

“Wait!” Lylor exclaimed as he looked at Androcles quickly and saw him smile and then he turned back to Martin’s image. “You speak... you speak as if you are already here Martin.”

“Here?” Martin hissed. “Hell, yes I am here! I’m been busting a gut cause my son takes too damn long to do shit sometimes! Make room for us in that transport bay *keto*, we’re inbound in nine minutes. *SPARTA’S WRATH* will remain Shrouded until its time to say hello to Koltar Four.”

“You are here?” Kesas exclaimed now as he realized what Martin was saying.

“I’ll see you all in nine minutes.” Martin spoke before he ended the transmission and Androcles recovered his P1.

“I suggest we go to the transport bay.” He told them. “Things will move quickly once father arrives. He doesn’t like to beat around the bush so to speak.”

“He has been here all of this time and you said nothing?!” Lylor snapped at Androcles.

Andro secured his P1 on his belt and nodded his head. “That is correct.” He spoke.

“Don’t you think that you owe us an explanation for that?” Lylor snapped again but much less forcefully.

Androcles shook his head. “No.” He answered bluntly before turning and heading for the door of the command center and into the corridor.

Lylor looked at Kesas with wide, angry eyes and saw that he was looking back at him with something akin to a smile on his face.

“You think this is funny?” He rasped out the question.

Kesas nodded his head slowly. “Yes.”

“How can you think this is funny?” Lylor demanded.

“I have come to the realization that...” Kesas looked at Lylor. “We... we are not dealing with normal Lycavorians Lylor. We are dealing with direct descendants of Daniho and Ashten Mahanlo. Martin, his oldest son Androcles and all of his children are those descendants. Never were there two more confounding men alive. You could never predict what they would do next and you know this. They are the same. We are dealing with Kelia’s bloodline Lylor Kirek. You are Kelia’s beloved mate, yes, but you are not of their bloodline. You do not have Mahanlo blood flowing within your veins as they do. All of them are much younger than us, yet their combat skills surpass anything that we have. Anything that your sister, Taig and Yasha have been able to train our people in. Can you stand there and deny that to me?”

Lylor looked quickly at Aryera who had remained silent until now. “Kesas is correct Lylor.” She told him.

Lylor turned back to Kesas. “Then what do you suggest Kesas?” He snapped. “I will not stand by while my Kelia is a prisoner of that foul women! I will not!”

Kesas shook his head. “And I don’t expect you too Lylor my friend. I don’t believe your family expects you too. What I do suggest is this. All of us... we have lived in this bubble out here for so long that we have forgotten that events have spun right along without us outside of this bubble we are in. You heard what Lady Reva told us on that ship. He has been King for less than thirty years and he has united our people unlike at any other time in our history according to her. Who but someone with the blood of Daniho and Ashten could do such a thing. And he has

finally discovered us out here and he intends to see his family reunited. No matter who he has to crush in order to do that. All of them do. You can see it in their eyes. In their movement as they walk. They are not here to play games Lylor.”

Aryera reached out and placed her hand on her brother’s arm. “Kesas speaks truth *fervon* and we should listen to him. I love Kelia as I would any sister that I ever had Lylor, but Kesas is correct. Martin, Androcles, even Lady Reva, they are her blood Lylor. This is her *nathos*. They have come for her and they do not intend to fail. We are family to them but we are not their blood.”

“They would not... they would not leave us!” Lylor hissed softly.

Aryera shook her head. “No... they don’t intend to leave us.” She spoke. “But you have seen what they can do *fervon*! Their equipment. Their ship. They fight beside *sinuovas* Lylor! Who among us can say that?”

“Then what do we do?!” Lylor asked. “Tell me!”

“I suggest we grab our boots and jump onto the ship and let them pull us along.” Kesas told him. “I have a sense that Martin will not dismiss us by any stretch of the imagination. And what we can learn is more than anything we could ever hope for.”

Lylor looked at him. “You trust him that much?” He asked. “You trust them?”

Kesas smiled at him. “I trust the Mahanlo blood that flows in their veins.” He answered.

Lylor looked at the chart table as everyone in the room stared at him. Mari and Brendi had remained silent during the exchange but like everyone else they were now staring at Lylor. All of them saw him nod his head after several moments.

“My heart... my heart tells me the same thing.” He said finally looking at Kesas.

Kesas nodded with a smile and gripped his arm. “Every day for more years than I can remember Lylor, I have asked for a sign. Anything that would tell me that all was not lost, that hope had not abandoned us. I said this prayer while standing beside your cryo chamber Lylor my friend. Every day! That sign is now here... and it is the brightest point of light that these old eyes have ever seen. I intend to be there when that light shines upon the Arhtai Pack and their vile deeds. You know how passionate Daniho Mahanlo was Lylor... and how cruel he could be if he felt someone had wronged his blood.”

Kesas looked at Lylor for a long moment, his eyes moving to Aryera and then back to Lylor.

“I see that in Martin’s eyes Lylor.” Kesas spoke softly. “And it makes me shiver in horror knowing that but by the grace of Daniho Mahanlo, I would be working beside Yelma Arhtai right now. Just as she asked me the day Daniho became our King.”

“What?” Lylor gasped aloud with wide eyes.

Kesas nodded his head. “She asked me to come work for the Arhtai as an advisor the day Daniho was named King. The next morning, Daniho came to me and asked me to stand with him and help him to learn.” Kesas smiled. “You know what my decision was.”

“Kesas I... we never knew that!” Lylor gasped.

Kesas shook his head. "Nor did Daniho." He said. "Which is why I have honored my vow to him with such devotion. Now his descendants are here... and I intend to help them put their family back together because I believe! I believe now, just like I believed back then!"

"*Avoi!*" Aryera's voice carried across the room then and finished any talk. They all knew what needed to be done.