

Befitting

Von Juju-Chan

Kapitel 6:

No trace of Loki was to be seen during the next two days, not in the halls, not in the hallways... nowhere. Given the days were passing by faster than usually – at least to Thor they were – it surprised him. In the end it might well be Loki's last chance to bid everyone he held dear goodbye. Was his little brother ashamed of what he had done... or of his defeat? That would probably be it, he thought, he knew Loki well enough to understand. Even as children it was a habit he had always had. Pride. Pride had kept Loki from so many things in the past but this time was different, wasn't it? Their father had told them Loki was not expected to ever return. Thor sat down under one of the trees in the garden, sighing. The time was too short to come up with a good plan. Well, he had never been one given to planning it was his strength that had won every battle, not his great mind. He chuckled. Some time ago he had felt ready for everything, ready to become the king of Asgard, but what use was a king unable to even protect his own kin, let alone an entire kingdom? A king should never feel this useless and somewhat dull. This time there would be no victory, no way to not disregard one of his responsibilities. Odin was right, he was aware of this: As heir of Asgard he was not supposed to leave the kingdom alone when it might be at the brink of war, the peace with Joutunheim was everything but stable, the dark allies of Loki could decide to try to invade Asgard any time. He was to remain behind to protect his people, should they need arise. He clenched his fist and smashed it into the ground. There was something more important to him than the throne of Asgard. Loki had done many wrongs but he was still his brother. Would always be, no matter how much Loki denied it. As his older brother it was Thor's duty to bring him back on the right path, to protect him from the shadows that had crept into his heart and corrupted his soul. He was ready to give anything to get his little brother back and to roam the light with him once more. Letting him go to his demise, all alone... he was unable to do this. The price to pay for this selfish wish would be almost unbearable to pay, though: He would have to forsake his people, defy the order of his father and king and there was probably no way he would get back to Midgard in time... in time to see his friends again, to see *her* again. He had thought about it so much, all the time and he still had no clue which betrayal would weigh heavier on his heart.

Loki had spent the last two days in his chambers. He had no desire to see anybody. When Odin had proclaimed his sentence he had pondered whom he would feel the need to see one last time and somehow unsurprisingly he found there was none. Not one person in Asgard he had the desire to speak to and he knew it was the same with them. None had come to see him, either. Before everything had happened, he had

considered Thor's friends his friends as well but now he knew he had deceived himself thinking that way. Why would they consider him a friend anyway, he was not a warrior even though he had fought side by side with them. *Some do battle, others just do tricks.* That was what Thor had said to him before he was supposed to be crowned. This was what they saw in him: A trickster, unworthy of either their respect or even friendship. That guy who would even lose to a maiden in an honest fight with weapons. He had been so blind, all these aeons he had been in Asgard, blind to the scorn and mockery aimed at him, unspoken but obviously stated in their faces. And now he had been let down by everybody he could see it clearly, he had heard it during the celebration, their true thoughts. Asgard's true face was just as ugly as his own actual guise.

He went to his closet and opened a drawer filled with nothing but a small box he took out. In it was a lock of long, blonde hair. Some time ago he would have known whom he wanted to see at least once again before he went away. When he had been younger he had been fascinated by the maiden whose hair he had kept all these years. She had not yet been a warrior, no, she was simply one of the fairest maidens in this realm. Sif. But just like everyone else she had preferred his big brother and out of his jealousy he had stolen her beautiful hair. He reclined on the bed, the lock clenched in his hand. The hair was still soft and shimmered like pure gold. They had never been friends and after he had stolen her hair she hated him. Well, he had brought her a replacement but these hairs had turned ravenblack. Just like his own hair. It had been an accident, they had been golden in the beginning, but, well... it hadn't worked out. He had been the reason for Sif to start her path as warrior. Thor had been furious at him for his prank, everybody had been. He stroked the tress, smiling. He had been a brat. Especially since he had only wanted to be Sif's friend because she had been so unnervingly fascinated by Thor. He stood up. There was one visit he had to make and he had almost forgotten about it.

After he had gotten ready, Loki went to the stables. At least Sleipnir deserved his attention. He looked out for people coming his way and hid when they did. At least he knew almost every secret pathway Asgard's residence had and truly, he made it to the stable unseen.

"Tch, hey, Sleipnir, it's me." he addressed the magnificent stallion and as soon as he had heard him, Sleipnir was standing next to the door, neighing. Loki grabbed an apple he had plucked on the way and held it so Sleipnir could eat it.

