

Ragnarök

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Ragnarök

by [Eldfjallsdottir](#)

Summary

Semi-goddesses, Nornir rule the destiny of gods and men.
When they manifest in the world of men, Eivor must prepare herself for her biggest battle :
The End Of the World.

Inspired by the Asgard Arc in AC Valhalla
Enjoy !

UPDATE MARCH 9TH 2022 : Currently rewriting. Turning it into a one-shot work
propably.

Coming home

Cold wind through her hair, Eivor sailed back to England. The trip to Vinland was fueled with both determination and anger, relief in her heart on her way back as she sent Gorm Kjetveson to rot in the depths of Helheim. She paid her blood debt, she was burden-free.

The only thing Eivor wanted right now was to go home, to see her people, to see him, to FEEL him. She had told Vili about her plan to take Kjetveson down and refused his help, claiming it was a thing she had to do alone.

"Let me go with you" he insisted the night before her departure as she laid on his chest after their lovemaking, his fingers lightly touching the skrælingi emblem tattooed on her spine. As much as he had faith in Eivor, he couldn't stop fear from rising into his chest. He loved her, and so did she, even though at first she called them "a flickering flame". How wrong she was then.

"I swear by the All-Father that I will come back home to you. You won't get rid of me so easily, Arse-stick. I'm the Wolf-kissed after all."

Hanging on her every word, he smiled as she straddled him, the shades of the bedroom's nearby fire reflecting on their bodies as they melt in each other's like a dance. She left with Nessa the next morning, leaving her loved ones behind, unable to tell when she'd come back... Or if she'd come back at all.

"Hey Eivor ! Tell me about that big dark-haired guy on the deck the day we left?" Nessa said, snapping Eivor out of her daydream. She wasn't the type of girl to easily express her feelings to anybody but Nessa seemed nice enough to share stories with.

"His name's Vili. We've been friends since childhood back in Norway long ago. By Loki, we were always up to no good." She remembered, smiling at the thought of their pranks in Stavanger. *"We had been separated for ten years, until I was requested in Snotingehamscire. He has grown into a fine man. He was supposed to take over jarldom after his father's passing but he joined my clan as a jomsviking."* **Joined me**, she thought to herself. *"I'm..."*

"LAND AHOY!"

This distraction was most welcome. After weeks and weeks of travel, water as far as the eye could see, the mouth of the Nene River appeared like magic through the fog. The crew sang their excitement out loud. It was not until later that afternoon that they finally reached Ravensthorpe. Cheers roared as they were all waiting to welcome their Jarl back.

As Eivor berthed, Sigurd as well as Randvi and the others were waiting for her under the big carved-wood gate at the entrance of Ravensthorpe, eyes full of pride and heart of relief. Despite Basim trying to break the bond they shared since childhood, clouding Sigurd's mind with lies, despite all the tragedies they endured, the Nornir's foretold treason, Eivor Wolfsmal still remained her brother's keeper and both the children of the Great North renewed their promises of being there for each other.

"My heart is full with mirth as you return to us at last, sister." Sigurd said, hugging her.
"What about Gorm, the Wolf Clan ? Are you freed from this burdensome task ?"

"Brother" Eivor began. *"This clan is forever erased from the surface of Midgard, from history as well. This son of a sow joined his demon of a father to rot in Hellheim. I am indeed, free."*

Sigurd smiled to her. This burden was way too heavy on Wolfsmal's shoulders since her younger years after Heillboer's attack, her youth sacrificed as she hunted down those responsables for her parents' death. As Sigurd declared a feast to be organised in Eivor's honor in the longhouse, Randvi came next to her and whispered in her hear *"As happy as I am to see you among us Eivor, I believe there is somebody eager to greet you back "*. And then, a known figure appeared.

Sigurd and Randvi aside, Vili presented himself in front of his beloved, taking her rough hands in his, his forehead against hers, their breathing against each other's face.

"You came back to me"

"Glad to see you did not flee while I was gone, Arse-stick" Eivor said smiling, hugging him. His scent was intoxicating her every senses. Feeling his big arms around her tiny frame made her legs shake.

"Never crossed my mind, Chicken Dreng. Where would you have me to go anyway ? You could set Niflheim on fire to find me." Vili answered. She remained the same as the memory he kept of her the last night before her departure though he did notice a new little scar on the edge of her right eyebrow. Eivor winced a bit when Vili slightly brushed his finger on it.

"By Freyja, Eivor, I just.... Don't leave me again. Okay ? We were all worried sick. I know you can handle yourself but if something were to happen to you, I don't think I could..."

"Vili, I'm fine." she stopped him, noticing worry in his eyes. *"**Njörd*** himself didn't succeed to keep me parted from you. I don't think Odin could, even if He tried. Now come on, I have a lot to tell you about Vinland, we have a feast coming tonight, I'm tired, hungry and, above all, thirsty!"*

By those simple words, Vili felt relieved and kissed her. **Hard**. He pours all his love into that kiss. Though she was the fearless Wolf-Kissed known accross all England, he knew her better than anybody. He wanted to shield her from everything this world would throw at them. They had spent ten years apart, they would not be parted from each other any longer. Taking her hand in his, Vili led Eivor towards the great **skáli**** to get some rest before the feast, the children of Ravensthorpe following them closely, asking Eivor to tell stories about that strange land called Vinland.

Messengers of Fate

Chapter Notes

Thank you everyone for the kudos and comments !
Glad you liked the beginning !

This chapter is rated NSFW.

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

The night was falling and all the villagers came to the longhouse. Randvi supervised that all is perfect : the victuals on tables on abundance, food as well as mead. Nothing was spared, tonight, their Jarl's return would be celebrated worthily.

Speaking of Raven Clan's Jarl, Eivor appeared next to Sigurd, under the astonishing clash sound of their horns full of mead with the tables, wearing a night-blue caftan, embellished with golden ornaments, associated with a full black-feathered cape with the Clan's armorial bearings.

“My friends!” she began. “I am more than thrilled to see you again. I make myself bearer of an extraordinary news from far-off lands. Kjotvesson's Clan is no more” .

This words spoken, the longhouse ignited like the Giant Sutr's sword. Those who travelled with her from Norway knew what had happened to the “little dreng”, surname given by her parents. She went on.

“As you know it, this scarred my heart for all these years. Tonight, we will celebrate. Not for my sake, but for the Clan's. This is your night! Sköll!”

The victorious tale of the Wolf-Kissed echoed joyfully through the great skáli, mead gushing. The Vinland stories Eivor told the children made them look at her with awe. She told them she climbed mountains as high as a Giant, their summits almost joining the Gods' celestial home; defeated O Yan Do'Ne - *name the natives gave him*- a legendary moose, according to their beliefs, sent by a Wind Spirit named Gǫ-oh to protect this land among three other creatures.

When Eivor mentionned this part, Petra and Wallace, drunks as skunks grabbed her by her shoulders and begged to take them for the next trip. As Wolsmal brought back the Kanien'kehá:ka* bow and spear, she offered them to Gunnar, amazed by the quality of work for such an ordinary looking people, according his Jarl's odyssey in those virgin grounds. Bragi was singing and brought the household with him whereas the youngster Ravens were arm-wrestling in front of amused Sigurd and Rollo.

Vili, mead horn in hand, almost hidden in the shadows, feasted Eivor with his eyes, an ignited spark in these, an almost animalistic glow towards her, his heart like a beating drum perfectly in synch with the drumming song. Eivor, sit on her throne, smirked when she saw him through the fires illuminating the longhouse's hall. No words were needed. She stood up, so did Vili, taking a last sip in his horn and followed her. As soon as they were alone, Vili grabbed Eivor and lift her against the wall, keeping her steady with his hips and kissed her. Hard. She let him, savoring this delicious feeling of Vili's lips on hers, as well as his fingers carressing her cheek. Parting briefly, he watched her.

"I missed you. I want you, Eivor. Now" he confessed, eye-contact with his lover, as if he was sounding her soul out.

Feeling something like a vital urge from her body's depths, Eivor looked deep in his eyes to make him know that she wanted HIM. She answered his blazing kisses by biting him, relishing his scent, worshipping his being. As they finished taking off their clothes, Vili grabbed Eivor by her thighs and her ass and brought her to the bed, where he dropped her softly on the bear-furred covers.

