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## **“Redemption”**

By Kellan Meigh

### Chapter 02 – “An Agent With An Agenda”

Gytha boarded the small corporate jet that was sitting on the ramp at Ontario International Airport, wondering just how in the devil her sister-in-law Cathy had managed to pay for this flight. It wasn't like this was a regular commercial flight, it was just she that was being flown up to Carmichael International Airport. It didn't belong to the 49'ers organization, since it said on the fuselage in bold lettering, “Bishop Enterprises, Inc.”

“Hi, I'm Theresa Rose Westmore, your pilot for today,” the bay colored femme offered up, giving Gytha a warm smile and paw-shake. “If you want to, you can sit up front with me, in the jumpseat.” she added.

“No thanks,” the ruddy femme equine replied, taking a seat near the front where she could look out the window. “Um, Miss Westmore, how long will it take to get there?”

“It's actually Mrs. Westmore,” the pilot retorted. “Please call me Theresa. I'm guessing it will take us about ninety minutes, once we're in the air.”

“Thank you,” Gytha said, settling into her plush, leather-covered seat.

“You can recline the seat with the buttons just under the end of the armrests and you can talk to me over the intercom. Put on the headset, select 'IC' on the panel and press the button on the cord to talk. You have to release it to listen, though. Would you like a drink? I have to ask, since I'm kind of the stewardess, too.” That made the ruddy femme smile.

“Water would be nice.” she stated. “Um, how did my sister-in-law afford to charter this jet?”

“My boss and the General Manager of the Roseville Niners are fishing buddies. The team's small jet is in New York right now so the GM called my boss. That was sixty minutes ago.” Theresa smiled and added, “Cathy Svensen has the team limo waiting for you once we touch down in Carmichael.”

“Wow, this is first class,” Gytha commented to herself, trying not to white-knuckle it while they took to

the sky. It was a commonly-known fact that she did not take flying very well. The intercom crackling to life gave her a start.

“Mrs. Delancey, the weather will be slightly rough due to the altitude the air controllers stuck me with. Please keep your seat belt on.” Theresa told her.

The ruddy hued femme tried her best to settle in, hoping in her heart that her brother didn't have a nervous breakdown. She knew Dana was very upset and Axel was taking this 'issue' too well. What really bothered her was the fact that their parents were supposed to be 'out of the business'. This sure didn't look like they were retired to her.

Barbara had come to her house just a few hours ago and picked up the safe that contained notarized copies of the important Svensen documents. Axel asked the ocelot to do that, since they couldn't get into the house at the present to access the originals. Barbara did convey the fact that the house was trashed and consequently it would need extensive restoration. Hopefully, the homeowners insurance will cover it, at least enough of it to get it to salable condition. Gytha wasn't holding her breath as far as her parents being found. She was very sure a twenty-foot deep crater meant a horrific explosion and a sure end to her parents' lives.

###

The flight took about ninety minutes to complete and just as Theresa had stated, the team limo was waiting with the back door open, ready for her to de-board. The driver retrieved her bags and loaded them into the trunk for her, wasting no time in doing so. The chauffeur, a lynx-mix that had a long tail, closed her door, got behind the wheel and whisked them off to Citrus Heights General just as fast as he could without breaking too many road regulations.

Cathy was waiting for her when the limo arrived at the hospital, looking totally devastated. Her face looked like she had been through the wringer. She appeared . . . beaten. Gytha hugged her and she wasn't surprised when the femme cougar hung on for more than a few moments.

“Cathy, how are you holding up?” Gytha asked, knowing she wasn't doing very well by her demeanor.

“Gytha, I'm falling apart.” she admitted. “Conrad is just totally non-responsive to me or the doctors. I think he's lost it.”

“Look, I'm closer to Conrad than the rest of the siblings. Maybe I can get through to him.”

“Well, maybe you can.” Cathy offered up. “All I know is the fact that he hasn't showed any signs of snapping out of it, since right after you called him.”

