

experience

One week a er falling to Midgard...

Gabriella worked with the animals that the village cared for. Every day Freya, in hopes of helping the people that helped her, worked with her.

"What is Asgard like?" Gabriella asked as she threw chicken feed on the ground. Freya had a small basket in one hand and gently reached her hand into the chicken coop looking for eggs with the other.

She glanced over at Gabriella, "It's — bright." She knitted her eyebrows together. "My father never let me leave the palace, so I can't really say..."

Gabriella nodded as she set the bucket up against the fence. "He was very protective?" She wiped away the sweat on her forehead.

"He wasn't always." She said. "I can't remember when exactly but, one day he just started to look at me di erently, started limiting my freedom." She put the last egg into the basket and stood up. The center of the village bustled with energy in the day. Kids went to school, some worked as blacksmiths, others did laundry, everyone had a task and Druig never had to control a single mind. "Do you feel like your freedoms are limited?"

Her hazel eyes looked up and to the right, her lips were in a pout of sorts. She crossed her arms and sighed, "I don't think so." She smiled, "I've seen other villages and even cities. I like it here. We don't have to deal with what other humans have to deal with."

"Like what?" She asked.

"Money, bills, taxes." She let out a small laugh at the expression on Freya's face. "I suppose you've never had to deal with those things either."

"¿De qué están hablando ustedes dos?" The main veterinarian, Juan, walked into the pasture. He wore a brown cowboy hat and leather boots. {What are you two talking about?}

"Chismoso," Gabriella answered quickly. He let out a small chuckle. "¿Tienes más tareas para nosotros, Juan?" {Gossip. Do you have any more tasks for us Juan?}

He scratched his greying beard, "That depends." He said with a small twinkle in his eye, "¿Estabas cotilleando sobre mí?" {Were you gossiping about me?}

"Of course not," Gabriella responded.

"Sure, sure." He put his hands on his hips and looked toward the town center, "Makkari and Phastos's are visiting Druig today. You may want to introduce our new friend." He pointed to Freya and gave her a grin.

"Friends of Druig's." She told Freya. "¿Alguno de los otros?" She asked Juan and he shook his head. "I guess we should get going." She dusted her hands o . "Adiós Juan."{Any of the others?}

The two women exited the pasture. Questions popped into Freya's mind but she was unsure if it was a good idea to ask. Druig had friends? She should've realized a being that was older than Odin had to have gained friends other than this village. She wondered why she hadn't asked him more questions about himself. He probably wouldn't answer, she thought.

"You look nervous." Gabriella leaned over and bumped her hip against Freya's. They glanced at each other and Freya let out a laugh.

"I'm not." She brushed a hair out of her face. "Can't help but be curious. Should I be nervous?" đ

"No." Gabriella looked down at her feet. "Makkari and Phastos are very nice. Well, they were nice the last time I saw them."

"And that was?" Freya asked.

"I think I was 10, or maybe 9." She said. The sun was lowering and the a ernoon was golden and warm. Freya wondered if there was a time before that she felt her stomach flutter before meeting someone. It wasn't something she was accustomed to, she cared what these friends thought of her or what Druig thought of them. "There they are." She pointed at the rectangular pond.

They stopped and Freya liked that she could see them from afar. Druig stood beside a woman, she was small with warm brown skin. The man was tall with dark brown skin and glasses on the bridge of his nose. Druig smiled at the woman and she looked up at him and moved her hands. He laughed and said something back and motioned with his hands.

"Makkari is deaf," Gabriella said. "To communicate they use hand signs. It's called sign language." Freya felt her face warm, had she looked confused? She felt like a child despite being alive for almost 1,700 Midgardian years. She felt so many things at once it was hard for her to grasp them all. Freya was angry at her father, jealous that her brothers had been able to travel the cosmos, and the most unwelcome feeling she had was fear that Druig and Makkari were something more than just friends. She swallowed what felt like a rock and looked at Gabriella.

"We should wash o ." She said but her voice was breathless and so . She glanced back at Druig for only a moment before, turning toward Gabriella's home. She couldn't let herself be jealous. She was a stranger in a world she would leave eventually. Druig was only a kind person helping a stupid girl a er she was naive and weak.

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Freya looked at herself in the mirror longer than she'd care to admit. Her hands combed through her wavy locks. They were frizzy and she wished more than anything they were long enough for her to be able to braid it back.