Bringing his body closer to hers, Vili kissed her back, no longer limited to her upper lips, but started to go down on her neck, kisses as hot as the grounds of **Muspelheim*** and without any restrain, a loud moan escaped Eivor's lips. Aroused, she was not able to resist those torturing erotic stimulations from her Dreng, his rough hands on her skin feeling like a bomb. When Vili's lips reached the junction of her thighs, he stopped, a mischevous smirk across his face, looking for his lover's gaze, frustrated by this unwelcome interruption.

"Where in Helheim do you think you're going, Arse-st..."

Without warning, he attacked her pearl, open-mouthed. It was then impossible for Eivor to resist this deluge of sensations falling on her, grabbing tightly Vili's hair. Stimulated from every part, she only had to surrender to her lover's will. Vili's mouth skills provoked a storm of emotions inside Eivor, as if her body did not belong to her any longer.

"Vili...." she said, her breath jerky.

While Eivor was completing losing her mind, Vili removed his face from between her thighs in order to position himself at her entrance. She wrapped her legs around the Dreng's hips to encourage him to merge into her. Without further ado, he went in. Eivor exhaled, feeling him deep inside of her, with his back-and-forth thrusts, both energetic and dominating, without being brutal, his hands still firmly gripping Eivor, moving in unisson, lost in the carnal rhythm in them.

"Vili...I" She whispered to his ear, biting his earlob, cloudy-minded by the extasy, still no control over her own body.

Feeling their end coming, Vili focused on giving this carnal dance a final boost, without flinching, causing in him as in Eivor a desire that begged to spread.

Finally, Vili nestled in Eivor's neck, with the last thrust, the breaking point was reached. An explosion occurred in all their beings, grabbing their minds, tetanizing their muscles. The orgasm was such that the two Vikings were unable to utter a single word, only their resounding moans frozen in time and space in this place where only pleasure of the flesh reigned supreme. Vili leaned on his forearms, avoiding to crush Eivor with all his weight during the slow decrease of the pressure, the relaxation of their muscles to leave only a suave sensation of bliss. Vili felt his raging heart temper its ardor, Eivor slowly let her arms slide down his chest glittering in sweat.

Finally, Vili withdrew. He collapsed next to Eivor, hugging her. They remained intertwined, their heartbeats slowing down.

“Still fiery Chicken Drengir” he smiled, pleased with himself. She patted him on his pectoral, which earned him a small mocking laugh. Eivor ran her thumb over his lover's scarified lip, her gaze mirroring his, remembering every ounce of that perfect face that she had missed so much after all these weeks apart. Eivor brought her hand closer to her beloved's cheek to caress it tenderly, before placing a soft kiss on his lips.

“I love you, Wolf-Kissed. You know, in my dreams, we were always together. You never left there. The Gods must have blessed me, I am the luckiest Norse guy ever”

*“I love you. From the bottom of my **Hamr**”*

Vili covered their sweaty bodies with the furs and both fell into the arms of the Dream-Goddess **Njörund**.

Later that night, Valka was indulging in a little ritual when a strange group of clouds darkened the celestial dome, quickly giving way to a riot of lightning illuminating the county.

“A manifestation of the All-Father?” she thought.

She returned to her hut for shelter, the lightning becoming more and more threatening. In the longhouse, Eivor found her sleep disturbed: with each strike of thunder on the earth, a vision came to darken her dreams: three masked figures, probably old women, weaving. At the foot of the first, a snake. At the feet of the second, a wolf cub. At the feet of the last, a baby.

In unison, the three women spoke :

"When the Sun dies, Winter will come. When the Moon dies, Eternal Night will settle. When the world-Serpent lets go of its tail, the Flood will fall. When the unworthy dead rise, accompanied by the Incarnation of Death, the Scourge of the Gods will break its chains and lead the All-High to death. Led by the God of Malice, so is the coming of the Ragnarök. "

Chapter End Notes

Thank you everyone for the kudos and comments !
Glad you liked the beginning !