“You and I will get through to him,” the tall femme equine mix retorted. “He's too strong. He won't retreat so far into his mind that we can't reach him.”

The two femmes went into the emergency room where Conrad was still being attended to. A nurse was checking his pulse while a doctor was checking his pupils for response. They were joined by Al Rawlings, the General Manager of the 49'ers.

“How is Conrad?” the beagle asked, giving the femme cougar a polite hug.

“They're not sure just yet,” Cathy replied, trying to hold herself together.

“I came just as soon as I had everything arranged for you,” he put forth, giving a quick look into the room. He seemed rather upset, too. “I hope he snaps out of it; it's just too close to the Super Bowl. The team really needs him.”

They kept clear and tried to make small talk with one another while the doctors set up an EEG machine to monitor the stricken tiger's brain activity. It didn't take long for them to cover Conrad in electrodes and begin scanning his brain waves for abnormalities.

Cathy watched the medical team care for her hubby, trying her best to keep a brave face. She knew in her heart that his parents were dead, no longer existing on any plane except maybe the hereafter. She wondered if they were together, wherever they were. Torvald and Victoria had been promised that one concession by the Gods. Whether their employers from '*On High*' kept their end of the bargain, she might never know. Because of all that had happened, she found it very hard to pray, but pray she did.

###

Kenji was on his way to meet with Rumjal, having been requested to make his presence known to the rather large pachyderm deity. He knew word had gotten around that he had finally done in the Svensens, and it was a possibility that he was going to be rewarded handsomely for doing so.

It had been so easy to get that dumb stallion to blow up himself and his blasted striped mate, giving them a note filled with lies to lead them on. The timer was faulty, having been designed that way by a fur that owed the clouded leopard numerous favors. There was no real delay ever intended, and the payload would have went off with fifteen minutes to go anyway.

In a way, this was revenge for what the Svensens, their family and friends had done to him. He rubbed his throat, still feeling the pain of having his head removed so rudely by that damned strange femme wolverine. Then the indignity of being drawn back across time and space, not of his own volition, only to be tied to a chair and tortured for hours by those two femmes. His head still rang from that palomino femme sorceress' back-paws across the face.

There was another thing; Kenji was still mad about his friend Ingvar being eaten alive by that huge Valkyrie's mount. The panther had gotten him a few well-paying jobs from the Council and Ingvar had always asked for the bladesmith to do his rather heinous tasks for decent remuneration. Now that the dark felid was gone, he had no inside with the Assembly of Evil and as a result, suffered a distinct loss of income. Maybe Rumjal would favor him an audience with the Malefic Council, so he could offer up his services directly.

Kenji walked into Rumjal's office and strode right up to the huge gray one, smiling his shit-eating grin but before he could utter a word, the elephant punched the spotted felid in the mouth, laying him out.

“You are one stupid shit, aren't you?” Rumjal commented, shaking his head in disgust while he stared down at the prone Agent. “You, my friend, have just thrown yourself under the bus.”

“What the Hell?” Kenji blurted out, right before the huge one kicked him across the room.

“You just shut the fuck up!” Rumjal suggested, walking over to sit on the corner of his desk, where he could still see the feline. “You have single-pawed, just fucked up royally! Did any one tell you to bring down

the wrath of the Gods, the Angels, The Valkyries, The Consortium and the Celestial Courts, directly on top of our heads?”

The leopard started to defend his actions but a paw brought up by the minor deity made him stop and listen.

“You probably thought it was a grand idea to do away with Torvald and Victoria, huh? Two inactive Agents, you fool! Not retired but inactive! So now you destroyed Torvald, who belongs to Odin, and Victoria, who belongs to The Almighty. They will now send their instruments of destruction down upon us, making the previous interactions we've had with them seem like playground scuffles!

“Now we will have Angels that are pissed, and Valkyries with axes to grind, literally, coming to make mincemeat out of all of us! Not to mention Wilhelmine! She will mobilize the whole Consortium into a wave of destruction, Hel-bent on destroying us!

“And don't think for a moment that Judge Talmadge won't send his operatives down here, seeking us out so they can skin us alive! No, my friend, you have really fucked up big time. A total, epic fuck-up. Of the Nth magnitude-type of fuck-ups!”

The feline really wanted to say something in his defense, but it was clear; he had fucked up. Now he wondered what the punishment would be. Banishment? Loss of powers? The gray one speaking again snapped him back to reality.

“You have so totally fucked up! Maybe more so than Anane ever did! I really can't convey just how badly you have screwed the kali here.” Rumjal shook his head, then continued. “I really want to kill you myself, but it would not be fitting. I wanted the Svensens on my side in this whole Council power struggle. I was very sure they could take out a certain feathered fallen one, one that would eventually cause me grief and possibly change the odds of my taking over the Council.”

The elephant thought for a moment, then continued. “I think the decision by the Council to turn you over to Aslaug was a wise one. I'll let her know exactly what you did to her friends and I will allow her Carte blanche to do whatever she wants to you. Actually, I'm wondering just how you would look, sans a hide. She can be one sadistic filly when she's riled and I'm sure the knowledge that you killed the Svensens would be enough to get her going.”

“Oh Hell NO!” Kenji begged. “NO, don't let her get ahold of me!” he practically cried out.

“It's too late, my friend. You've made your bed, now you have to die in it.” Rumjal said with a very sad tone in his voice. “The Council feels this in their best interests, to allow Aslaug to destroy you. Maybe that will even things up and keep the Side Of Good off of our backs.”

“Please let me even things up?” Mr. Nishiguchi begged, fearing for his life.

“This 'action' will even things up a bit,” the pachyderm put forth. “I'm stripping you of everything except your immortality and I'm banishing you to her world, her reality.” he stated. “You could always hope that another Agent finds you first, before the Angelbreaker does. It might be quicker and much less painful.”

With a wave of Rumjal's paw, the spotted feline disappeared.

###

That noise was what had brought him around, the sound of something being dropped into a metal pan or bucket? He wasn't sure what it was, only that it was . . . disturbing. There were voices nearby, a male and a female, not familiar voices to him in any way. The voices did seem to have a Midwest drawl to them, though. They were standing close, near enough that he could sense in his nostrils the female's light perfume; roses. He also detected a very antiseptic smell, too. He surmised that he was probably not in Asgaard. And he also seemed to be struggling to get his breath.

They were standing by his head, talking to one another and moving things around. In his drugged state, he couldn't make out what was being said by either fur. Soft paws gently tipped his head back and held it while something was slipped down his throat, into his trachea. There seemed to be some pressure in his chest but that was tolerable, now that he seemed to be getting more oxygen into his lungs.

Attempting to open an eye, the one that wasn't bandaged, all he saw was white. Bright, clinical white. And pain. A hot, searing pain in his head from the light. Wishing for the pain to stop, he shut his good eye and took stock of his situation.

His head hurt. Pretty badly, too. The male was concerned about his condition, since he could not feel nor move his body, if he still had one. Another noise nearby, regular in nature, suggested that he might be hooked up to a ventilator. That might explain the numbness of his body. Maybe a spinal injury that had caused some kind of paralysis.

There was that sound again, that metallic plinking sound. What was it? He couldn't remember what had happened to leave him in such a condition. Actually, at the moment, even thinking made his head hurt too much. He did know that he needed rest, however, so he finally gave in and slipped back into the comforting blackness that engulfed him.

###

Jennifer Longbow stood at her kitchen sink, attempting to make some coffee to curl up on the couch with. As the femme river otter finished filling the carafe from the faucet, she suddenly felt nauseous and light-headed. This was probably caused from her weakened condition, considering what she had just been through.

Setting the carafe down on the counter, she took a seat at her kitchen table and caught her breath. Looking around at her home, she wondered where this would all end. All she wanted was out. Out of the game of recruiting and training operatives. Away from those that had made her what she was today.

