

Kith - I'm not Alone

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Kith - I'm not Alone

by [Reinamarieseregon](#)

Summary

AU: In a second life, Varania keeps bumping into Fenris and feels drawn to him but she does not recognize why. Fenris has a family but feels some things are missing...

In the past he had opted to slay the sister

Beta-ed by friends

Notes

Shortforms guide: dw= don't want

ur=your

MMos= massive multiplayer online game i shorten it

Beta-ed by friends June

Part 1

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

He brushes her arm when they collide, and gasps- flash of a memory that she collapsed before him and his clawed gauntlets covered in horrid blood. *What are those things on my hands?* Her face was obscured by some kind of mist, though he made out scarlet hair and a yellow dress. "You sold me out, now you have no chance at all! Die!"

"Wait! Do I know you from somewhere?" His voice is much louder than he intends. He is gasping though he has not been running. The girl's hair is cut very short and she's tanned, wearing just flats and a checkered blouse. His stack of books scatter loudly to the floor. Feeling a sense of vertigo, Fenris questions himself if he's going mad.

"No I don't think so. I'm sorry, I should have been more careful." Her voice has a ring of curiosity and optimism.

As she bends down to help pick the books up, she can't help studying his distinctive pale hair, if it is a natural hue or dyed, subtle pointed ears. He has a deep voice that does not match his youthful appearance, matched with sharp elfin features. And he also looks smart in the stark black Librarian uniform. He murmurs a hurried thanks and rushes off clutching the books tightly.

This girl is a regular at this library, often doing research for her university lessons. Over the next few days, Fenris can't help observing her, even if he is busy doing paperwork, giving briefings to seniors how to use the IT search catalogues and reminding people not to be too noisy. Sometimes he smells people sneaking in food and even eating.

Then one day, while he is at the counter scanning numerous barcodes of new arrivals, she says, "Hi this is strange. I want to borrow this, but I don't get why my card says it's invalid?"

"Sure, let me check it. Can I have your ID?" Fenris replies, concentrating on the screen. When he touches her ID before reading it, a whisper calls out: *She's your sister Varania* He blinks in disbelief while the computer loads her loan records. His hands become clammy with sweat. 'Who said that?' His partner is on roving duty.

He coughs to clear his throat a few times before he can speak, maintaining his public composure. He checks the chemistry reference book out on the magnetic surface. "All right, it's done. It is due in three weeks' time on the 24th." He clips the receipt and hands it over.

"Thank you, Mister...." She notices his name-tag and slowly enunciates "Fenris. That is a rare name indeed!" She has a nice smile and warm eyes.

“Welcome.” He attempts a smile back. She blushes red and heads over to the entrance. The elf casts his gaze out to the glass doors and sees more people exiting and entering. Much later, Fenris brings his attention back to the keyboard- *Oh no this is her ID! Varania Summers. How can I forget?*

Right away, he starts tracing her contact details. Unfortunately Anders interrupts loudly. “Fenris do you have the keys to the spare meeting room? I can’t get it open.” Anders has just joined as a maintenance staff and panics easily over trivial matters “Someone messed up the passcode again! I’ve to set up for the next session! How?”

“Let me find it, then I’ll come.” Just as he has finally located the keys, some toddlers who have been running amok start bawling and they tell him their mummies can’t be found. “Here they are. The code is on the tag, Anders.” He asks them where they were last seen, and has many more problems to solve.

An hour before closing time, Fenris finally has some time to take a break. Ah he had forgotten to return her ID. Yes most people tend to ask the origins of his name, well his parents wanted to be special and name him after the Norse myths. He uses the desk phone.

Varania feels her phone buzzing. Her ID is missing and she has just noticed now it’s not in her usual purse, nor in her other pockets. *Crap, now I’ve to retrace where I’ve been, the lecture theatres, canteen, garden? I’ve been to so many places today!* She rifles through her packs and messy piles.

She can’t get that elf’s striking features out of her mind, why did he give her such a piercing stare? She presses ‘answer call’ “Hello?”

Fenris’ voice is in her ear, soft and deep. “Is this Miss Varania Summers? I am sorry, I have your ID. Do you wish to collect it now, or come back tomorrow?” She feels her racing heart patter to normal.

“Ah I thought it’s lost! No problem, I’m coming over right now, when does it close?”