On Midgard, women didn't have to be properly dressed at all times. She wasn't required to wear heavy gowns and be pruned till she was as beautiful as a flower. Gabriella owned no makeup, even if Freya wished to cover imperfections she was out of luck. She wore an olive green dress and a black sweater that Gabriella gave to her. When she walked out of the bathroom and heard laughter from down the hall she stopped short. She took in a deep breath, you're being silly, she thought to herself. Stupid girl, Amora's words were an impossible force in her mind.

Freya stepped into Gabriella's common room, as she expected, Druig and his two friends were in there along with Gabriella. The first one to notice her entrance was Makkari. Her big brown eyes widened along with her smile. Freya tried her best to smile back and push the nerves creeping in. Makkari sat next to Druig she slapped his shoulder and he turned to her. His smile faded when he looked up at Freya and then back down at Makkari. "What?" He asked.

She signed, "Tell her, Hi I'm Makkari, and that she can come sit over here.'Druig's smile returned and a little laugh escaped his lips.

"Freya this is the beautiful Makkari," His dimples grew deeper and he nudged the woman sitting next to her, "She says hi and wants you to come over here."

Freya walked over, reverting to the one thing she was good at, following directions. She tried to ignore how she loved the way he said beautiful, how she wished someone would speak of her that way. She sat down across from Makkari and next to Phastos.

"Hi," He said and stuck his hand out, "I'm Phastos."

She took his hand and shook it. "That was my first handshake." She said meeting his deep dark eyes. "I've read Midgardian text for ages and always wanted to try it." She pulled her hand away and looked over at Gabriella who leaned back in her chair. "I'm Freya." She said.

"Yes, we know." Phastos leaned a forearm on the table in front of him. "Druig's told us a bit about you." Freya glanced at Druig who was already looking at her.

Makkari signed and Phastos nodded, "Nordic books depict you with long blonde hair. Makkari says she prefers the real thing to fiction."

"Thank you." Freya looked to the woman her hand subconsciously touching the back of her neck. "I wish I could sign." She said.

"Well Makkari here, is a great lip reader." Druig said, "But I'm sure you could learn."

A timer went o and Gabriella stood up, "Food's ready." She moved into the kitchen and pulled out a few pans from the oven.

"Druig told us that your stuck on Earth," Phastos said.

"Yes. Heimdall can't see me, I've been blocked from his vision." She noticed Makkari's lips curl down and Phastos glanced at Druig and then back to Freya.

"Does the spell work on people who aren't around you?" He asked.

"I don't know," Freya said. "I was never taught magic."

"But, Druig, said you can use magic?Makkari signed.

Druig signed back to her,"Not exactly."

"Druig told us you can perform magic." Phastos clarified.

"More or less," Freya shook her head. "It's something my father didn't allow. So all I have now is intention, I suppose." She looked up to Gabriella and stood up. "Let me help." She moved into the kitchen and grabbed plates and cups.

"Gracias." Gabriella winked at her. "You know what Freya is amazing at?" She asked the group a rhetorical question. She walked over to the table with the pan in her hands. "Playing the piano." Freya spun around so fast that the bowls on the top of her stack fell. In a bolt of golden light and a burst of air, Makkari was by her side bowls in her hands.

Freya's eyes were so wide that she was sure they were about to pop right out. She shook her head and tried to calm her speeding heart. "Makkari can move at the speed of light," Druig said.

"Right." She nodded. "I can see that." She grinned at Makkari, "Thank you." The woman smiled and the two of them moved over to the table. "And Phastos, what can you do?"

"I am an inventor. Not as flashy as her's or dangerous as his." He gave both Makkari and Druig a once over. "But I prefer it that way."

"I see," Freya said as she took her seat. "May I ask how many there are of your kind?" She asked.

"On Earth? Only ten." Phastos said.

"And you live forever," Freya said but it was more of a question. The three of them nodded. "Why come to Earth?"

"That is a long story," Phastos said.

"And we have nothing but time on our side," Freya responded.

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She had never heard of deviants or Arishem. As the three divulged their lives, Freya realized she had heard of their names in stories, stories that they created. The Eternals had always been there, and yet never seen.

Once they were done with dinner, Freya said goodbye to Makkari and Phastos. Makkari hugged her tight and when she pulled away signed, " It was nice meeting you."

