

"Vena, the Deviants are not a carriage!"

"To me they are!"

"She's going to get herself killed! Where's Thena when you need her?" Kingo yelled running a er me just as I drove fire straight to the Deviant's heart." Nevermind then..."

"Not good enough, Vena. Next time, try being a little faster." Ikaris called out and I screamed in frustration making the Deviant he was fighting explode. "What the..."

"Was that fast enough for you, Ikaris?" I spat and held Thena's teeth and looked around to see the remaining Deviants have exploded also.

"Vena, why don't we take a walk. Just you and me." Thena said cleaning the blood o my forehead. " Makkari, tell Adonis and Ajak that Vena's with me. She needs to calm down for a little bit."

"Next time... don't hide those powers from us." Ikaris shrugged and I lunged towards him but Gilgamesh held me back.

"It's a power I hate. Get o my ass." I spat and held Thena's outstretched hand. "Where are we going?"

"Just for a walk. You'll be back in Adonis' arms before the feast, Aphrodite." Thena smirked and I rolled my eyes linking arms with her.

"Shut up, Thena."

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"For how long have you known about that power?"

"Not long. I discovered it on accident and I've been training with Ajak ever since. It's not blood manipulation completely. I just manipulate the water that's in the blood."

"That's impressive." Thena nodded impressed. "By the way, I've noticed you're much more on edge lately."

"Just trying to keep that power under control." I mumbled hanging upside down on the tree.

"Vena, I know you're lying."

"It's Ikaris, okay?! I hate that man. He always pushes my damn nerves to the breaking point and then has the absolute audacity to say 'remember your mission'. Like I know what my mission is, no need to remind me every waking moment." I groaned jumping o the tree and laid my head on Thena's lap. "I hate it. And then he goes and gets the praise for my work! I bet he's rubbing his mouth to Ajak about how he handled the Deviants and we just stood by watching him. Like that's Sersi, not me."

"Ajak never believes him, little Vena."

"I don't care. It's just the fact that he takes the credit for our work. All he's doing is flying and chasing one Deviant while we're down here being trampled by dozens at a time. And then he goes around saying that people like Druig or Phastos don't do anything? If it weren't for Druig, humans would be dead and Phastos actually makes the barriers to protect them. All Ikaris does is boss us around and he gets to be mother's favorite!? That's something that just doesn't sit well with me."

"Well... you could talk to him but I think we all know how that's going to turn out." Thena sighed and I chuckled closing my eyes. "You shouldn't let him get into your head like that, Vena."

"I know. I know. I can't help it sometimes. He just thinks he's better than all of us because he's a perfect little soldier and perfect soldiers follow orders, Vena". I'd like to give him an order to fly to the sun and explode like in Sprite's story." I shrugged and Thena started laughing.

"How's this? Next time he gets on your nerves, why don't you tap into that special power of yours to assert dominance? Because let's be honest, Vena. I think the majority of us fear you when you're out fighting Deviants. And now with this, I can only imagine Kingo running to the hills when your eyes start glowing." Thena said between laughs and I smiled shaking my head.

"Once I get full control over it, Ikaris is in for one hell of a ride."

"Good. Now that we've got one issue out of the way... let's talk about your Adonis." Thena pinched my cheeks and I groaned sitting up.

"Why do you all insist on still calling him Adonis?"

"Because it's entertaining to see his flustered face. And he admitted it, so now he's Adonis and you are Aphrodite." She shrugged. "You seem calmer when you're with Druig. He's not tampering your mind, right?"

"No, Thena. Druig hasn't tampered with my mind. He promised he wouldn't do that." I said and Thena smirked nudging me with her shoulder. "Here it comes."

"You both are so in denial that it frustrates all of us. Phastos calls it 'mutual pining' and he's sick of it. He's been going on rants to Gilgamesh about 'getting that cute shit away from me and my lab or I'm gonna lose it' or something among those lines... I don't blame him." Thena hummed and I groaned hiding my face on her shoulder.

"You should talk to him about this, Vena."

"I'm not in love with Druig, Thena. I have a mission to focus on. Or so Ikaris says."

"If Ikaris can fall in love with Sersi, why can't you fall in love with your Adonis?" Thena asked and I shrugged. "I think it comes down to if he makes you happy. I mean, we've lived together for over two thousand years, Vena. The others may not notice, but I do. You change when you're with him."

"How so?"

"You don't hide who you truly are."

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"Vena, hold that steady!"

"I've been holding it steady for what feels like forever! This wall is not getting any lighter!" I yelled and Ajak started laughing. "Ajaki! You're supposed to be on my side here!"

"VENA!"

"Oh, shit. Someone hide me!" I hissed and hid behind Kingo and Makkari who immediately shielded me. "I'm not here."

"Vena I can see you." Ikaris sco ed walking inside the lab.

"No you can't, I'm just Sprite's illusion... Yeah, that's it." I nodded and Ikaris threw something that I caught with ease. "Shit."

"Care to explain to us this special power you discovered and why haven't we found out about it earlier?"

"You made me mad! I didn't want to use it! But you pissed me o! You're lucky it was the Deviant's head and not yours!"

"What's going on?" Druig asked walking inside with Sprite and Sersi trailing behind. "So we all just meet in the lab? Is that how we're doing meetings now?"