Njörún* is the Goddess of Dreams.

Kanien'kehá:ka* is the mohawk name of the Iroquois tribe.

Muspelheim* is the world of fire, kingdom of the Giant Surtr

Hamr* is the soul on a more personal level.

What lies ahead

Chapter Summary

Sorry for the delay ! I've been quite busy !
Here's chapter III !
Enjoy !

Chapter Notes

Hersir * : Military commander
Sannligr* : "Fair" in Old Norse.

Eivor was shaking, still plagued by those visions foretelling the Fall as told in the legends. Vili woke up as thunder was still raging outside, eyes clouded. He took a moment to realize what was going on and tried to wake her up.

“Eivor, love, wake up” he said, his voice low. He tried to move her softly, his hand caressing her shoulder but she did not react. She was still anchored in the depths of these bad dreams, her forehead sweaty, heavy breathing. Vili took her close to him, grabbed her face in his hands, brushing her cheeks.

As the last thunderbolt hit the ground, she woke up, screaming, utterly helpless. She looked at Vili, being worried sick about her state. She hugged him tight, the urge to feel she was back on this astral plan.

“Hey calm down, it’s alright, I’m here” Vili told her. He had never seen her so powerless.
“Do you wanna talk about it ?”

She remained silent at first, still trying to figure out what happened, whatever those things were.

"I don't know how to explain what happened or what I saw. It is still cloudy in my mind, but it could have been the Nornir. Each one of them had something at their feet., a baby, a wolf cub and a snake. What is that supposed to mean ? It was as if they were foretelling something terrible and at the same time it felt like I've already lived this".

"Nobody knows your mind but you, Hjarta. You know I am here and never leaving" Vili said, brushing her cheek. "Come here love, let's get back to sleep"

He sheltered her body with both his own and the covers above them, eyes locked in each other's.

"While nightmares plague my sleep, I am glad your arms keep me grounded"

The morning light coming through their bedroom, Vili emerged from sleep, Eivor sleeping heavily, her arms around his chest like an anchor. He pulled a lock of her hair behind her ear and watched her silently. Their night was rough, she needed her rest. He moved her softly, covered her and left.

Randvi and Sigurd were having breakfast in the longhouse's hall, reading correspondances coming from all over England. She waved Vili to join them.

« Morning Vili. It was a hell of an evening, wasn't it ? » she started.

"Morning Randvi. Sigurd. Indeed it was. You could not have prepared something more worthy of Eivor" he answered.

"This is private I'm sure, but we heard somebody scream last night. Is everything alright ?" Sigurd asked, still being big brotherly.

"Eivor had a nightmare. That is all" Vili answered. He was not sure, whereas if he should speak of it to them or not, it was Eivor's doing after all. *"She is still sleeping"*

"I had trouble sleeping too. When she was young, she used to have nightmares. The most unexplainable thing is that when she had them, there was always a storm like yesterday's at this moment. Do not worry, she will be fine." Sigurd replied, but he knew the unspoken truth : Before they fought Basim in Goinnhellir, Eivor and Sigurd discovered that they were among the nine reincarnations of Gods before Ragnarök, them being Tyr and Odin, and Basim, Loki, their nemesis. This discovery explained a lot of things, but they swore to keep this between them, to find the other six and never speak of it to anybody.

"I don't know, it was scary" Vili answered, biting into his bread. *"It might be nothing though, I may worry too much"*

*"You are just caring, friend. I am glad another one worries for my sister's wellbeing that much. And as **the** brother, I am beyond glad that you've joined us, Vili. I never saw her happier than right now. It was about **damn** time. More than 10 years of pinning"* Sigurd joked, patting Vili's shoulder.

Vili almost choked, the two others laughing. He's known Sigurd for what seems like a lifetime, considered him like an older brother ever since but he was still not ready for teases like this.

"Would you mind not killing my lover out of embarrassment, Sigurd ?" Eivor said, coming out of the bedroom, still looking tired from the past night. She didn't wear her everyday gear, only a long shirt, covered by Vili's cloak.

She joined them, smiling to her brother and Randvi, came behind Vili, lifted his chin and kissed him tenderly, not particularly caring about their surroundings.

