《The Forest Spirit who sought the Gods》

14 Wild night 2

Disclaimer / this chapter contains only fighting and no particular plot. Expect graphic violence here. People who are adverse to blood or cruelty might want to skip this one. The others get a free pass into Thani's fight-hungry mind and will discover exactly WHY fighting close range against Kali's believers is the worst of ideas.

"Alright, come at me you little wimps! I can guess you have already fought other followers of Kali, but did you know? We're able to take down five times our numbers alone, and up to ten times in groups! I only see six of you here, who's ready to die!"

Standing straight on the fallen trunk, back to the lake, her little speech sent back a wave of thick fear through her blessing's senses, telling her she would have more room for errors, their apprehension preventing them from exploiting any holes, fearing a trap. Smiling, she decided to add fuel to the fire. "Hey big boy with the shield, tell me who's the closest to you here, so I can rip him apart first! You've only been blessed with strength, I can feel it... Will the other two turn blind from rage when you break? Hmm? Come on! Fight me!"

Her crazy urging and taunts sent shivers down their spines. Her pupil-less eyes were eerie, her gaze combined with her scar-riddled and tattooed body enough to make them flinch. She was sure of it now. Two followers of Theomars, one of Oberon, three non-believers. The protector had someone close included in the three. She could see the backliners moving, and knew that was her cue for action.

"Let's dance! AHAHAHAHAHA ~~~~~" Her insane laughter resounded in the night as her magic pulsed through her arms. She rushed at the weaker three to her left, turning her back to the heavy and strong warriors. Her best bet was on reducing the number of opponents quickly, breaking Oberon's follower's powers at the same time, before going back to the stronger ones. She would be fine as long as she didn't take any mobility crippling or instantly lethal injury.

"Lucas, block her!" One of the two women pushed the shield-bearing man in front, then got ready to flank Thani as soon as she was stopped. "Sorry missy, but I won't be the one to die today!"

"Ahahah, want to bet on that? The stake's all of your heads!" She cut her left arm lightly, and smeared the running blood on her magic-infused tattoos. Still holding her dagger in the right hand, she swung her opposite arm towards Lucas, and her tattoo detached from her skin, forming a strange spiderweb which grabbed his shield. She pulled him down, tripping him forward.

"What is that magic! Malar never told us anything like this!" The second woman behind Lucas turned pale, terrified by Thani's unknown magic.

"It's called Blood Animation if you want to know!" Thani dodged a panicked sword stab from the shield-bearer at the same time, riposting with one of her own. However the leather armour managed to deflect her hit, turning this exchange into a draw. "It lets me do cool things like THIS!" She threw herself in Lucas' embrace, her free left hand cupping his face. Her left tatoo jumped from the shield the man's face, covering his head entirely, making him both blind and unable to breathe.

The three warriors behind would catch up in a dozen seconds at most, Thani had to decide which woman to kill first. One of them first would break Oberon's follower's powers early, giving her respite by slowing him down, the other would press her for time. She kicked down the man struggling for air, looked intently at her two other foes and spoke in a low, intimidating voice "Who next?". The difference between her crazy attitude and the bloodthirsty one now finally made them realise how close they were to death.

"Don't fight her! She's trying to get you into a close melee and we won't be able to help you!" Gramor's approaching voice boomed into the air, waking everyone up from that terrifying first trade. Lucas struggling unsuccessfully on the ground told them of their ennemy's magic strenght.

"So what if they know, big man? They don't get to choose!" Thani's right tattoo snaked around her shoulder down her left hand, ready to jump at another target. No more time to focus on her emotion sensing blessing to find the most scared one now. She lunged at the one closest to the shore, intending to break the encirclement to get some more freedom. The target took a step back to give time for her partner to catch up and pincer Thani.

Thani used her tattoo to grab her target's sword and hand, leaving her exposed to her own weapon.

"Leave Delia alone, you madwoman!" She traded a slash across the woman's throat for a heavy stab to her belly, giving her the first non-self injury of the fight. No reaction from the big lug behind her, she got the wrong one.

"You should have gone for the head.", she said, turing her empty eyes to the last

woman and grinning. "Who are you... How can someone so young be this strong?" Felicity's voice was choked, her face harboring tears, her sword still stuck inside Thani's abdomen.

The tattoo left the dying Delia's sword and grabbed both combatants in a tight embrace. "Blood Family. Give my regards to your companions when then come after you." Grinning from ear to ear, she activated more of her magic, sending it both towards her newest gaping wound and Felicity. "Transfusion!".

Gramor's heartbroken howl in the night covered the woman's agonized one. The living tattoo released the two women, and only Thani was left standing. Felicity fell to her back, gasping for air and holding her abdomen, now adorned with the same wound she inflicted seconds before.

Jamie, Frond and Gramor caught up as Thani pulled the sword out of herself, and began healing at a visible rate. She threw her short dagger at Lucas' face to finish him before they could react, pulling back her second tattoo at the occasion. Both parties stood roughly five meters apart, staring at each other. "I'm going to need something larger for round two." Thani swung a tattoo like a whip, using it to swipe the sword of Felicity, who was bleeding out.

"Now THAT is a knife. How are you feeling, big man? Ready to get cut up by your relative's weapon? Who was she, a sister, a girlfriend maybe?".

She could already imagine the man's distorted face under his helmet, Oberon's curse for failing to protect his loved ones doing its work of robbing him from his blessing and more. "Now fall for me. Kneel, and I just might let you live to bury your dead. Your God's curse will leave you by then, am I right? Such a dilemma, isn't it? Die a dog's death, unable to even move with your heavy armor, or suffer mental agony as everyone you're familiar with dies?"

Turning to the two apostles of Theomars, she continued : "I'm no follower of Deva and you both know it. Get worked up too much and you'll go blind. Don't and die to me."

"Jamie and Frond, followers of the Warrior God. Do not humiliate us. We will not be swayed by your words, you must have spent an incredible amount of energy in the fight just now to finish it early. You were aware that if we caught up before then it would be your end. Gramor won't be able to do anything anymore, you have already won. Why keep fighting?"

She squinted her eyes and gave a few swings with her sword. "You told me your names, now let me tell you mine in honor of your God. I am Thani, head of the Blood Family, Blessed four times. Praying and managing gets boring, you know? I can finally indulge in my little guilty pleasure after 14 years. Dont you dare take that fight

from me and run." She tapped her wound with her free hand, showing off her now healed body. "I'm impressed at your discipline after witnessing our little carnage here. The last half of my magic will be enough for you! Now let's paint the earth red!"