"Adonis! It would seem your Aphrodite can make Deviants explode and we're just finding out now!" Ikaris exclaimed as I formed a ball of air and threw him to the ceiling.

"Oh, that. I knew it already." Druig shrugged leaning on the newly fixed wall.

Ikaris stood up with a hu and glowing eyes and I stomped towards him.

"I needed you to use that power earlier in the fight, Vena. Hell, we could've used it when we got here!" He spat and I pushed him back.

"It's always what you want, huh? Never what makes me comfortable? Ever stopped to think that I bloody hate that power?" I exclaimed as my eyes glowed and a ball of fire appeared in my hands.

"Vena, calm down." Ajak called out and I shook my head.

"Two thousand years, I had to deal with Ikaris' bullshit. And you still defend him? I'm out there every time fighting my ass o, almost dying by the way, and perfect Ikaris gets the bloody praise for our work!" I exclaimed and Ikaris started laughing. "Okay, y'know what? One fight, you and me. I win, you stop this horseshit and leave me be."

"And if I win?"

"Your pick."

"I win... you have to focus solely on the mission. Nothing more, nothing less. Aphrodite" Ikaris smirked and my breath hitched.

"Didn't think about that, little Vena?"

"Ikaris."

"I think this is the only way, Ajak. It's gone on long enough." Kingo sighed with a frown on his face. "I think all we can do is hope that Vena wins."

The door slammed making me jump and I looked around to see Druig had le.

"Your choice, Aphrodite." Ikaris smirked as Sersi pulled me into a hug.

"That's enough, Ikaris. She doesn't have to use her powers if she doesn't want to." She defended and pulled away. "Go a er him."

"But..."

"Vena, go." Ajak smiled and opened the door. "I'll deal with Ikaris."

"Makkari, please get Druig in here." Sighed and Makkari nodded speeding o and appeared a second later with a straggling Druig.

"Makkari!"

"Just sit down and watch, Adonis. Makkari rolled her eyes forcing Druig to sit down before gesturing for me to continue.

"Fine, Ikaris. Right here, right now." I smirked punching Ikaris in the face and pushed him towards the fixed wall.

"Not the- Oh screw it. Let her go with it." Phastos sighed sitting on the table next to Druig.

"So you accept?"

"Bring it." I hissed pushing him back further and my eyes glowed.

"Even if it means sacrificing your feelings for Adonis?" Ikaris whispered and I laughed.

"How about yours for Sersi?" I teased pulling him back and pushed him back into the wall forcefully.

Ikaris' eyes glowed before kicking me back and had me in a chokehold making me gasp for air.

"Ikaris that's enough!" Druig yelled and stood up with glowing eyes but Thena and Makkari held him back.

"Not yet, Adonis. She needs to do this on her own." Ajak said and gave me a small nod. "Remember the trick I taught you, Vena."

I managed to suck in a breath as my eyes glowed brighter and I manipulated Ikaris to let me go. I pushed him to a wall and I ed him with my powers with gritted teeth.

"One chance. Let... it... go." I growled holding two balls of fire. "Let it go and I'll let it go."

"Vena..."

"Let... it... go." I tightened the hold and felt tears in my eyes. "Please."

"Okay, I won't bring it up again." Ikaris desperately said and I let him go. "Vena..."

"Don't." I choked out and ran out of the lab. "Just don't."

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"You're upside down."

"And you're right side up."

"You sure it isn't the other way around?" Druig asked climbing up the tree and I sat up shrugging. "Thena told me what happened this morning, Ikaris really gets under your skin, huh?"

"Why'd you storm out when I was about to fight Ikaris?" I mumbled fidgeting with my fingers.

"I didn't want to see you get hurt."

"So you think I couldn't handle Ikaris by myself?" I sco ed. "That's horseshit and you know it, Druig."

"I think Ikaris wouldn't stand a chance against you, and you proved it." Druig shrugged scooting closer to me. "It's bad enough you have to fight Deviants le and right, you don't need any extra pressure on you."

"If you say so."

"Vena, I'm just looking out for you."

"I know, I know. Just... don't make this any more complicated than it needs to be. My mind is a mess right now." I mumbled rubbing my temples refusing to look at him.

"Is there anything I could do to help?" He asked and I shook my head.

"I think I need to sort this out for myself, Druig. My mind's a mess right now."

Druig chuckled using two fingers to li my head up and leaned in slightly.

"I think I can help with that." He smirked and looked down at my lips. "If you'll let me, of course."

"Just shut up and kiss me, Adonis." I breathed out and sealed the gap between us.

"Is your mind better now or do you need some more help?" Druig smirked once we pulled away and I chuckled hiding my face in his chest. "My beautiful, beautiful Aphrodite. You have no idea how long I've waited for that."

"How long, Adonis?" I smirked looking up at him.

"Since Egypt." He shrugged and kissed me again. "And now I'm addicted."

"Now is that such a bad thing?" I teased and Druig pulled me closer to him.

"Not at all, my beautiful Vena... So would you?"

"Would you what?" I asked as he rubbed his nose against mine. "For someone who's extremely sarcastic, you sure don't know how to use your words."

"Would you be mine? Because I was yours since the moment we met." Druig smiled and I nodded pressing my lips to his again. "Use your words, my beautiful Vena."

"I'd love nothing more, my charming Druig."

MEMES:

