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'Lost'

By R C Stankewitz

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Chapter 5

“Reconnaissance Missions”

Their breakfast over, the trio sat down to get to know one another better. Because he was the host, Kellan decided that he would go first.

“I live in, or I guess that I should say that I did live in Roseville, California with my mate, Tasha” he began to tell them. “My Tasha is a Siberian tiger that I met in the Air Force. We married after I was out of the military and we settled in Roseville. We have two sons, Kellan Jr. and Kory. They're both equines, Kellan Jr. looks like me and his younger brother Kory has his mother's ruddy orange coloring and faint stripes on his arms and legs.” Kellan smiled with a look of love for his family. “Kory is named after my brother” he added as a look of sadness crossed his muzzle. The two immortals could feel his pain as he said that last part.

After a few moments, Kellan looked at Torvald as he said “I would like to hear your story. I'm not sure why, but you seem...different...from other equines I have known.”

The berserker nodded and spoke. “I am different because I'm not from the 21st century. I was born in Denmark in the 10th century. I was a Berserker in my former life.” He looked to see that Kellan was not surprised by this information.

“I thought something was different about you” the smaller equine stated. “I've never seen another blond equine since Kory's football team played a team from southern California. Their coach was a blond equine femme.” this caused the immortal pair to smile at one another and start chuckling.

“Was her name Aslaug Larsdatter?” Torvald asked with a silly grin on his mug. The tigress was trying her best not to crack up laughing at the situation.

“Yeah, I think so” Kellan replied. “It's been so long ago it's hard to remember.” He was puzzled by the fact that his guests were laughing at this information.

“We know that blond femme” the tigress stated. “She visits with us often. That game was just three weeks ago by our time.” Torvald was laughing now as Victoria continued. “We remember your son because he really stands out from the crowd.”

“That *is* scary if you ask me” Kellan commented. “We must be from the same world then.” The immortal pair were nodding their heads in agreement. “You still haven't told me how you became immortal, though.”

The berserker got up and lifted up his tunic to show Kellan two scars about four inches wide, one on his back and one on his chest. “This was from a broadsword that killed me in a battle over Saxony.” He saw the smaller equine's eyes go wide from that information. “I wasn't supposed to die that day so the gods made me immortal to continue my work. I was brought to Seattle in 1891 where I was to learn my craft. Some things happened to derail that however. I was left in a mess, freezing out in the snow. I was thankful that Loke sent somebody to see after me.” Kellan was still mulling this over when the Trickster shimmered into view.

“Torvald! My favorite immortal stallion! Odin says they're trying to figure out exactly where this place is!” Loke told the berserker excitedly. The weasel turned and looked around the cabin to realize there was some fur there that was new to him. “And who is this stallion that I haven't met before? Is he one of your friends or family?”

“This is Kellan” the huge stallion said. “He has been here for 22 years but I think it's less time than that on our world. I think by what we were just talking about that he's from our world.”

“Well, any friend of yours is a friend of mine” the weasel stated. “I am Loke” he said to Kellan as he smiled at him. “I will see to it that you're rescued from here too” he added, sitting down on the couch with the smaller equine.

Loke turned to face the berserker again. “Odin, Freya and Christopher are planning out how to rescue you as we speak. Wait a little while and summon me again. I will tell you any news that I hear.” The Trickster began to shimmer again so he stepped to the middle of the room. “Odin can pull me back from here. I will tell your family you are OK whe...” The weasel was cut off as he shimmered out of sight.

“Well, you see what we have to put up with” the tigress said as she looked at the smaller equine. Kellan was trying to say something as he pointed to the spot where Loke had been just moments before.

“Apparently I can summon him by saying his name” the huge equine stated. “Every so often I accidentally summon him. He really hates that.” The smaller equine was starting to grasp what was up with these two immortals.

“Victoria, how did you become immortal?” the smaller equine asked as he looked at her intently.

“Torvald had to overcome his fear of losing me to be able to fulfill his work for the gods” she began. “The archangels interfered with that so I was pulled into his quest to overcome that fear.” The tigress swallowed hard as she remembered the evil she felt in Surt's realm. “I was taken into a dark realm that would have destroyed me if I were a mere mortal, so the gods saved me in the only way they could; they made me immortal.”