“Not until 9pm. It’s fine, I will wait for you.” She cannot fathom why there’s a highly delicious thrill at the thought of Him waiting for her! Am I crushing on him? Stop, he must be attached already being so hot! She runs all the way there, before going in she sees his pale hair through the glass. Varania combs her hair and touches up her makeup.

“Hi! I had been looking for that, and then you called.” He apologizes again, holding her ID out with both hands. This time when she touches him, there’s no vision or premonition. “No problem, I should have checked first. Ah your hands! They’re nice markings.”

Oh even though his shirt is long-sleeved, the vine-like art patterns adorn both his hands to his fingertips. “Yea. A ritual.” All elven clans held this traditional ritual of marking Rite of passage, especially since he always fell ill and his elders deemed the gods’ protection a necessity. Perhaps he had pleaded with his father not to do it, but they wouldn’t listen to an eight year- youngling. If only he could have chosen to have it in a less exposed area. Some days, he wears gloves but his skin gets allergic to the heat and sweat.

She has not left yet and earnestly waits for him to continue. “Family tradition. I didn’t want it but no choice,” he says carefully.

“Oh I see. When my friend had one done, he kept screaming. And that scared me from making any.... Did it hurt a lot?”

“I don’t remember. A long time ago.” Fenris tucks them into his pockets, frowning.

“Sorry, I don’t mean to pry. Thank you, hope to see you again soon! Take care.” Varania blurts, before realizing ah why did she talk so much? Fenris opens his mouth but is speechless. Near the exit, she waves to him again.

Fenris stifles a yawn, not really listening to what they are gossiping about- Bethany, Varric and Leliana. He can’t wait to sleep on his off- day tomorrow, with these weirdly lucid dreams haunting him. Perhaps he has played too many rpgs, Skyrim these weekends, that he keeps killing a person with the very same name. But his sorrow is so painfully etched in his chest, he jerks away, soaked in sweat and swiping tears from his face. After the sixth consecutive *deja vu*, he calls his mother. “Did I have a sister before?”

“No, we just have you and your brother, Fen. What’s wrong, are you getting sick?” His mum has an Ocd-tendency to get overprotective. He quickly reassures her that he’s not. As a child, he suffered poor health that he would be stricken with fever for longer than most elves. Thankfully, after nursing and loads of tonics and supplements, those days were history. He will always be eternally grateful to his loving family.

“Mum, I just have these recurring dreams of a woman. It felt so *real*. ” She reminds him to go for a medical checkup. “I’m not feverish. No it can’t be Isabela’s friends, I don’t drink that much anymore.” Not since he broke out in rashes. Hoping to ease overstimulation, Fenris changes his night routine of playing games and being online to quiet reading and watching BBC documentaries. Mostly he lives alone now, as his roommate is away.

He sleeps more soundly and tries to forget about worrying, yet meetings with that particular girl keep happening.

This library is vast and conducive for self-study and group projects, and Varania delights in coming whenever Fenris is on shift. It can be a pure coincidence. Isabel pretends to act hurt

when Varania notices him speaking to some visitors and excuses herself. “Heyy you are just going off to leave me alone. Again? I wanna chat him up too.” Isabela removes her earplugs and takes out her cherry lipgloss from her mauve pencil case- cum makeup pouch.

“But it’s not like that, I have a problem with my account. It keeps freezing up!” she denies and approaches him quietly, combing her hair down. He is frowning in concentration as the elderly customer complains repeatedly how the aircon temperature should be tweaked as she has joint aches, that young people don’t understand and can he handle the books for her.

“I am sorry but I have no access to that. If you stay nearer to the doors it won’t be as cold.” And then he speaks in another dialect to her friend, carrying the pile for them.

Varania smiles. He is so patient with the old too wow!

When he has settled them, his eyes widen when he sees her waiting. “Hey, how long have you been waiting ? What’s the matter?”

She waves her hands merrily. “It’s fine, I know you’re busy, Fenris. I can wait. It’s an issue with a workshop I want to attend, I can’t sign in. It lags.” What if he gets annoyed and directs her to someone else?

“Today is quite... challenging. Thank you for being patient, come. I’ll go through it with you on the kiosk.” He explains to her every step on the touch screen monitor. Varania admires the deep baritone of his voice and how soft his pale hair is. “I think it should be fine now, the receipt will print. Hm why didn’t you ask the other staff? They are quite helpful too.”

She scans his face for irritation, but he looks the same, with a small smile. “Oh. I like speaking with you. Next time I can, who’re they?”