"Morning to you also, love" Vili said, eyes full of awe. *"We were speaking about the party Randvi organised for you"*

"Thanks for it Randvi. It was perfect. We were all so loud I'm sure we woke all the dead of Helheim up!" Eivor answered, sitting besides Vili, and began to eat. There was still waste from the party, some Norsemen still sleeping on the ground, completely stoned. It brought Eivor a "home" feeling. While Randvi gave indications about today's raid, Sigurd asked :

"Vili told us you didn't sleep well last night as we heard someone scream. Are you alright, sister ?"

"Fine. Or better should I say. This was nothing I'm sure." Eivor answered elusively. As usual, she wasn't the type of girl that talked a lot about herself, she was more of a straightforward woman. *"I should look out for Valka after breakfast. She might have a concoction to help me sleep."*

"Let me accompany you. I have to go see her for my arm." Sigurd begged. She nodded and looked at Vili. *"Find me later? We need to get ready, we're raiding today."*

She kissed him goodbye and went back to their room to gear herself up.

On their way to the volva's hut, Eivor stayed silent, but she wasn't going to fool Sigurd. He just knew.

"Are you going to tell me ? You won't fool me like you're fooling Vili. I know something happened. There's always weird stuff happening when you have nightmares."

"I don't know if we should take this seriously but this feels like a warning." she answered, intertwining her fingers, feeling the pressure increasing in her veins.

"A warning ? What for?"

"Ragnarök. I saw the Nornir announcing the end of the world."

Sigurd stopped dead in his tracks. Eivor never said such nonsense in her entire life, why would she say this kind of thing now ? He hoped she joked, but judging her stare, she was certainly not.

“Do you think it has something to do with... our condition ? I have not been sleeping well since what happened with Fulke but last night was particularly special.” Eivor knew what he meant.

After all, they were technically gods, so to speak. They did find celestial weapons in that cut-off-from-the-outside-world cave of Goinnhellir : Eivor inherited Odin’s spear, **Gungnir**, whereas Sigurd became the owner of Tyr’s sword, **Sannligr***. Weapons only them could wield.

They kept walking until they spotted the waterfall in the far back of Ravensthorpe. Valka was outside, preparing aromatic herbs for some kind of potion while mumbling a prayer. She spotted the siblings.

*“Eivor Jarl, Sigurd **Hersir***. Good morning”* Valka greeted them, stopping her preparation.

*“Oh Valka, **please** . there’s no need to be so formal. We are past this right ?”* Eivor reminded the volva.

“You’re right, but I didn’t want to be disrespectful. You’re the Raven Jarl after all. Anyway, how can I be of use ?”

“Well, you’re the only living person in the whole Midgard to know the truth about us. You saw the lightning last night, and you also probably felt it was not an usual storm. To be honest with you, it has something to do with us, particularly with Eivor.” Sigurd told.

“Pray tell, Eivor. I want to know. I was wondering if it was a sign of the AllFather” the volva answered.

*“It’s weird. A sign of me. Whatever. Last night I had bad dreams in which I saw what possibly could have been the Nornir foretelling Ragnarök. Urd had a baby at her feet, Verdandi a big snake and Skuld a wolf cub. If they **do** really foretell the end of the world, I assume those three are Hel, Jormungandr and Fenrir.”*

“Eivor this is crazy. The end of the world ? I know we’ve been through a lot on a mystical level but this ?” Valka replied, a stunned look on her face. *“Sorry, I almost forgot you’re practically living gods”*

“Oh please.” Eivor said, rolling her eyes. “I told Sigurd it was nothing to worry about, it was just nightmares. I’ve always had those since I’m a kid.”

“Maybe but if it happens to be a warning as you said, we really should consider it. Should it occur, humans are no gods. It could be a complete disaster. It has to be” Sigurd admitted.

“FINE! What do you want me to do then ? I don’t know when it will start and how it will start. Should we throw every baby, snake and wolf cub we encounter into cages ? You know how Ragnarök ends, Odin dies. It means I... Will have to. Not that I fear death and you all know it but...” Eivor sighed.

