

PRESENT DAY

AURORA

I take the kettle of water from beside the table, motioning to the team as I move everything around the small kitchen to prepare dinner.

"This is where you've been living? In the middle of nowhere?" Kingo asks, a scowl on his face as he looks around the small hut I called home.

He turns to me, eyebrows high.

"What happened to early 90's Aurora? I miss her. Bring her back" He exclaims, looking at me.

I chuckle, shaking my head and grabbing the kettle from the bottom before putting my energy into my hands and heating it up. Within a few seconds, the kettle starts whistling and I take my hands off the bottom, turning to the team.

"I'm afraid that version of Aurora is long gone, Kingo." I pause, motioning to the kettle "Tea, anyone?"

It was already dark out, and it had taken us most of the day to gather the debris and try to clean up the mess the Deviant had left behind.

Only now we'd been actually able to sit down and rest.

Sprite and Sersi raise their hands and I walk over to them, pouring a small amount of tea into the wooden cups.

It was difficult, fitting them into my hut. It was built for one person, not for all of them.

I had to admit, I'd been living a lot more humbly now. I'd come to Africa when an opportunity to volunteer arose about 20 years ago, and I'd fallen in love with the place.

No expectations, no cameras, no Eternals or Deviants or anything could be found here. I wasn't even sure how they'd managed to find me.

The people here were gentle and nice, and they'd taken me in almost immediately. The volunteers had come and gone, and I'd stayed helping them build huts and wells and whatever they needed to be done.

"Alright," I finally start, taking a seat on the head of my small table. I had to admit, as much as that Deviant attack had startled me, it was nice to see most of the group together. "Can someone explain what the fuck just happened?"

There's a few beats of silence, and I can see a small, wordless exchange happen between Sersi and Ikaris. Their brows are furrowed and Ikaris is unnaturally silent.

Something's wrong.

The small smile that had been on my face a few moments ago slowly disappears as I finally understand the gravity of the situation.

"Sersi..." My tone is warning as I turn to face her. "What's going on?"

She opens her mouth, only to close it again.

"The Deviants are back" Sprite is the one who finally speaks.

I scoot, sipping my tea. "Yeah no shit"

I stare around at the team, my gaze meeting Sersi who only nods, confirming what Sprite just said.

"One attacked us in London, and another attacked Gil and Thena" She explains, "And now one attacked you"

A funny feeling settles at the bottom of my stomach.

I lean back in my chair, crossing my arms over my chest and licking my lips.

"How... how did this happen?" My gaze is fleeting, landing on each and every one of them, brow furrowed, worry etched on my features.

"We don't know, but they evolved. They're stronger now," Gil pitches in, looking around.

I nod in understanding, trying to grasp my mind around the matter. I almost miss the look that they give each other.

There's something they're not telling me.

"Whatever it is that you're hiding, you all need to spit it out before I—"

"Ajak's dead"

Silence.

It's kind of a blur after that. I remember dropping my cup of tea, hearing the echo of it as it splattered into the ground.

I stood up silently, thoughts reeling in my head as the team seemed to start talking all at once.

I need to get out.

The voices of the team seemed to be underwater, and my vision blurred until I almost couldn't see where I was walking.

A pair of hands grasped my shoulders, but I pushed them off, the necessity to breathe becoming too much.

"I need to... I need to" I couldn't even finish a sentence as I exited the hut.

I'm not sure who followed, but I didn't care.

Ajak. My Ajak. Dead?

No. She couldn't be.

"Aurora" I can hear Gilgamesh calling from behind me, but I pay no attention.

I need to get away.

Small drops of water fall into my hands, and it takes me a moment to process that I'm crying.

Ajak is dead.

Ajak is dead.

The tears fall faster until I'm sobbing, my chest heaving up and down.

I reach the nearby forest, unable to continue walking and falling against a tree. From behind me, I hear as Gil finally catches up, his big, warm hand touching my shoulder.

He leans down beside me, rubbing his hand against my back in soothing circles. I finally look up, holding up my hand to cover my mouth and stifle my sobs.

"She can't be dead, Gil" My voice comes out muffled by my hand as I shake my head uncontrollably.

His face says it all. She is.

As realization finally dawns on me, I feel myself being overwhelmed by emotion. I fall down completely, Gil's strong arms catching me so that I don't fall all the way to the ground.

He holds me in his arms, offering comforting words as I sob into his chest. He's strong and sturdy and warm and it soothes me slightly to be held by someone I had once considered my best friend.

He holds me back tightly, even as my energy pents up so much I'm scolding hot.

Ajak had been killed, I assume. One of the deviants must have killed her.

They were going to suffer. I was going to kill all of them one by one.

Ajak had been like a mother to me. I knew that out of all of us Eternals I had been the closest to her. She'd offered me advice when she could. She was one of the only people who could truly control my anger and my energy.

I should have gone to check on her. I should have visited more often. I should have noticed something was wrong when she'd stopped answering my texts.

Guilt crashes over me, filling every crevice in my body.

She was gone. She was truly and actually gone.

And as I cry in Gil's arms, I find myself missing the only person who'd held me at my lowest and pushed me to my highest. The only person who'd actually cared.

The only person who made me feel safe and at home.

Him.

a/n short chapter by expect a double update today!

[Continue reading next part](#) □