He chuckles and his ears are slightly red. “So long as they’re in the black uniform, that’s Sebastien with brown hair. The people in green are maintenance or in training like Anders. They may not know. Josephine and Leliana are nice too.”

Hm that Sebastien didn’t speak clearly before. Haha but I can’t possibly scare him that I wish to monopolize him. From the corner of her eye, she notices Isabela coming over. “Hello handsome. That day, I found this card slotted in one of the books.”

Fenris observes it. “I see. Then I’ve to catalogue it. Thanks. Anything else?”

“We w-“ *Sensing she’d say something out of place*, Varania elbows her. The other girl coughs. Varania does hope to ask him if they can meet outside. She curses Isabela internally, who is hitting on him. Fenris is professionally focused, he does not smile. But Isabela is never the kind to take no for an answer.

Whether on a groceries trip or the convenience stores, Varania always shows up somehow. One day she is browsing the latest Game magazine and he is going to pay for his copy. "Hey!

You read that too? I love fantasy and those online free MMos, like Dungeons and Lord of the Rings, do you?" She's so excited that her normal brown eyes are almost golden.

"Oh sometimes when I'm off. I used to like them, why?"

"Can I add you? Um that is, if we are online at the same time? Please. Hang on." She digs into a jean pocket for her phone. Fen is about to say he doesn't really play those anymore, as he prefers the single player Witcher and The Elder Scrolls nowadays. Oh yea he stopped for awhile when some noob players wanted to harrass him on his exact gender-identity, or acted lame.

"Hm, sure. I may not be online for long though. Ha, I almost forgot my nickname." He smiles "Why not give me yours? I'll find you. Did you meet any weirdos?"

"Hell yea. I log off and go to other servers. Some crazy people."

She continues telling him how much she adores playing as an Elf mage!

"So do you also play as an elf? Or you prefer other races? I hope not orcs, they're eugh."

Fenris laughs. "The whole point of a game is to be different. I've tried as an orc before, not bad. I prefer to customize the races for their attributes. I'm not surprised you play as an elf mage. But we're quite mundane, really." She puts back the magazine.

"Nah you're really special. Ahhh, sorry what made me say that. I mean you don't have wings and dragon shouts, but I've always felt very positive about Elves. I hope to study the Celtic history in my next semester." Varania confides, blushing but looking determined.

Normally he does not want to be grouped into his kind "you're all one and the same" but he is impressed by her geekiness. "Good luck. You're not going to buy that?"

"Nope I need to save money." She's stunned after they come out and Fenris holds out the issue. "It's ok, I can't-"

"I want to lend it to you, I know you'll take better care of it. Coz if I bring it back now, Jo and Varric would start folding their pages."

"Wow thanks." Varania feels a pinprick of jealousy at the friends he has mentioned. *Are they his colleagues, how much do they know and understand him? How can they be so careless with his stuff?* "I'll take good care of it."

"No rush. I've to go now, bye." A short man and two ladies are waving and calling to the elf. He joins them.

She has not logged into The Lord of the Rings MMORPG since term tests have been ongoing. *Time to reward myself and maybe wrap up that quest, want to join at least a level 20*

party to do the rescue mission. While waiting for the servers to be less busy, Varania wonders when he may come in. There are no new invites, so she continues a sidequest that she can do on her own. Her character is a scarlet haired Icewitch level 15. While running about collecting items, Varania remembers oh she ought to allow the public to add her on friends list. Previously she had to block some nasties. She plays for about three hours until it's time for bed.

Over the next few nights, Varania only has a brief time to log in as there are projects piling up again. Isabela's sister shares the dorm with her and tends to hog the powerpoints for her personal devices. It's Friday night, no tests tomorrow so she wants to catch up with some single player DragonAge, or Skyrim. "Gina can you unplug one of these? I need it!" She calls out to the closed bathroom door. No response. Varania decides to risk unplugging it. Hm, is it likely that Fenris has sent me an invite yet? The wifi reception sucks, so she continues some DragonAge.

Gina's complaining is tuned out by her ecstatic cheer: Yay a new invite! **From Elgarnon5: hi u are varania? It's me Fenris.** Gina shakes her head "Are you crazy?"

"No I found my friend. Now shoo." Varania silently curses the slow loading servers. It's past 10, would there be a chance he is home now? With cold fingers, she types into the IM chatbox: **Heyy u are here, me too!** His nickname is green. Varania pans around to find him, but there are too many garishly dressed characters of all species and armors. She had randomly generated her name Cildis, and is a slim Wood elf maiden with an oak staff and long red hair.

