

# Befitting

Von Juju-Chan

## Kapitel 15:

This kind of rest had been exactly what Loki had needed. Not only because of the trouble he had had since he had arrived in this realm but also because of all the distress that he had had during his last days... back there. There was no dream, no emotions, no memories as if his whole existence had been switched off. Enough to allow his body and especially his mind to recover from the hardships. When he awoke some time later to a gentle light from outside, he felt better. His head no longer ached and he had the feeling even his magic had partially recovered but that could be wishful thinking. The fact remained: He felt better and prepared to take up where they had finished yesterday. At least he assumed a night had passed whilst he had rested. There was only one thing he disliked and that was the feeling of having been incautious. No matter how much he had needed to sleep, he had not actually intended to let his guard down in this way. In the end he did not know what kind of surprise his host could have had in store for him. He shook his head and swore to himself not to allow such improvidence to occur again.

"So you have awoken, young one from afar." The sudden speech startled Loki but he brought himself not to show it.

"It seems I am." He looked up to face the man who had picked him up and kept him save from this beast he had called 'ground'.

"I fear I do not know how to provide for beings like you but maybe the things I can offer are suited to nourish you." With a swift motion he gesture towards the room they had entered first when they had arrived there. So they had some kind of dining room even in a realm so far away from everything... a funny thought. Something so ordinary between all these things that made no sense whatsoever. But Loki had no intention to take a chance.

"I am grateful for your offer but I think I should stick to the things I have brought along. No offense meant, I simply prefer not to push my luck." He hoped he sounded as polite as he had intended. Nothing good could come from offending the only being in this realm that had proven not to mean any immediate harm to him.

"A wise choice. So be it." Not a single trace of any reaction was showing. Had Loki not known better, he would have suspected Thenaree had never actually expected him to accept the offer. But his last words got right under Loki's skin. Those had been his

father's ... the allfather's last words to Laufey before everything started to fall apart. Thor's last words before he had given up on him. This short sentence's sound felt like a whiplash. He had to pull himself together, those memories belonged to the past now. They were no longer able to hurt him. He followed his host quietly. Had Thenaree noticed anything odd about him, he had carried it off well and refrained from mentioning it. Together they stepped into the entrance room and Loki sat himself down. No time to indulge in reminiscences, the here and now was by far enough to keep his mind from wandering off.

"May we continue now where we stopped yesterday?" Thenaree sat down at the opposite side of the table, carefully watching Loki.

"This is what we have decided when you retired yesterday. I assume the rest has set you up?" For an instant, Loki felt uneasy due to the piercing glance upon him.

"It has, indeed." He met the other's gaze with determination. There was no need to be afraid of this man but neither was there a reason to be rude or, even worse, dupable. Unfortunately it left him without possibility to inquire about the magic this realm held. "I believe I have understood some of the things you explained to me yesterday. But there is one thing you did not tell me... what is the actual reason you took me in? You said something about the cocoons whispering my name..."

"Well, Loki, they do." Loki swallowed hard when he heard his name vocalized by this man he had never introduced himself to.

"So you know who I am?"

"I'm far from knowing who you are. You can only know that which knows itself, can you not?" Another smile but this time rather unpleasant in Loki's eyes.

"Stop talking in riddles, old man."

"I know your name and I know you are not supposed to exist in this world. That is all I can tell you for that is all I know myself." Loki could sense no lie in this statement and he usually was able to tell a lie from the truth. He relaxed a little and chose to accept this answer. The guy would not tell him more anyway and there were other matters he could use some information on.

"What is it the cocoons are housing?" He clenched one fist underneath the table, almost able to feel this sickening warmth and the steady pulse inside of it. The red liquid they had shed when they were being wracked by this other monstrosity. The short moment of calmness when he had rested against one of them...

"I do not know. I only ever saw them exist like this." Loki once more missed something like emotion in this old voice but there was none, probably never had been.

"You never cared?"

"No." It was a simple statement.

"...I see." He did not. He did not understand this at all. Even someone who was not nearly as curious as he was would have been wondering, wouldn't they? Even an unintelligent, stupid oaf like Thor. Yes, even Thor would have wondered and once he would have been done wondering, he would probably have smashed the whole forest for the sake of destroying that which he was unable to comprehend. He would have destroyed the whole forest with all the might Mjollnir unjustifiably provided him with. But Thor was back in Asgard or even in Midgard to see this strumpet he had fallen for. There was no reason to think about him. "...have you ever heard of a race called 'Chitauri', old man?" Of course it was risky to mention them but maybe, just maybe Theranee knew something, anything, about them.

"... I have never heard of them." Had the man really hesitated or had Loki started to imagine things?

"Is that so?"

"We here know nothing about your 'Chitauri', Loki. There is nothing outside of this world that would be of interest for us." It was true but maybe only to a certain degree. Or he really was going crazy. There had to be a reason for Odin to send him into this world of all the worlds he could have sent him to. A faint rumbling outside distracted him for a moment. In the end it had been Asgard's wish for him to deal with the Chitauri. Or rather get dealt with by them – either way was desirable for them. So what reason would there be for them to purposely delay his meeting with them? He was brought back by Thenaree's voice. "May I now be the one asking you some questions?"

"I guess it would only be fair. Ask me whatever you want." But don't expect me to answer all of your questions truthfully, he added in his mind.

"You are not here because you want to. Why have you come here?" Loki brought his hand to the amulet he had around his neck.

"I came here.. to sort things out."

"With those... Chitauri?"

Loki nodded. "That's the plan." It wasn't exactly a plan. It was more of a suicide commando.

"You doubt it yourself. Even though you were given such a strong charm?" He gestured towards the amulet Loki held in his hand.

"This? It's only a memento of... a dream." The dream of being a prince of the Aesir, beloved son, brother and friend. The nightmare of betrayal. The other man stood up.

"Well, Loki... I wonder how long you will last running."

"I beg your pardon?" The man did not face him but all of a sudden his shoulders

appeared to be broader than before.

"What you seek is in turn seeking you. And it appears as if you are about to be found within no time..." The old man turned to him. "They tell me it might be too late for you to run away." And then Loki felt it... how his heart convulsed in his chest. "Maybe it's for the best for you not to try at all. The plains do not hide you."

How could he have been found? How did the Chitauri know he was...? He looked at the man, shocked.

"So... you have sold me out to them? This was why you brought me here?!" Loki asked him calmly as if this was exactly what he had expected. But he had not expected this kind of premature end to his journey.

"There has been no need to tell anyone anything."

Loki jumped up, cursing. "Damn it all!" He was not ready to meet them just yet. Some more preparations would have been necessary. He had had no time to figure out how to get his magic to work in this realm. "Be warned, old man – I will come back to you and finish you off if I figure out you betrayed me!" The man had been right, though: the plains would not hide him and his sorcery would not be too helpful in its weakened state. But the noises he heard from the forest made clear that there was no time to waste now.

"You should just..."

"Stay here and let myself be caught? As if!" He quickly took his stuff and looked around. He only had to be faster than they were.