Jenna knew this was where she wanted to spend her days; on her farm, with her husband and family around her. Not doing the work prescribed by her erstwhile 'employers'. That was the part that now bothered her; turning those malleable minds to the side of darkness and training them in the fine art of subterfuge. In essence, creating new Dark Agents. Just like she had done to her brother Gerald.

The femme otter stood and stretched as far as she dare, knowing she might pull a few stitches in the process. Why she had done that insane move, she didn't know. Jenna needed the two of them alive and when she found out what was transpiring, she had leaped into the fray without a second thought. What a dumb move that was, on one paw. On the other, if this worked out, maybe she could finally settle down and be the wife and mother she had always wanted to be.

"Jenna?" a femme voice questioned, making the otter look up. It was Tina Wood, the nurse that was

assisting in the matter at paw.

“I was light-headed again,” Mrs. Longbow offered up, giving the femme beaver a crooked smile.

“Your husband and the doctor will both be pissed off if they see you out of bed!”

“Tina, you're right. They will be mad.” Jenna retorted. “I'm sorry but I can't sleep. I keep worrying about the stallion. He's in a bad way. Don't try to kid me about it, I've observed first-paw just how chewed up he is.”

“We've gotten all of the metal out of his hide, all nineteen-point-two pounds of it,” the femme beaver offered up, finishing the job of starting the coffee. She then made Jenna sit down again. “You aren't in much better shape, either. You really shouldn't be out of bed.”

“I know. Gah, I wish I had worn two blast suits instead of one.” Jenna mused.

Tina sat down across the table from Jenna, then spoke up. “What the Hell did y'all get hit by, anyway?”

The otter shook her head. “Not real sure. It had that smell of Semtex, though. I'm thinking there was a huge load of it.” She looked up at Tina, noticeably upset. “Torvald isn't going to make it, is he?”

“Probably not,” was the answer. “Doc Peyton has done everything he could but I think he's just too torn up to recover by himself.”

“I was afraid of that,” Jenna commented. “Well, I could try to take him to Asgaard . . .”

“. . . And you would be dead within ten seconds of a Valkyrie or Einharjar discovering you before you could get him to Eyr.” the nurse finished that thought.

“That is true.” Jenna shook her head, then spoke. “I really thought that I could get them out of there safely. That damned Kenji Nishiguchi put a dark spell all over everything! Every item in the room had a ward on it so I had to literally 'scoop' them out of there. It took too long to get the field around us, so that's why we're all in this shape.”

“Well, if it's any consolation, the tigress is doing fine,” Tina pointed out, taking Jenna's paw in hers. “She will make it,” the beaver added.

“Yeah, she was protected quite well,” Jenna stated. “Well, while that coffee brews, I want to check in on her.”

###

Victoria tried unsuccessfully to scoot up in her bed, hoping to get just a bit more comfortable. A femme nurse had been in the room earlier, checking her over and maybe the tigress should have asked for some help at that time, had it not been for being too groggy. That was most likely due to some drugs that had been administered to her at some point in time.

The striped femme was fairly sure, even though she couldn't see them under the sheet covering her, that she had casts on both of her legs, from her toes up to her thighs. The casts on her arms, bright blue fiberglass ones, covered her appendages from just below her knuckles to her armpits. They were also part

of her source of discomfort.

Attempting to get her arms into a better position, nothing seemed to work for her. Putting them across her abdomen was uncomfortable on her shoulders and down at her sides wasn't much better. And her left wrist itched something fierce. That must have been due to the act of healing.

Looking around, the room she was in seemed to be right out of the 1940's, by the style of the architecture and furnishings. The pictures on the walls seemed to corroborate that assessment, even the picture frames had that 'old' feel to them. Her hospital bed and the bed table in front of her, however, were modern as were the plastic pitcher and the tumbler sitting on the table. The pitcher was most likely filled with something cold, as evidenced by the condensation on it.

“Oh, you're awake!” the casually dressed femme otter said as she entered the room, headed in Victoria's direction with a slight limp. She also seemed to be favoring her right arm, too.

The femme filled the tumbler with what appeared to be water, placed a straw into it and presented it to the tigress. Victoria took a small sip, then drank about half of the glass due to her thirst. Once she had consumed her fill, she spoke up.

“I don't want to sound rude, but just who are you and where am I?” the femme feline asked her benefactor.

“I'm Jennifer Longbow but you can call me Jenna. As to the 'where' part, you're in one of my spare bedrooms on the farm that my husband and I own. We're not far from Hooker, Oklahoma, if you must know. We're not on the same homeworld as yours, though.”

“I see . . .” Victoria thought for a moment, then continued with her questions. “My arms and legs?”

“Well, Doc Peyton repaired the damaged bone, tendons, muscle, blood vessels and nerves. Since the damage was done by a Dark Agent's act, you'll be a bit in healing up. He didn't want you moving your arms and legs around until they've had a chance to begin healing.”

“My husband, Torvald . . . is he . . . can I . . .” Jenna interrupted her train of thought.

“Doc Peyton is weaning him off of the ventilator as we speak.” the otteress replied. “I had on a single blast protection suit, similar to the ones you were wearing when I rescued you and your mate so I wasn't hurt too badly. Your husband, on the other paw, was badly injured.”

“How bad?” Victoria had to know. She had noticed the numerous fresh wounds that adorned the otter's arms and neck.

“He might not make it.” was the blunt reply. “They removed almost twenty pounds of metal from his hide. I'm sorry, Victoria. I really, really tried to do my best.”

“Who sent you to help us?” she wanted to know. Who would have foreseen the heinous act in progress?

“No being sent me, I sent myself.” Jenna confessed. “I wanted out of the business and I had heard how you, your hubby, Joe Latrans and Aslaug Larsdatter were helping all Agents to get out of the business, even Dark Agents. I overheard some fur say something about Kenji preparing to kill the two of you so I came to your aid. I just wasn't fast enough.”

“So, you're a Dark Agent?” the tigress questioned.

“A Dark Agent that desperately wants out is more like it.”

“I want to see Torvald.” Victoria stated firmly. There was something wrong here so she needed to see if her hubby was okay. She was actually concerned that this might be an elaborate hoax by the Malefic Council to get to her in some way.

“Well, he looks like a frightful mess right now. Are you sure?” Jenna pointed out.

“I don't care. I need to see him.” She knew she needed to see her hubby, just to confirm this information that he was in a bad way. Maybe it would be possible for her to call Hrist and have the Valkyrie take him to be healed. She just knew that she needed to be near her hubby at this moment.

“Okay, I can see you're not going to back down.” Jenna commented. “I'll go and get a wheelchair for you. It might take me a bit to find my fore-femme to help me so just be patient.”

Victoria watched the femme leave the room, wondering if this really was the end for her hubby. They had always talked about their possible demise at the paws of a Dark Agent. Maybe this was the final moments for her beloved stallion. If that were true, she needed to be with him. The tigress didn't want him to die alone.

The tigress knew in her heart that if it were so and he would die, she wouldn't remarry. Not ever again. One failed marriage followed by another one cut short was all the heartache that she could bear to deal with. She did feel an obligation to see him buried on their homeworld, since they did have cemetery plots that were paid for.

Victoria also felt obligated to continue their efforts to start that troubled teen intervention program, even if she had to hire some fur as a counselor. That idea had been Torvald's dream and she would honor his dream by making it a reality. She would do whatever it took to make it happen.

###

Cathy sat down next to her hubby's bed, trying her best to hold herself together. Gytha had gone to get some dinner so she had stayed behind, just in case Conrad came back to the land of the living. The femme cougar had called Axel, just to pass along the fact that his twin sister had made it safely and their brother was still out of it.

This was bad; her hubby was lost to her at the moment and there was no prognosis by the doctors as to when he might come around. They were as stumped as she was. Especially when it was conveyed to them that it was an emotional blow to his mind that had caused this situation.

“Cathryn?” a soft femme voice asked, causing the femme cougar to look up. She had been 'in the zone' so she didn't see or hear the two femmes in scrubs and lab coats that had entered the room. “I'm Bethany Carmel,” the striped femme stated, “And this is Mala O'Kendranal,” she added, indicating the turquoise and white vulpine with her. “Willi Marie sent us to help out with Conrad.”

“You're sorceresses?” Cathy queried.

“Yes, and we're both healers, too.” Mala added. “Please allow us to help out. Willi was very upset to hear that this had happened.”

“Won't you be noticed? You both don't seem to blend in very well.” the femme cougar put forth.

“Don't worry, no fur will pay us no never mind.” Bethany replied. “If you would excuse our hurry, we need to get to work.”

Cathy watched on while Bethany pulled the curtains at the end of Conrad's bed, blocking their view from the rest of the emergency room. Mala had taken up a stool at one side of the tiger's bed so the femme cougar gave the kurani her seat. The two femme healers each took one of her husband's paws in theirs, then closed their eyes in concentration. Cathy sat down in a chair nearby, wondering just how long this would take and more importantly, would they be successful? Only time would tell.

###

Mala opened her eyes to see Bethany doing the same. Looking around, they were standing in a riparian valley that seemed to be in late spring. There were a few puffy clouds in the sky and a gentle breeze was blowing. The two femmes were standing on a gravel path so they used their powers to figure out which way to go. Turning toward a grove of trees, they headed out.

The healers walked along, the gravel crunching lightly under their heels. A smell wafted past their noses, one of something spicy being cooked. Distinctly middle-eastern in nature, Mala had commented. Just a few yards into the grove, under a mulberry tree, sat a lone figure on a park bench. That figure was Conrad.

“Hello, Conrad Svensen,” Mala offered once they made it to the bench. That made the male look up at them strangely.

“Do I know you two?” he asked, clearly confused as he looked at the femmes that were wearing scrubs and lab coats.

“We're friends of Wilhelmine.” Bethany offered up. “May we sit with you for a bit?”

“Sure, that's okay with me.” he replied, shrugging his shoulders. “Not much going on here, though. Kinda boring, if you ask me.”

“It's nice here, in the shade,” Bethany commented, looking at the tiger to see what he would say to that.

“I guess,” Conrad retorted, taking a small rock from the pile that was on his lap and throwing it at a bucket that sat some distance from them. It bounced off the side, hitting too low to go inside. “I've missed a few times.” he stated off-paw. There were a number of rocks that were lying about, near that one that he had just thrown.

“Is something bothering you?” Mala asked.

“Yeah, my parents.” he replied. “Are you two doctors?” he queried.

“I guess you could say we are,” Bethany offered up. “We're healers.”

“I don't need healing,” Conrad said curtly. He threw another rock that missed its mark just as badly as the

last one did.

“Your wife is very worried about you,” the kurani put forth, hoping that would break the ice.

“She is?” he asked in return, seeming upset by that information. Another rock missed its mark, too.

“Your whole family is very worried about you.” Mala stated. “Your wife and Gytha are both waiting for you to come out of this. So is your boss.”

“My parents are dead. What's left for me?” he mused.

“What would your father say?” Mala asked.

“You mean Torvald, right?” He attempted to clarify her choice of furs.

“Yes, I do.”

“He wouldn't sit around.” Conrad suggested. “He would tell me to get off my ass, shake it off and go forward with my life.”

“So, why aren't you doing that?” Bethany asked the tiger.

“I . . . I don't know. I wasn't expecting this. They were out . . .” Another rock missed its mark.

“Willi Marie seems to think they're not dead,” Mala brought up. That rock went wild, landing yards from the bucket.

“Not dead? Is she sure?” he questioned. A small quartz rock went cleanly into the bucket.

“She's not totally sure, but she read the echo of the explosion and clearly observed three furs in the blast, not two. There is the distinct possibility that some fur pulled them from the blast.” the blue and white femme explained. Another rock made it into the bucket.

“Would Torvald have turned inward? Did he do that when your mother was missing?” Bethany asked.