U are home early today ?

It's a long time before she gets a ping back. **Hi V yea not so busy. Ive not come here for long time Can't see where are u?** She gives him a briefing, grinning. After a while, he shows up on her screen. Elgarnon5 is a hulking orc with staghorns and a masked face. Their characters look very humorous standing beside each other, with the backdrop of a Hobbit Town.

Varania laughs again.

Cildis90 : Lol u really choose to be an orc why?

Elgarnon5: yea I know not cute. Coz can wield dual weapons, many skills, strong. U look nice :)

Cildis90: thx. Hm do u want to go on quest or we just stay here?

Elgarnon5: u mind staying? I've to open door for roomie, he forget keys. Tell me what has change here. What new quests?

They chat for a good two hours, before she yawns. He is less shy online and elaborates more about the differences between the races from the books, movies and games. Varania in turn

shares her deep fascination with Celtic myths and appreciates his special persona. In public, he is very patient because he has to be, whilst in reality and online, he can remove his mask and be bossy with people that annoy him.

Cildis90: u busy tmr? Its nice chat with u Fen! can I text u sometime?

A pause, his status is orange for idle. Elgarnon5: yea am sleepy. Tmr 2nd shift. Er prefer we chat here ok? Phone more for family calls.

Varania nods and answers: ok np. Look fw to meet again soon :p Sleep well

Never mind, I'm content enough that he tried to log in and added me. This is better than nothing. Before he disappears, he adds : not sure, think I come here after tmr. Take care.

'Thank you producers of online games, it's an awesome place to find and meet new friends yay' She closes her laptop and flops on her bed giddily.

About a month later

Fenris doesn't want her to ask him repeatedly for his number anymore. "You don't have to keep thanking me. It is my duty to help customers. I'd do the same for anyone." He takes out his black and silver casing mobile.

"But it's so cool that we get to learn something, and talk like this! Oh when we bumped into each other you asked if you knew me. Why?" Varania tries not to sound too hyper.

He chews his lip. No he cannot possibly talk about that. "I... forgot. All right I've just texted you. Please don't tell other people."

"Yeay no problem! I promise. What kind of apps do you have? Some can really save time..." The girl offers to show him, and he watches, smiling. It is nice to relax with someone who's outside of his small social circle.

530pm National Hospital

Fenris wakes up and finds himself in a foreign green -walled room. He's too weak to move and can't keep his eyes open. Why does everything look so blurry? His tongue feels sore.

"You fainted. Don't move, Fenris. You need more rest." Aveline talks, somewhere to the right. The new clothing feels weird and chafs his skin. His shoes are gone, his wrist hurts with a needle.

“Don’t tell... family.” He whispers, managing to touch her hand. Such a monumental effort, and his lips are so dry. A part of him wants to panic but to hear her reassuring strong voice, the elf is soothed.

“I didn’t. But they have to know. That Panadol didn’t work.” The motherly coworker supports him to sip some water. “You’re on drip, remember not to climb out of bed on your own. Don’t worry, we’ll take care of everything.” She says more things but he’s too drugged to hear it and drifts off. Ave watches his chest rise and fall, covering his thin arm under the blanket.

Bethany pops in. “Is he alright? I got a shock hearing the news.”

“Same. They won’t talk to anyone outside of family. For now it’s good that he’s getting quiet rest. The nurse said it’s best he not be too agitated.” Bethany frowns, a heavy loom of guilt in her mind. On their recent meet, he had mentioned he didn’t have much appetite. Just before he passed out, she had noticed him taking out an emptied strip of Panadol. She thinks, *Once more, we were talking too much to hear his soft voice .*

The next day, he hears his phone vibrating in the drawer. It’s late morning, and some of his energy has returned but his hand shakes badly. Squeaky wheels and people talking outside.

Varania's text: **oh no u ok? Y in hospital?**

He lies on his side. **Tired, waiting for doc.**

V: Others said u din eat much yest. Have u told ur folks?

He blearily remembers hearing Donnic taking his mobile and doing all the arrangements. Dreading how his mother (especially) will get emotional and bossy, he had protested but they ignored him. Said it was necessary procedure.

Pausing, he taps.

F: Not wat I want. They nag me : (

An incoming call from her: I want to come see you today. Does it hurt?

