile and he teaches me the signs. Sprite says “This’ll be entertaining. I’m gonna go find Druig. This’ll be perfect.”

She walks away and I look at the photos on the walls and I say “Is that a deviant?”

He nods and says “Yeah. They seem to be evolving now though. Which is normal for species but we thought we took care of the deviants. My reports told me we killed o every deviant...”

I nod and say “Maybe this Arishem guy just made more? Didn’t he literally program us? Is that what it’s called?”

Phastos groans and says “You’re right.”

I clear my throat as I look to the other picture and say “And here’s Thena on a horse? She had a horse?”

He looks to his invention intently and says “Oh yeah. Sure she did.”

I nod and say “I had a horse!”

He says “Uhh... Hm.”

Completely ignoring me, I say “Blossom.”

“What’d you say Maya?”

“Oh... nothing.” I say rubbing my burning temples.

Sprite shouts from the main room “Maya! I walk out and she’s there with Makkari and Druig. My walking comes to a slow and Makkari avoids my gaze and Sprite says “We’re waiting.”

“This is just like junior high bs.”

She nods and says “Sure, now do it.” Druig bites into his sandwich and I walk towards Kingo and Ikaris that are deep in conversation. I tap their shoulders and they spin around. I sign “You’re a bitch.”

Kingo gasps and says dramatically holding his chest “How dare you!” Ikaris furrows his eyebrows and pushes my forehead away and says “Real funny Sprite.”

Makkari chuckles and Druig reads her signing. He chuckles and they walk away to grab something.

Sprite looks to me and says “Sorry. I know you were trying to get makkari.”

“It’s fine. Do you have a phone charger? I haven’t spoken with my friends and others in awhile. I’m sure they’re worried.”

She nods and says “Sersi has one.”

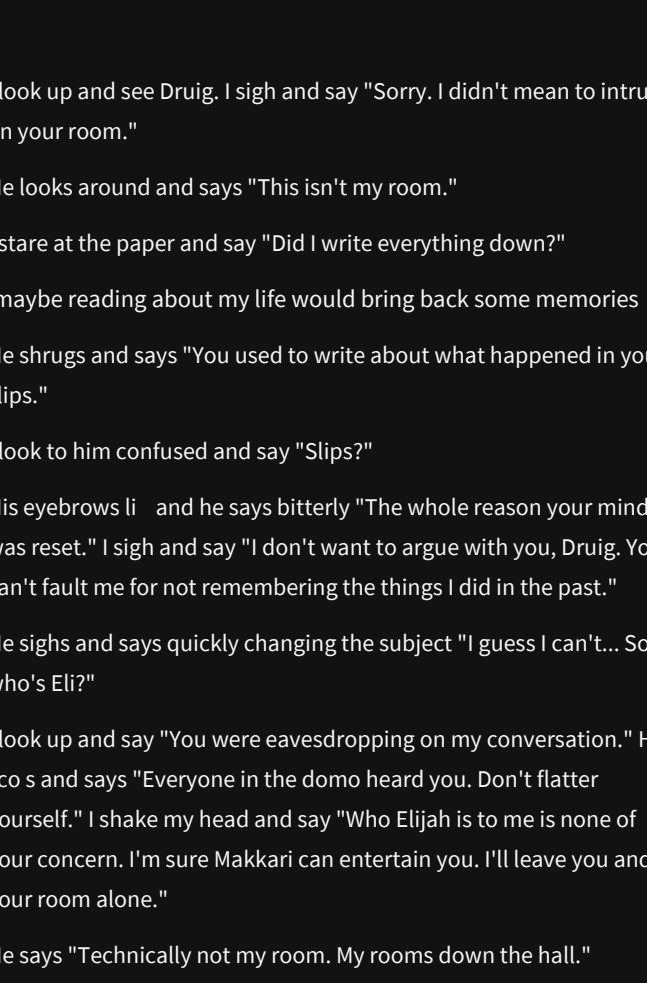
“Thanks Sprite.”