“OK, now that I'm totally confused, what do we do now?” the smaller equine stated.

“I guess we sit tight and wait for the gods to rescue us” the berserker said as he made himself comfortable in his chair.

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“The gods are going to know about your game” the older entity said nonchalantly. He had watched the weasel visit the cabin with interest. **“You know Christopher will send the archangels after you.”**

“I am not afraid of the angels! I can defeat them easily!” the younger entity replied to the older one in a defiant tone of voice.

“You are making a mistake if you ask me” the older entity commented. **“I wouldn't mess with the gods if I were you.”**

“Don't you have a war to start somewhere?” the younger entity said flippantly as he went back to planning his next moves.

###

It had only been a few minutes since he had left when Loke reappeared at the Svensen residence. “I have good news” he said to the two feline femmes. They were still sitting on the couch, message in paw.

“Well, what is it?” Valerie asked as her tail twitched in anticipation. She was more than ready for her sister and brother-in-law to return home safely any minute.

“Odin, Freya and Christopher are formulating a plan” the weasel stated. “I will no doubt hear something soon.” He started to leave but stopped quickly. “Your family are with another equine named Kellan. They are in a cabin so they are safe for now.” The Trickster then shimmered and left.

“At least they have shelter” Valerie commented as she got a look of relief on her muzzle.

They went into the kitchen and were making some sandwiches for dinner when the doorbell began to ring, followed by knocking on the door. Barbara went to the door and looked out the peephole to see the filly standing there.

“Aslaug! Come in, please!” she beckoned as she stood to the side for the filly to enter. It was apparent that she had just come from a pickup game at the park. The Shieldmaiden was still wearing her football cleats, shoulder pads and her favorite jersey that was custom made by a filly in San Francisco. It was a black jersey that said in clearly legible white letters on the front

**Your God died nailed to a cross.
My God carries a big hammer.
Do the math!**

“Loke found me and told me what happened” the filly stated as she sat down at the kitchen table. “This is bad. I don't know what to do for them.” Aslaug took a sandwich that was offered and nibbled at it. She finally said quietly “This is something that's best left for the gods to deal with.” She was looking at the others with a look of sadness on her muzzle. “The gods will get them back.”

###

Odin, Freya and Christopher were sitting at a table in the lion's home, waiting for one more fur to join them. “What's keeping that shifty weasel?” the one-eyed wolf asked as he scanned about. “I asked him to meet us here some time ago.” As they waited a few more moments, a very rough-looking Archangel appeared with Loke in his custody. Gabriel, the feline archangel was bruised, battered, scuffed up and was missing a few teeth. The obvious injuries were his left eye being blackened and swollen shut along with his wings being held stiffly against his back, missing quite a few feathers.

“What happened to you?” Freya blurted out as she tried to stifle a laugh. “You look like you were in a battle and lost!” The angel was just shaking his head as he looked at the ground in embarrassment.

“Michael and I went back and tried to apologize to the Shieldmaiden like the boss told us to. Apparently she's still mad at us for that minor incident and didn't want our apology. It has something to do with Victoria being immortal now and how immortality sucks...”

“Minor incident my *good* eye! I should give you and Michael both a sound beating for that!” Odin spoke out as he tried to control his anger. “You know well enough that we

can't make the tigress mortal again. She's stuck with it and that's why the Shieldmaiden is mad at you!" As the wolf sat there and calmed down he finally said "Besides, it doesn't look like she had a hold of you for long enough."

"Yeah, I guess we had it coming" was the angel's short reply. He let go of Loke and shimmered out of sight.

"Nice of you to join us" The lion in the loud camp shirt stated as he motioned for Loke to sit down. Christopher looked at the Trickster and asked "Is it true that Torvald can summon you to his location?"

"He can summon me. So can his stepson for reasons that I do not understand" the weasel replied as he tried to get comfortable. "What does that have to do with me?" he asked as he looked at the others.