He needs to think through the hazy cloud to find words. “Er, no pain. I took half day. Then-woke up here. No need.”

“Please let me know which hospital you are in, Fenris! After class, my friend’s sister said some people were crowding around , but I didn’t know was this serious. I want to come.”

Her voice wobbles. He doesn’t understand why she’s this upset. They’ve known each other barely a month.

On his end, there's a long silence and Varania starts picturing the worst, that he has collapsed. She repeats 'are you there' a few times. His voice sounds distant and drained, "V, ok talk later. Feel sick bye." Her stomach churns.

Fen feels like he's in some kind of misty dream, though the cool gloves feel his brow and administer some jabs. Those are real, like the migraine that keeps needling his head.

Chapter End Notes

2020: Im proud to be in Rainbow fictioneers my writer friends! Ive gotten helpful betas xd
Thank you Feng and stacy :)

To Be or Not to Be!

Chapter Summary

Truth comes to light. Don't worry, this is not incest fic. I did not know the slash / means the characters being together, have changed.

Chapter Notes

Edited some

When Fenris gets his bearings from the painkillers, he gingerly turns to face the doorway. What a relief that no more hammers are knocking around in his brain. It feels so stuffy that he pushes aside the blankets. Flexing his stiff muscles, his left foot has prickles from being in one position too long. No light. Hm?

A plump man in a white lab coat is talking to his dad, their voices a low murmur. They walk in together. His father is silver haired but still sprightly and a calming influence. *Thank God mother is not here, or I'd have to take care of her now*, he sighs. Mother has a fiery temper from her continental roots, and Fenris' brother inherits that. Hm doesn't seem that Blake came along. It hurts that his brother has not forgiven him yet, but he manages a weak smile. Father clasps his arm gently.

"It seems you had a more severe migraine this time round, my friend. You'll stay for observation. Hope you can eat something light at least, don't fret about anything. Take your time, you might feel nauseous..." The doctor drones on, more about reducing stress and sleeping more. All Fenris vaguely catches are the keywords and the soothing tone. Except for a pale haze shimmer around them, Fenris finds his sight is mostly back to normal. After a nap, the elf is much better.

"Dad, I want to read. I will be alright." He shifts to sit up straighter, when he hears the rustle of pages. His father hands him the leisure section of the papers. "Glad it's not too serious, but you should lie down as much as possible. Didn't you say this job is more balanced than that hellish one?" Yea he had loathed running round small kids, forcing them to do homework when they were more interested in playtime and gossip! Fenris chuckles.

“This one is fine. Ha, I got the horrible batch of kids then. I even took some time off last week” He can’t digest all the words, but is content with the vibrant colours of objects in the ads and celebrities white-teeth smiles. The air is completely silent, just the whir of the airconditioner. Then his phone vibrates a few times, but dad takes it away, then comes back. “Why worry about all these calls? Who is this V girl? Ahhh”

Fenris sighs at his father’s suggestive grin. “A friend. She did say she wants to come. Please.” He holds out his hand.

“I’m not in pain now, Dad. Have you eaten? Don’t tell Mother yet.”

“I can’t promise that. Good thing I don’t own a mobile, you kids these days are glued to screens. Don’t be too long now.” His father opens the paper again as he texts briefly.

Someone softly taps his shoulder. Fenris pushes the hand away and turns away from the light. A slight pinch on the crook of his arm, a needle thing. He rubs his eyes and moans. “Hello, you have a late visitor. He’s much better, but don’t take too long. Official visiting will end in twenty minutes.” Fenris’ acute hearing seems to be waterlogged, everything echoes.

His foggy vision makes out a seated figure and a standing one. Just now when he tried to go to the bathroom, he experienced vertigo and a killer headache. A man had to half carry him there. Absolutely humiliating. So he stays nuzzled in the pillows, warm and fluffy. However the aircon is quite chilling. He fumbles for the blankets.

“Who is it?” Sleepy, go away, his grumpy mind complains

“It’s me. I promised to come, Fenris. How are you feeling?” the blurry bob shifts about, identifying herself as a new friend. But his mind is cluttered with flashes: *how my sword dripped scarlet, and I gave a battle cry. When the last foe vanished, he sank his claws into a man in robes You’re no longer my master! Then he punched and broke the man’s neck. Stop, the shorter elf cried. She had the very same voice, but her eyes had been same like his and she fell to her knees. Why was she here now?*

Shaking his head temporarily, Fenris slowly opens his eyes but not really looking directly at her. Because he has to concentrate or the words will be lost to the winds. His soft voice gets emphatic as the mental- pictures show up, “You’re really here? Not a dream? I didn’t want to tell you yet, but maybe this- is a sign. I think I saw our past, because I was wearing armour. I had some kind of magic. Then after one old wizard died, you said something about giving me up, you had no choice. I feel like I’m going mad! Please don’t come any nearer.” He holds up both hands and averts his face from her.