I borrow Sersi’s phone charger and plug it into the wall outlet as I slide down the wall beside it watching the black screen with the little blinking red battery in the center of the screen.

I watch Druig and Makkari fight over a book and I look down and at my hands feeling weirdly.

I sigh as I hear them laughing. I don’t fit in here.

I am the outsider.



My phone turns on and I let out a relieved sigh. I scroll through the notifications and click on Elijah’s contact. I read his messages.

wanna explain why sarah just le me the weirdest voicemail?

may? hello?

I’m o ended you won’t text me back, even Sarah is nervous now.

I love you and I’m worried

It’s been days. Sarah and I want to send a search party.

I go to the voicemails and I look confusedly at Nonna’s phone contact. I click the voicemail and hear Ruthie, Nonna’s daughter’s voice. What?

“Maya, it’s Ruthie. I hate to tell you this way but you deserve to know that Nonna passed away in her sleep last night. We’re planning services for her now, we cremated her and are thinking of scattering her ashes on the ferry, her favorite place as you knew. Anyway, I can give you more details. Please contact us we all worry for you and miss you dearly.”

I drop my phone and it drops with a loud thump. I stare at the phone as my chest tightens and my body physically can’t process death right now.

I was just at a funeral. I just lost AJ and Gilgamesh.

Nonna?

Really?

I scrunch my eyebrows together and I grab the phone again. I dial Elijah’s number quickly and pull my knees towards me as it bounces nervously.

“Maya! Finally! You answered. I was so worried.”

I shake my head and say “Eli what the hell happened when I le?” He sighs and says “You heard about Nonna.”

I close my eyes and let my head hit the wall behind me “Yeah. So natural causes? She died of natural causes?” He clears his throat and says “She was 94 Maya.”

“I know. I just... Yeah. I guess that makes sense. You’re having her funeral soon?”

“They haven’t decided. Ruthie and Sarah are pretty occupied by that. Maya, where the hell are you? Everyone is at home. Where are you?”

I shake my head as I look around and say “It’s too hard to explain. I’m okay. I’ll be home soon. I just need to handle a few things.”

He sighs and says dejectively “Why are you keeping secrets from me?”

My hand yanks the charger o my phone as I stand up angrily. Walking away from the main area. “Elijah I am not arguing with you about this. I will tell you everything as soon as I get home. Alright? I’ll be home before you know it.”

I hear voices in the background and I say “Is that Ruthie and Mila?”

Druig looks up as he hears me say a males name and I say as I walk through the hallway “Stop arguing with me.”

Makkari nudges him and signs “Who is she talking to? Druig’s jaw clenches and he signs “A man... She’s speaking to a man!” Sigh and say “I’m hanging up now. There’s people around me. I’ll talk with you once I have better service. We’re up in the air so my service is shit.”

“What?!”

“Bye Eli.”

I hang up and sigh as I head back inside. Heading for my room immediately. I’m trying to just process the news of Nonna’s death, I mean she was ancient but she was just always there, in my life.