"She says it was nice meeting you." Phastos stuck out a hand, "I'm glad we met Freya." He said.

"What is goodbye in sign language?" She asked. Makkari signed and Freya copied it. Makkari clapped for her.

"Goodbye," Freya said and signed at the same time. Druig put his arm around Makkari as the three of them le .

"I'll see you two later," Druig said.

Freya felt so incredibly human at that moment, in a home, not a palace. She cleaned with Gabbie they talked about the night, laughed about uncomfortable moments, and Freya couldn't help but smile.

"I'm so tired." Gabbie rubbed her eyes. Freya glanced at the scattered dishes and baking items.

"Go to sleep," Freya said. "You cooked for a very long time and deserve rest. I can finish these up." She said.

"Are you sure?" She asked and leaned against the counter.

"Confía en mí." Freya said and a big smile grew on Gabriella's lips. She let out a shocked gasp. {Trust me.}

"¡Ha estado practicando! Muy bien." She said. "Okay, okay, I'll go to sleep. Buenas noches y gracias." She gave Freya a small hug and walked over to her bedroom door. {She has been practicing! Good job.}

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She hated to admit it but Freya needed to be alone. She wanted time to think about how Midgard had already changed her more than she was prepared for. If she went home, would she be the same? Her father would want her to be married o , one of her brother's would rule the other would be by his side. She'd continue to be the trophy princess. Was she wanting that?

It was not something she'd admit out loud but, she liked imagining what would happen if she stayed. She could live with Gabriella, help on the farm, practice magic with Druig. But then she wondered if that was the life she wanted to lead. No. If she was honest she wanted to be able to go where ever she wanted whenever she wanted. And a part of her wanted to take —

Knock. Knock. Knock.

She turned to the open door frame, Druig stood beneath it his fist hovering inches from the wood. The world outside was dark and there was only the sound of a cool breeze and the buzz of insects. "An asgardian goddess doing dishes in a small Peruvian kitchen, I never thought I'd see that." He said.

She glanced down at the dishes she scrubbed, "I'm sure you've seen

far stranger things." She heard his footsteps move into the house and walk over to her. Her heartbeat sped up. She didn't dare look him in the eyes. She knew if she looked at those eyes, she'd be inclined to be miss them. "And I'm no goddess." She shook her head, "My stories are just that, stories."

He rolled up his sleeves and grabbed a dish from beside the sink. He dipped it into the soapy water and grabbed a sponge. "What makes you doubt yourself so much?"

"It's the truth." She said

"I could always find out for myself." He said. His shoulder brushed against her's and she took in a breath. "Or maybe I already know?"

"Oh yeah?" She asked and turned to look at him.

His eyes, in the candle light, and warm ceiling lights, glistened like there was speckles of glitter in them. "Yeah." He said, his eyes glanced down at her lips and then his head tilted to the side. He looked into her eyes. "You been forced into mold that you will never fit in. But you don't want to disappoint the ones who love you so you try to, desperately."

She knew her voice would betray her in that moment. She knew her cheeks were red and her eyes wide and unwilling to look away from his. "How do you know that?" She whispered.

"Experience." His voice was low. Their faces were closer than she remembered. Her voice failed her. Her eyes darted from right to le as he took in his calm expression. How could he say something that shook her to the core and look at her like that. Then she remembered, this was not forever, even though she desperately wanted it to be.

"I have to fit it." She said. "I — don't know what I am if I am not that mold." He glanced down at his feet and for the first time she heard him take in a breath.

"A goddess." He looked back up to her. "You are a goddess, Freya, when your back there remember that, for me." He turned around and walked to the door.

"Druig." She took a step forward but stopped herself. He looked back at her. "I — um — thank you for letting me meet your friends."

"Goodnight, Freya." He said a small smile on his lips. He pulled the door open and walked out. Freya placed a hand on the counter, and glanced out the window.

A/N: this one was a doozy. It's nearly 2600 words. We got to see Makkari and Phastos and a bit more of Gabriella and some Freya/ Druig.

Also if any of my spanish was wrong you know the drill let me know ⊙

THANK YOU to those who are commenting and favoriting it means so much. I am definitely taking into consideration any of your suggestions. So please feel free to tell me your thoughts and feelings

Updates will probably slow down soon as finals are coming up but I will have at least one part out a day.

Much Love, Savannah

Continue reading next part 🛛