Varania is shocked by how much weight the patient has lost now, in the pale green hospital robe, hooked to an IV. Fen's usual neat hair is disheveled and he's all confused and disoriented. Josephine had visited him earlier and said he was weak but not in pain. It is now dusk when the staff are starting to clear up the last meal trays.

"I won't be long. Just wanted to check if you're alright, Fenris."

So we won't be talking calmly and bonding like in those doctor-patient dramas, she feels a huge wave of disappointment.

He breathes deeply, eyes closed. She can see the exquisite brands that snake up his lower arm, rune patterns or plants? "Wait who are you?" he rouses, when she comes closer.

She tells him her name again, wondering why he can't recognize her now. Only their breathing and the aircon whirring. He blinks and then a scowl, an expression foreign to her. "I met your dad. He's very friendly. " Maybe she should call the father to come back, so that it won't be so awkward now. Varania opens her handbag, a nervous reaction.

The response the elf gives almost knocks her in the gut and she feels her knees weaken.

"You're *really* here? Not a dream? I didn't want to tell you yet, but it's too much if I don't. I think I saw our past, because I was wearing armour. I had some kind of magic. Then after one old wizard died, you said something about giving me up, you had no choice. I feel like I'm going mad. Please don't come any closer!" He tries to back up while propped against the pillows and his pupils are dilated. His face is drained of colour.

Without realizing it she manages to take one of his hands, feeling cold. Fenris is perspiring as if he has just been in the hot sun. Varania is terrified, *Why is it like that? He shouldn't get so tensed up, it's bad for health.*

"Could be a nightmare. Look, Fen, we did not meet before. Not until you knocked into me the first time. Shall I get the doctor? Lie down." Varania tries to get him to lie back but unsuccessful. She keeps her right hand gently patting his arm, feeling the markings' scars.

"No! It is true, I'm not mad. Are you doubting me?" The elf somehow reverses the grip and he's incredibly strong, not at all ill. There's an etch of absolute honesty and lucidity, even though he's raving. He is now grasping her so tightly her skin is white. Thankfully his nails are short so they don't draw blood. "No no sorry I don't mean to. It hurts, can you let go? I'll be right here."

"We were related by blood! You called me Leto, said I freed you from being bonded. It was an inn!" He stubbornly holds on, glaring. Those enchanting green pupils have become suspicious and hard. His teeth are gritted.

"Calm down. I'm ok and here. Take it easy. You're hurting me." It won't help if she is freaking out now, just need to buy time. She remembers that it's best to talk in a low voice to

coax an agitated person. Never dreamt this would happen now. Varania looks around for the emergency bell. “Owww! Fenris, don’t. Ok ok, I’m not leaving...”

He motions for her to sit beside him and he lets go slightly. “I was your brother, then. You believe me don’t you? It was shocking, even though I can’t see the person’s face, the sensations, the blood was so real. There was a fight and I can’t see my companions. But I fought this bad old guy who used me. You were to the side, in a yellow dress, your hair was red. You were elven then, the energy it’s the same...” He repeats these over and over again. She has no choice but to listen. As he’s speaking, he is lying back on the pillows and calming down gradually. Then his manic energy fades and Fenris’ eyes close. He has passed out.

She feels for a pulse, it’s quick, but he’s ok. She presses the button. He’s definitely hallucinating, must be sicker than we thought. Was that why he was afraid of me, the first time? Why would we be enemies? It can’t be true.

She picks up her bag to go, barely registering the medic who comes in with equipment. She rubs at the bruise as she exits the ward. His father stops her. She nods, still reeling from what this lost disoriented Fenris has feverishly confessed. “I- I think he’s going to sleep now. Sorry, I don’t know why he felt upset.”

The old man frowns but she doesn’t wait for his response. Distantly she hears him tell her it’s fine. It was a mistake to come, maybe he hates me. Why would he have those nightmares and tell me? Why me? He could have told some shrink!

The next time Fenris wakes up is to his mother’s instructions to the nurse and she kisses his cheek. Her greying hair is in a bun, she holds him by the shoulders. “My boy are you in pain? They ought to feed you more.” He assures her he’s not. “When you’re out, you should move back with us. We can’t have you stay alone with that naughty unreliable mate.” Fenris knows there’s no out talking her. When she pauses for breath he asks if she can read to him. Mother beams, picks up a book that someone left there and recites to him about some exotic birds being found. The elf checks out everything from the pale curtains closing the sunlight off, and scratches at his wrist. It would be nice to take a shower but quite inconvenient with the saline drip.

“I remembered the moisturizer cream. Use it.”

So when she goes off for a meal, he notices the flower baskets and cards of wellwishes. *Wow, I have no idea they are so worried about me when they barely listen to me half the time.* Several texts from Varric and people he didn’t know he gave his number: we miss u! Well there goes my privacy, he thinks.

Josephine: what u have a lost sister? But when did u find out? Hm long story, not sure how he can talk about it, it won’t be short...

Yep, gd to see u yest. Just found out (fenris) Even Sebastien and Anders have given him small gifts. Fenris beams. Aw, they don’t have to. It’s the sentiment that counts. His eyes feel

a bit wet, to his surprise. Then he manages to eat some of the bland food on the tray.

It's so quiet his ears have a whining sound. In between sleeping and waking, visitors come by. There's something he needs to remember, but it is fleeting and out of reach. The urge to bathe and relieve himself take priority. Either his dad or the male aides help him over the next four days until he is free to go.

It's nostalgic to be in the same old bedroom where they grew up, with the singers' posters. Blake gruffly tells him if he feels ill, to give a shout. Fenris sits on his bed, just in shorts. "Thank you. Can we talk?"

"Nothing to say. I'm different from you, I'll always be the rebel son. You're the shining star." Blake is in the doorway, back to him. Fenris would like to argue the point but the migraine might relapse. Perhaps they can talk later. He settles down on the pillows, how soothing they are. Before he completely sinks into deep sleep, he hears- 'best not to look at your cell, here are the meds'

He's astonished to sense Blake's fingers rest on his knee.

Although Varania tries valiantly to let go of that incident, she has to vent her frustration on her laptop hitting the keys. **It's not fair! Are you guilting me? I DON'T CARE IF THAT WAS ME! It's nothing I can do! - have been some of her draft messages but she backed out of sending them. Backspace, delete.** Certainly didn't want him to read that and get a relapse. After her fingers are throbbing from the abuse, she closes the laptop and some tears make their way to the surface.

I was really worried about him, why did it have to get fucked up?

On her next visit to the library two weeks later, Varania is concerned how she will freak out if she sees him. Josephine and Bethany are the staff on duty. When she was alone at lunchbreaks, they would join her.

"Hello, is Fenris recovered? Did he sound-ah- strange?" She asks when they finish briefing some visitors.

"Not at all." Jo replies, looking at her questioningly. Yea, I forget this is a public area, but- I've to know. The waiting is killing me – she tries to stop twiddling her thumbs.

"Don't worry he's better, has moved back with his folks. It's kind of you." Bethany smiles.

"Oh. He sounds the same? Did he change?" She has to tell someone, or she'll explode! Beth notices how upset she looks and suggests they go outside and have tea.

"No he sounded fine and thanked us for our concern. Maybe he was not himself that day. Do you want me to ask?"

“No please don’t. He could be discouraging my.. infatuations.” She oddly thinks of seeing that word somewhere on an ad. Beth pats her shoulder. Varania begins telling her about Fenris' episode when she visited him alone. When she looks up, Beth has a neutral expression.

“Could be he has other issues. Fen has a habit of being polite and nice. I’ve known him for years. I’m sure he was in shock.”

A few days later, Varania has all but forgotten about him, what with volunteer work with therapy dogs that Leliana begs her to go, having girltime, finally meeting her posh father at his new business place etc.

Until her phone pings a few texts. Some are from others, but his name is on the top, freshly sent today. *Hi thanks. I’m ok now, hope life is fine for u.*

What? That’s it? She wants to demand an explanation about how he frightened her then. All her calm dissolves. Why did u tell me I died? The friends call her to go for a bunk meeting. She decides to leave the phone behind.