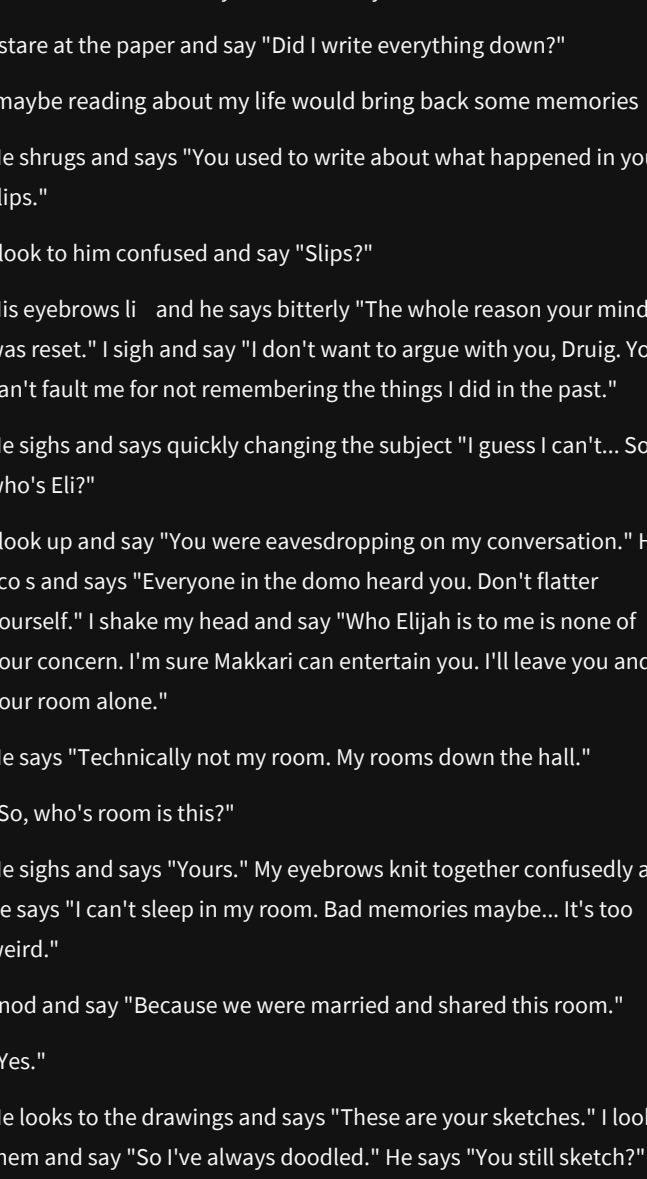
Ikaris nudges Druig and says “You really thought without her memories she wouldn’t move on? I’ve got news for you buddy, that’s not Gaia and she has a whole new life without you. Maybe you should work on getting one too.”

Makkari throws a pool ball at Ikaris at a fast speed and he grabs it immediately. Extending his hand to grab it. Makkari glares at him and I stop in the hall as weird deja vu sets in.

Where the hell am I heading?

I continue walking forward, letting my body move to where it recognizes. I push open the door of a room and see Druig’s bag sat on the bed. I look around the room and see a few items around the room. My hand tugs the writings o the wall and I look at the handwriting.

“You liked to write a lot.”



I look up and see Druig. I sigh and say “Sorry. I didn’t mean to intrude on your room.”

He looks around and says “This isn’t my room.”

I stare at the paper and say “Did I write everything down?”

maybe reading about my life would bring back some memories

He shrugs and says “You used to write about what happened in your slips.”

I look to him confused and say “Slips?”

His eyebrows li and he says bitterly “The whole reason your mind was reset.. I sigh and say “I don’t want to argue with you, Druig. You can’t fault me for not remembering the things I did in the past.”

He sighs and says quickly changing the subject “I guess I can’t... So, who’s Eli?”

I look up and say “You were eavesdropping on my conversation.” He sco s and says “Everyone in the domo heard you. Don’t flatter yourself!” I shake my head and say “Who Elijah is to me is none of your concern. I’m sure Makkari can entertain you. I’ll leave you and your room alone.”

He says “Technically not my room. My rooms down the hall.”

“So, who’s room is this?”

He sighs and says “Yours.” My eyebrows knit together confusedly and he says “I can’t sleep in my room. Bad memories maybe... It’s too weird.”

I nod and say “Because we were married and shared this room.”

“Yes.”

He looks to the drawings and says “These are your sketches.” I look to them and say “So I’ve always doodled.” He says “You still sketch?”

“Yeah.”

He crosses his arms and says “Wanna show me them?” I shake my head and say “No way. Not happening.” He chuckles and says “Come on. You don’t trust me?”

God I shouldn’t but I do.

I shake my head and say “They’re embarrassing.”

He smiles and says “Hm? Are they?” I push his shoulder and my eyes trail to the chain around his neck. I see the studded ring on the chain beside the plain silver ring. I look to the ground annoyed.

He lied.

I sigh and say “You lied about not having my ring.” He looks down and grumbles as he pushes the chain with the rings back under his shirt.

I cross my arms and say “You expect me to remember everything when you won’t even tell me the truth.”

He angrily says “You aren’t my wife. I don’t owe you honesty and trust. I don’t owe you anything.”

I shake my head and say “The worlds ending and you continue to lie. Don’t you feel lonely living in your own little world?”

“Don’t you feel powerless living in other people’s worlds?”

I stare at him for a moment and say “I’d rather feel powerless than alone.”

“That makes you weak.”

I stare at him and say “It makes me human.” He sco s and says “You aren’t human.” I look to him and say “Tell me the truth. What happened the night Gaia le?”

“I’m not talking about that right now.”

“Why not?! It’s my story! It was my life. I deserve to know! What did you do that made me run? Him? Why did I feel unsafe enough to run away from you?” I say now aggravated.

“You wouldn’t understand the story.”

“Try me, Druig! I can handle it!”

“No! God damnit! No! You le on your own account! You le without a second thought. No goodbye. You le me. You le our village. You le Makkari. You didn’t care enough to even say goodbye. And part of me always believed you would come back. I’m not an optimist. That was your thing. But I believed you would come home. You never did. Now all I see is a stranger. You aren’t my wife. You’re more of a liability.”

Silence lingers and I say calmly “I’m not your wife. You’re right. But I’m your only shot at getting her back and here you are pushing me away.”

He looks to the ground and says “You’ve moved on.”

My face turns to confusion and I say “What are you talking about? If I moved on why the hell am I even wasting my time talking to you? Hm?”

“pity.”

I sigh and say “Druig, I am trying. I swear. You really think I want to walk into a room and see your face drop every time? You think I enjoy seeing Makkari cry over the fact I forgot how to communicate with her? Do you think I’m truly that sick in the head? You look at me like you expect me to be Gaia. I understand that but when you ignore and shy away from me like I’m the plague how the hell am I supposed to be the person you need? I don’t wish to be considered a burden but I am!”

“I don’t expect you to be Gaia...”

“Yes you do! You love the idea of me! Not me. You need Gaia. You’re lying to yourself if you truly don’t believe that!”

He says exasperated “Fine! I do expect you to be Gaia but I don’t wish to make you feel horrible! I’m angry. I have a right to be angry.”

I shake my head and say bluntly “You can be as angry as you want. Gaia le. Boo fucking hoo. She le. You. What are you gonna do about it?” He glares at me and the tension rises in the room.

He pulls my arm towards him and quickly cuts o both of our angry arguing. He kisses me angrily and aggressively but quickly it turns into a so and almost emotional kiss.

He pulls away and says “I’m gonna take back what once was mine. I love you! thought. But I didn’t say it.”

It didn’t feel right saying it in the moment.



haley speaks!

Merry Christmas and Christmas Eve! If you celebrate! Currently at home we are baking loads of cookies and many dishes for the holiday. Pretty chaotic around here!

when was someone gonna tell me toby is 46? Dude what the hell I thought he was like 35 and Andrew is 38?? I’m flabbergasted. Also, I watched the hawkeye finale. Meh I’d be badd now, so currently I’m rewatching the old marvel movies :(I for the life of me can’t find motivation to write, January 11th I’ll have more motivation lmao, that’s when eternal releases on disney+. Also thank you so much for 200k reads!! Ahhhhhh it’s awesome to have all of your support.

Thank you thank you! Currently finishing my chapters with dyed green hands from baking and using food dye today! I feel like the hulk haha

So, how do you guys feel about the angry kiss? hehehe I like the angst I’m sorry if it’s annoying. I just don’t want to rush the process!

Did you guys catch the little slip of her memory?? :) she’s remembering! A little bit at least!

Q&A: favorite mcu couple?

Continue reading next part