She knew she’ll die in battle eventually, she’s a warrior : she was born for it. What she did not expect is that she’ll probably die this way. Her mind instantly flowed to Vili. She just couldn't go away, they just met up after 10 years. After a moment of silence, she spoke again.

“When I lived through Havi in Asgard, we were nine. Basim, Svala and Rig are dead, so Loki, Freyja and Heimdall are no more. We have to find the others.”

“This is going to be a really gigantic task, but I trust you both” Valka said. “You’re the Gods, you’ll make it. If you need me, I’m here.”

Eivor and Sigurd left Valka to her work, with more questions than answers, conscious of the tremendous quest lying ahead of them. They looked at each other in front of the waterfall, lost in their thoughts :

"Come Brother, we have work to do"

Chapter 4 - Repeat

Chapter Summary

Here's chapter 4. Enjoy !

Warning : There is violence in this chapter. Be warned.

Smoke interlaced with fire and blood through the air as Eivor and her crew raided Runcwuda Abbey's shores. Braggi led the archers from the ship whereas Eivor alongside her men stormed into the holy place.

The monks and civilians ran away like the Devil himself descended Hell and went after them. Broken bones and clash of axes against shields sounded like a sweet melody to Eivor's ears, equal to a nocturne to send her enemies to meet their end.

Birna and Rollo engaged themselves in a killing contest, euphoria increasing with each blood spilling blow. They both danced as they left corpses on their path.

Vili led the ground forces, looting every wealth he could find on his way. The closer they got to the abbey's church, stronger opposition was. True to himself, he smirked, yelled and charged forward. By a swing of his great axe, the son of the North sent a few soldiers floating in the air, the sound of armors crashing down on the ground following closely, their blood on his face, running along his cheek, streaming down his Adam's apple. After such a blow, he took a moment to catch his breath. He was strong, an undeniable fact, but he remained human. A spearman appeared behind Vili, ready to impale him but Björn stopped him dead in his tracks before he could achieve his goal, his head flying away.

"Thank you, Björn Bloodtooth, I owe you one!" Vili thanked him.

"Of course you owe me one, son of Hemming. But let's get out of this alive first, shall we ? Where's Eivor?"

He was right, she was nowhere to be found. She went ahead of the ground force to get rid of the archers that could cause too much chaos amongst them. What she did. He decided to follow the trail of fallen corpses she left behind. While her crew was taking care of the

biggest part of soldiers defending the abbey, Eivor was sneaking around the cloisters looking for anything that could be wealthy or come in handy.

She found a small door in a corner, enough hidden to stay unnoticed by whoever would walk by, but it could certainly not escape Odin's Sight. The Wolf-Kissed broke the lock and entered the small room. It was dark but she could distinguish some bookshelves, a few chests, some scrolls on a table at the near back of the room. She came closer, took the biggest one in her hands and unrolled it :

"His Royal Highness Ælfred the Great, King of Wessex,

specifically orders that everything must be put in order to stop a potential viking invasion coming from Mercia. He also requests the arrest of their pagan leaders, being identified as Ubba Ragnarsson, King Guthrum of the Great Summer Army, Sigurd Styrbjornson and Eivor Varinsdottir to face the Holy Father's sentence for their crimes : Conversion or death"

She did not read until the end, anger raging inside her. This King had no intentions of peace with them, leaving only two choices, both being unacceptable : Dishonor or death. She took the parchment with her to show the others, she kept looking for essential information that might help them strip Ælfred from his rank and conquer the last kingdom of England. There was no way he was going to get away with this. Focused on her task Eivor did not hear the woe-bringer coming behind her. As big and heavy he was, he managed to keep his footsteps light, breathing low, coming closer and closer until it was too late for Eivor to escape him in this small room. The enemy hit her hard in the face, Eivor losing her balance, life-containing red liquid gushing from her split lip. She could not match this woe-bringer's strength and size alone, still stoned from the hit, him putting his hands around Eivor's throat and starting to press them together.

The Norsewoman tried to punch him as hard as she could to free herself, unsuccessfully, as he kept tightening his grip around her neck.