"We will use you to transport Freya to his location so I may find them" Odin stated to the weasel. "You will stay near Freya until he summons you again. She will hold your paw and go there with you."

"Oh Great!" the Trickster said to no fur in particular as he picked at the food on the table.

"Well I don't see it as a picnic either" the vixen replied to the weasel. "I volunteered to do this for the Berserker and his mate. They don't deserve to be treated like this."

Oh, OK then..." the weasel said in a dejected tone. "So much for my plans..."

###

Several days had went by for the trio marooned on a strange world so they had passed the time by telling stories about their lives. Torvald was still trying to keep from laughing as he told of Aslaug beating on the Archangels.

"So anyway, when Gabriel dropped the shield, Aslaug beat the daylights out him and Michael both!" The berserker was laughing as he remembered how battered the two angels had looked when they returned to Christopher's realm. "I heard that Christopher's father was going to make them apologize to her face-to-face!" he added. "I wish I could be there to see that! I know it won't go well..."

"That's funny but I have to admit" Kellan commented. "If I went home and told these stories, I would get locked up for being crazy!" He was still smiling as he said "Still, I'd like to see the filly in action, that's for sure. She sounds like a 'One Filly Wrecking Machine' to me!"

"I'll have to remember that" the tigress said thoughtfully. "We never know how to refer to her properly. That reference fits!"

The tigress was picking at the remnants of their snack as she asked their host "Where did the surname Meig'h come from? I don't think I have ever heard that one before."

"It's an old family name that was turned into M-A-Y at some time or another" he replied. "My grandfather revived the name by legally changing his to Meig'h. That hyphen really wreaks havoc with some computer systems!"

It was noticeable to the immortal pair that Kellan had been in much better spirits since they had arrived. He was smiling and his voice even had an upbeat tone to it. They sensed that he was looking forward to being back home with his family. The truth be known, the Svensens were feeling exactly the same way too.

As they sat there, Kellan noticed something going on outside. "It's snowing" he said as he went to look outside. The smaller equine saw that the flakes were rather large as they fell. "It's going to be a cold one tonight" he commented as he turned to look at the immortal pair. "We'd better get some wood inside before we get snowed in." The trio went and carried in enough wood to last a week just as the snowfall got heavier.

"It doesn't snow much here" the smaller equine said to his guests. "When it does, it gets pretty deep out. I've had it above the window openings before." He put a few more pieces of wood on the fire before he began to peel some tubers and roots for a stew. "At least there's no shortage of water when it snows!" He was smiling as he added "It's good to have company when the weather's bad."

"You're a good host, Kellan. I hope we'll see you often when we go home" the tigress said as she helped peel the tubers. "You're a very likable fur." Kellan just smiled to that in embarrassment.

The trio sat around that day and enjoyed the quiet of the snow, the smells of the stew cooking over an open fire and each other's company.

###

"The snow will coop them up" the younger entity stated. "They will get angry with one another and then I will turn them to my will." He was 'smiling' at the thought of having three new warriors under his control.

"You have not paid attention" the older entity pointed out. **"The immortal pair share a love that transcends time itself. Cannot you feel it?"** He was watching the stew slowly cooking in the fireplace. **"There is too much love present to turn them."**

"You still underestimate my abilities" the younger one stated. "I will have them and I will have the Shieldmaiden too."

"**You have told me that before**" the older entity commented as he watched the game unfold.

###

The Shieldmaiden had returned home after having a light meal with the femme lovers and Conrad. She showered up and put on an oversize t-shirt and a pair of sweatpants to lounge around the house in. The plight of the Svensens really bothered the filly so she knelt in front of her shrine that she had made and said a prayer for their safe return.

The filly and the squad had been sent on missions by the gods but the gods had always known where they were so they could pull them back home afterwards. This was something different altogether. As she had been told by Odin, there are many different parallel worlds so a hunt across all of these worlds would take forever. She hoped in her heart that the gods had a plan. As she had told Victoria more than once, being immortal sometimes sucks.

After straightening up her house a bit she retired to her bedroom. It had been a long day and the filly needed some rest for her mind. The last thing that she was thinking about before she fell asleep was how could they possibly find them if it was an unknown realm.