“No, he carried on.” Conrad replied. Several more rocks made it into the bucket.

“You've been here long enough. Are you ready to come back with us?” The striped femme asked.

“I . . . I guess so,” he replied, shrugging his shoulders. “I still have some rocks left.” he added.

“Do you want to throw them, too?” the kurani asked.

“I guess not,” Conrad replied. He pushed the remaining rocks off of his lap and stood up.

“As peaceful as this place is, let's go.” Mala stated, standing and taking Conrad's paw in hers. Bethany did the same, then the three of them stepped forward at the same time.

###

Torvald could feel his head being tipped up and back again, then he was sure that tube in his throat was being removed. Another paw wiped his mouth with a rag, then some fur fluffed his pillow a bit.

He could feel that bandage over his left eye being fiddled with, then he felt the skin being pulled as the fur in question attempted to gently remove the bandage. The pain returned when the doctor finally removed the dressing and opened that eye to look at his eyeball.

“Nnnngh!” the stallion grunted out, trying his best to shut that eye. Needless to say, Doc Peyton had a firm grip on his subject.

“Just be still, Tor. I’ll be done in a second or two,” the moose offered up while he squirted some antibiotic ointment under the lower lid, the one that was stitched up where a construction nail had damaged it. “Can you see anything out of that eye?” he asked.

“Y . . . yeah.” the stallion replied quietly. After a moment, he made an astute comment as he closed his eyes. “Too bright in here.”

“I’ll dim the lights,” the doctor stated, going over to the dimmer switch and turning the intensity of the lights down. “Is that better?”

“Much better,” Torvald whispered, trying to lift an arm. He quickly found out that he was still too weak to do much at all.

“Don’t try to move, please?” Doc Peyton requested. “You’ve been critically injured, Mr. Svensen. I’m actually not sure how you’re awake and talking with me right now.”

“Too stubborn,” the equine retorted.

“I’ll give you that,” Bruce offered up. “I hate to ask you, but could you try to open that injured eye again?” he requested.

“No flashlight,” Tor brought up as he grimaced and opened that eye. It was still too bright but it was bearable at the moment.

“I’ll try not to shine it directly into your eyes then.” The doctor needed to see if that left eye was healing or not, considering he had removed a fairly big nail from it. As he had hoped, it was mending.

“I can see but it’s blurry,” the stallion observed.

“Well, if you had been mortal, you would have lost that eye, stallion.”

the doctor checked his charge over again, noting a distinct improvement in blood pressure, heart rate and respiration. Actually shocked by this change in the equine’s vitals, he made a comment.

“You immortals just amaze the crap out of me. How your body can regenerate itself, I just don’t understand.”

“My wife?” the stallion asked, once the doctor was finished with his thoughts.

“She’s here, in the next room.” was the reply. “Victoria wasn’t harmed too much by her predicament with

the exception of her wrists and feet.”

“Need to see her,” Torvald asked, trying to roll over on his side to see the doctor better. He was unsuccessful in his venture.

“Torvald, you be still!” the doctor demanded tersely, physically forcing him to lay back down on his back. “You've got miles of sutures in your hide that you're threatening to tear out!”

“Yes, Doctor,” the stallion retorted, ceasing his efforts to move.

“I will get your wife in here to see you just as soon as I can.” the medical fur stated. “In the meanwhile, I want you to rest. It's a miracle you're still with us so don't push your luck.”

Torvald watched the moose leave the room, wondering where he was at the moment. The doctor had a midwest drawl but that didn't tell him much. What he could see of the surroundings led him to guess it was a private residence that was used at one time by a physician. There were old-fashioned glass front cabinets for medicine, an old-style counterweight scale and the antique appearing examination light overhead. These items clashed with the modern ventilator, the monitor and the bed that he occupied.

Tor noted that he was currently hooked up to an IV, one that was supplying whole O Positive blood to him. That kind of indicated that he was in a bad shape. Deciding that maybe it was better to heed the doctor's orders, he settled back in his bed and tried to get some rest.