When Varania gets back, there are some missed calls from an unfamiliar number. She has got a reservation pending. It will be kept for 3 days. A few texts, with a trembling heart she clicks open Fenris’ one. **I don’t rem, sorry. U alright?**

I can’t believe it, he’s denying! Can he really forget such an outstanding thing? She snorts.

I could private message him, ingame but I don’t want to feel crappy, whenever I log in and worry! So she types out roughly what happened, ending with ‘I can’t quite forget that. If u are well, I wanto settle this once for all. Need to meet asap’

Central Garden near the college

He pushes back his fringe and removes his shades. These days, Fenris wants to reduce direct sunlight glare which could trigger another migraine attack. Not sure if she is going to show up, after all her tone had been furious. His memory of that encounter was completely blank, but he believed her. The very first time he knocked into her and they picked up the books..... As Varania is thinking the same thing, looking on the ground and darting glances left to right. She spots him from the back. “You’re here.” For the first time she’s unflustered and wearing the public mask.

He turns around and motions for her to sit.

“I didn’t mean to scare you, V but the flashes kept happening. My clan believes very much in signs. It’s alright if you remain angry with me. I was quite affected by those dreams, I remember telling Mother. Asking if I’ve a longlost sister. Regardless, I do want to make it up to you, somehow.” He can’t quite look directly into her eyes, so he focuses on a strand of hair stuck to her forehead.

“Oh. Sounded like we had a really harsh past life. But we are who we are now, Fenris. I was shocked. See the bruise you gave me?” He’s sad to see her hand. “You want to stop me from liking you?”

“No. You... like me? I know. These weeks the nightmares finally stopped. I am so sorry.” Varania can’t be angry with such radiating sincerity. Looking away for a moment, there are some sparrows courting one another just above them. They’re so noisy and carefree. She feels envious.

“Yea. Besides that issue, I want to ask if you want to—give me a chance to make amends. To join our family.” The elf has been so tense about how to propose it, but finally his inner burden has shifted from his heart.

She does not know how to answer, though her cheeks redden.

“I wasn’t thinking along those lines, Fenris. I want us to be more than friends. Are you seeing anyone at the moment?” Varania watches him raise one brow and the other.

He clears his throat, watching the wine glass.

“I’m flattered. Hehe, I did wonder why you blushed sometimes. Hasn’t been easy for me, romantically. No, not at the moment....” His gaze unfocuses as his mind flashes back how the wrong men used and manipulated him back then. His latest partner had been very hurtful.... Fenris decides to protect his emotional vulnerability now and take a break. “I used to see a man, but I had to leave. Prefer not to go too much into that now.... Varania, I felt like it was destiny that I remembered bits of the past. But the present is most important. Will you give me a chance to take care of you, as a brother this time?”

She swallows a lump in her throat, oddly moved. Slowly she nods. *Ah so he is gay*

All of that taxing conversation makes them hungry and the weather is heating up now. “Hm this café has nice cakes. My treat.” They stroll comfortably indoors.

That’s quite unexpected, Fenris looks as if anyone will like him for being easygoing and so kind!

Then they continue eating in silence. After a while, he adds, “Oh yes, my mother kept asking when you can come over to try her cooking. And dad has met you, he is fine with it. She has

always wanted a girl. I have a brother. He doesn't- come home much." She can hear his eagerness and his sadness emanating from the little revelation.

"I don't mind, in fact. I always wanted a big brother. They were idiots to break up with you. You're all right." Varania believes in her response, this time. He chuckles. "I could've been too stubborn or idealistic. " Then they move on to their favourite topics.

"So, how about the new Dragon Age? I heard the multiplayer is bugged. How's the pain, are you fully recovered now?" She notices he eats quite slowly, wondering if it is an elven trait.

He rubs his chin. "Ah yes, I had to sleep more or my family would pester me. They unplugged me from the online realm. Not yet, I prefer to wait till they fix more of the problems. Is it good?" Talking about that makes it all casual once more. The waiter shows them the tab.

Varania hopes to get to know Fenris 'all over again' , though she had expected different results, this is not bad at all. How deep his green eyes are, the depths of a soul.

"I have to go now. Working tomorrow, need to prepare." His voice gently interrupts her. "Thank you for coming." He keeps his wallet and seems to be waiting.

Varania feels an internal stirring, not just love, but a new beginning. "Don't worry about all of that, ok? Sleep more, and eat more. "

He thanks her and they shake hands. As his figure recedes into the distance, his pale hair forming a magical effect, Varania daydreams of the moment when he can forget that burden and they can be more than friends!

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