"Sorry it took me so long. I'm sure you already know it. I'm here to say goodbye, my little one. I wished I could take you along, but... well..." Loki shook his head.

"Don't worry, I'm sure Sleipnir will understand." Loki froze. He hadn't even heard her enter.

"I thought you would come here at last, my son. You wouldn't leave without coming here." After a moment to retain his composure he turned to her.

"I thought I was alone."

"I know. But I had to see you, Loki. I had hope you would come... to me at least. Did you not wish to take your leave of me?" He looked down and licked his lips.

"To what end?"

"My dear Loki... to what end does a son grant his mother her wish to see him before he parts with her for an indefinite amount of time?"

"...I came here to see Sleipnir."

"Loki..."

"Please... I only wanted to see him."

"So you want me to leave?" Frigga asked, merely whispering.

"...yes. But promise me one thing...."

"What is it, Loki?"

"Make sure Sleipnir is fine. That is all I need to be certain of." Loki stroked Sleipnir's forehead affectionately.

"He will not lack anything. He never did, you know this." Loki nodded and hugged Sleipnir's head, burying his face in Sleipnir's mane.

"...leave me alone, please." Frigga hesitated, she knew what Loki's voice meant. It took him everything he had to not cry. She went to him and stroked his hair, just once, before she turned to leave.

"I shall see you tomorrow at the latest ..." Frigga had been gone for some time, before Loki had enough strength to answer.

"Don't..."

"Thor! Thor" There you are..." The young woman ran towards the sleeping figure under the tree, her black hair swinging with every step she took.

"What are you doing, sleeping in the garden? I had to ask Heimdall to tell me where you are. Your mother wishes for you to come to her chambers." It took Thor a little before he was awake enough to understand who came there and disturbed his sleep.

"Uhhh... Sif? What are you doing here?" She stood there, her hands on her hips.

"Did you listen at all? The queen demands your presence. It seemed to be urgent. And... I also wanted to take my leave. Ours, actually. Volstagg, Fandral, Hogun and I are being sent to the dwarves." She offered him her hand to help him getting up.

"I shall hurry to her. And, well... a convenient timing, isn't it?" He took her hand and rose. Sif shook her head.

"I know, but it was the king's order."

"Sometimes I fear he knows us too damn well, right?" So his father was sending away the ones he knew they would have accompanied him anywhere. It was getting harder and harder to decide.

"The allfather knows everything, Thor. And he is wise, he knows what is best." Did he hear a tiny bit of frustration in her voice?

"So they say." He knew this was the chance to discuss his plans with one of his friends. Sif would understand him, he hoped. Or maybe not.

"...there is nothing we can do, Thor. Nothing you can do without defying Odin. You knew when you went to capture him, you knew it might... end like this." She was trying to comfort him, but there was no need to do so.

"He's my brother. And I did, what had to be done. I guess I always do what has to be done."

"Right now you really sound like a king, Thor."

"Oh, shut up, Sif!" He found himself laughing.

"Enjoy your time with the dwarves and look after the others. And make sure to tell me what happened once we meet again." Sif directly looked into his eyes.

"I promise. And now you should hurry to your mother instead of gabbing."

"You are right. Lady Sif... greet my friends and take care." He hurried off.

"I guess you are the one who should take care, Thor. Don't do anything you will regret."

When he reached his mother's chambers, he found her not alone, but in company of his father. He bowed before them.

"Mother, father. I was requested to come here?"

"Yes, Thor. There is something I want you to take to your brother... would you do me this favor? It seems he has no desire for my presence." She stretched out her hand, in which a tiny pendant on a silver necklace was lying.

"This is an amulet which has been in my possession for... a very long time. I want him to have this for his journey. It's a magical amulet." Thor opened his hand and felt the cold metal touching his skin when Frigga dropped it.

"I don't think he will be glad to see me either." Now Odin stepped forward.

"There is another thing I want you to do when you are there. A little errand. Take this and make sure he will receive it as well. Do not tell him it was I who gave it, understood?" Thor nodded.

"I will."

"Then off you go, my dear son." Frigga smiled at him whilst Odin blinked.

The two things their parents had given him weighed heavier than expected. Cold and somehow he knew this was the magic they emitted, although he had no magical intuition whatsoever. No, he was glad to give them to his brother as soon as possible – but he found his brother's chambers empty.