"The famous Wolf-Kissed of the far North. Not that fierce right now, huh ? The King will promote me when I'll bring your corpse to Winchestre" he laughed, adding more pressure to his hands.

Life began to escape Eivor's lips as her vision blurred, her last thoughts going to her family : Sigurd, Randvi, Vili... At the thought of them, a small tear streamed down her eyes. She'll die alone in a pagan holy place, lost in the middle of nowhere in a foreign country. Her heartbeat got slower and slower, her eyes closing unhurried as if time had stopped around her, silence settling.

“EIVOR!”

A loud strong voice erupted from the door, pulling Eivor out of her loss of consciousness. Vili stormed forward the enemy, covered in sweat and blood and pulled him off of his woman. He threw him away, not giving his enemy time to breath, hitting him as hard as he could : face, ribs, knees until his hands were soaked with saxon blood, until he couldn't feel them anymore. Vili lifted him and smashed his head against the wall until the facade was painted with his brain. The corpse fell on the ground, Vili not caring about it at all and ran to Eivor. She started crying, adrenaline leaving her veins and Vili hugged her tightly, inspecting her face.

“ I knew this was a bad idea when you left ahead. I feared for you. ” he started.

“I know. But I thought it was better if I went ahead. I'm more discreet than you. I was wandering around when I discovered this small place and thought it was important if it was hidden like this. “ Eivor said, breathing harshly.

“You have to stop scaring us - me - like that. If I hadn't left the men in front of the church, I would have not arrived in time and...” Vili added, prompted by a confused mix of pride and naked fear for her.

“Hey stop. It was my own fault, I should have been more careful” she said, hugging him.
“You're cute, though”

“By the Gods, Eivor...” Vili managed to say, sounding exasperated. *“It's gonna be alright?”* pointing to her split lip.

“Saying the one with the blood-covered face. You know, if I wasn't being this close to being murdered, I could have been turned on by it”, she answered, still massaging her throat.

“Glad you kept your sense of humor. You know I'm always in for it but we have more important matters. Did you find something useful?”

Eivor gave Vili the paper roll and let him read. He remained silent but she knew he was boiling inside. He has never been tempered, always hot-headed like a volcano but it was one of his many features she liked the most, perfectly balanced with her rough coldness she can show sometimes.

“That’s the only alternative we got ? Surrender to their God or die as pagans?” His voice sounded venomous.

“I’m afraid it is. We must report to the other and set up a course of actions. We’re expected with whatever plans we’ll figure out. Come on, I’m tired of this place”

They left the dark little place, viking soldiers fighting the last of the Saxon guards in the small gardens around the cloisters. Eivor shouted at them to get out of the abbey, there was no need to slaughter them all, they had what they came here for.

“So it’s happening. We have to find Ælfred first.” Ubba advised.

“Where ? We’re expected everywhere in Wessex, more even in Wincestre where he’s supposed to be.” Soma argued. *“There’s no way we can take it. Wincestre is no city, it’s a real bastion, the best fortified place of the region, even of all England”*

“I could go scouting. It will be a lot easier not to be spotted” Eivor proposed.

“This is a real bad idea, Eivor.” Ubba refused. *“If anything goes wrong, we can’t get you out in time. Can’t get you out at all”*

When Ubba spoke these words, her eyes met Vili’s. He was clearly not agreeing to this scouting plan. She was almost strangled today, and there was only one woe-bringer. He trusted her, but also fear was stronger : she may be the Wolf-Kissed, she was human. Eivor hesitated a moment but Ubba was right. She had to make decisions, and not of the easy kind.

“You’re both right. I am taking no decisions tonight, I need to have my mind clear. Moreover, if we are to take Wessex down, we’re not enough. I have to go back to Ravensthorpe. I’ll need Sigurd. Randvi must be warned of what happened today and she will have to remind some thegns they have promises to be honored.”

They all retired for the evening. Some stood by the fire listening to Ubba relating the sage of his late father, the Great Ragnar Lothbrok - the legendary King the Norsemen still mourned ten years after his death - and how he and his four brothers invaded England leading the Great Heathen Army, avenging his father’s sadistic death by Ælle of Northumbria. They all cheered in tribute to their King.

Some craved peace. After dinner, Vili looked out for Eivor as she didn’t spend the evening with them, wasn’t in her tent either. He just hoped she didn’t sail back to Ravensthorpe without telling him. She wouldn’t have. He looked between tents in the camp when he was stopped by a raven quark, Synin perched on a rock nearby, staring at Vili. He didn’t move, the bird quarked again.

“Want me to follow you, don’t you ?”

Synin soared in the direction of a little grove nearby the camp. Vili followed the dark path underneath the covers of trees, only illuminated by the dance of fireflies, the dark sky disappearing under the thick foliage, forming an arch above his head. The humus that covered the ground suffocated his steps, enveloping them in silence. No birds except Synin, nor animals appeared. It was as if he was alone in the world, lost in a sea of oaks with only the sound of his heart for company. Vili spotted the small light of a fire through this expanse of trees, highlighting a figure. He managed to join the small sanctuary, bathed in moonlight.

Eivor was here, sitting by the fire, arms crossed around her chest, looking up to the sky through the little hole in the foliage that allowed the lunar glow to spread.

“You’re still noisy, Arse-Stick” Eivor stated but remained sat on the ground, focused on her task.

“There you are. What are you doing ?”

“Sending a prayer. Wanna join?”

Vili nodded and sat behind her in silence

“Freyja, Lady of Love and War, beautiful and strong, You, who fight in every battle, whether they are in the blood of swords or birth, guide me through difficult times, give me courage and strength to overcome the obstacles standing in front of me. Lady of Wealth, give me the pure energy of your love. My heart and soul belongs to you, I will honor your name until Odin summons me in his great Hall. In the name of Fire, Water, Air and Earth, Mighty Queen of Vanir, most beloved of the Goddesses, pour your blessing upon me”

She blew the candles off, smoke flying to the sky. She leaned against Vili's chest, he hugged her tight, never ever wanting to let her go after today, carefully inspecting her wounds and those ugly marks this barbarian left on her neck. He was the only one allowed to leave marks on her body, marks of love and belonging. He proudly wore hers.

“I don't like these, at all.” he remarked, emphasizing on “at all”

“I know, they will fade eventually” she told him, voice low.

“You seem distracted lately. I worry. If there was something, you would tell me, wouldn't you?”

“Of course I would, Vili. I feel tired, that is all. I've just prayed Freyja, she'll give me my old self back, I'm sure of it.”

“Eivor, you're one of the strongest people I know. If you were any stronger for the two of us you wouldn't need me. Besides, worrying for you is gonna turn my hair grey and I'm not ready to physically look like my old man”

Eivor snorted. She wanted to tell him she wanted him until the end of her days, when their hair turned grey away from the war AND Ragnarök if it was bound to happen. She wanted to tell him but it would only bring more worry on his shoulders.

“As much as I like the place we’re in and how alone we are, we probably should go back. We have to sail back to Ravensthorpe” Vili admitted.

“You’ve just ruined the mood. What happened to the battlefield beast with a bold and pleasing personality taking nothing seriously ?”

“I guess you have that effect on me.” He chuckled. *“As for the beast part...”*

She gave a small tap on his chest and then they moved back to camp. She giggled when she heard a few female soldiers whispering how unlucky they were. Vili lifted the tent’s flaps and they both went in. Undressed in their bed, Eivor snuggled into the arms of this big bear of hers and they both fell asleep.

“The Scourge of the Gods will break its chains and lead the All-High to death”

It was still the same deafening voice echoing in Eivor’s ears, along with the same vision flashing in her mind, still the same dream : Gungnir in her hand, standing in front of the great red-eyed black Wolf, all fangs out, surrounded by snow, under a raging thunderstorm illuminating the sky. She charged, spear forward, so did the beast at full speed.

She woke up before she could see more of it, her face soaked in her own sweat, her breathing heavy. She took a deep breath, collected her thoughts and looked at Vili. He was peacefully sleeping beside her, snoring even. She let her hand touch his cheek slowly, then took refuge in his arms, grabbing his chest tightly as she was trying to anchor herself in reality, tears running down her face.

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