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## **“Redemption”**

By Kellan Meigh

### Chapter 07 – “Driving The Wedge Home”

Torvald felt stiff all over from being laid up in a bed so he decided that he needed to get up and move about some to work out the stiffness that permeated his body. One thing that he wanted to do anyway was to bring a few paw-guns into the house for their personal protection. Knowing that their firearms had been stored in one of the pods, the blond stallion grabbed the keys to the padlocks off of the kitchen counter and headed out the front door.

Standing on the front porch, he looked over at their house under repair. He had told Victoria that he felt the home could be returned to its original state but he actually had some reservations about that. The kitchen, particularly had been all solid wood for the cabinets but would their insurance put the cabinets back the way they were originally? Hopefully they would.

There were actually a number of things that were special about that house; the doors were all solid core, that stove that his mate loved to cook on was horribly expensive and the walls were skim-coat plaster finish. These were just a few of the things that his mate loved about their home. He knew the furson in charge of the repairs had better do a proper job or there would be one pissed-off tigress to deal with.

Standing there, enjoying the afternoon breeze, he gave thought to what Axel had said regarding their immortality. What really would happen when they started to cheat the underworld out of their operatives? Lucifer in particular wouldn't think twice about sending a legion of his soldiers after them. Maybe the underworld would leave them alone and then again, maybe not. Only time would tell. He knew in his heart that they needed to do this. There would be no more unwilling Agents, ever again.

Turning and walking down the ramp that had been constructed for his mate's wheelchair, the huge stallion still held onto the railing for support. It was clear to him now that he had indeed, almost bought the farm. Torvald couldn't remember being this weak in a long time, not since that time where Thammuz almost took him out.

As the huge stallion walked across the motor court to the small group of storage pods that held their belongings, a male voice called out from his left, garnering his attention.

“Hey! Hey you, stallion!” the male tiger called out as he cleared the top of the steep ravine by the driveway and stepped over the low railing by the pavement. “Listen, I seem to be lost and I really don't remember how in the world I got here!” he explained to the stallion as he walked towards him. Before Tor could reply, another voice, a femme voice speaking the berserker's native tongue flawlessly, called out to the male in question from behind a large bush by the driveway.

“*Mister striped felid! Get back here! You're going to get yourself killed!! Please come back down the hill with me!!*” she shouted in a panicked tone. That made the tiger stop, turn in the general direction he had come from and shrug his shoulders, as if he didn't understand this femme that was shouting at him. The huge stallion had his curiosity piqued so decided to see who this furson was that was speaking old Danish, his first language.

“*You, in the bushes, I am Torvald Svensen! I mean no fur harm! Show yourself!*” he ordered in his native tongue, waiting while the bush rustled once, then the owner of the voice came into view, looking stunned.

“*Torvald?*” the blond femme equine asked, lowering her battle axe and stepping out from behind the shrubbery. “*Are you Torvald Svensen, son of Sven Mikkelsen?*” she added, slowly walking towards the tall male equine.

“*Wilhelmine Andersdatter?*” he asked cautiously, walking towards the femme slowly, recognizing that it was indeed his first mate, in the flesh. She was a bit older than he had last remembered and she had some semi-fresh blood on her tunic and leggings.

The blond femme walked up to him and carefully touched Torvald, just to be sure of who this was in front of her and that he was not some *sejd*-creation. Dropping her axe's head to the ground and balancing the handle against her shoulder, the blond femme took his muzzle in her paws and turned it left and right, looking him over closely.

“*Let me see your scars,*” the femme asked, stepping back a step. “*My Torvald had a huge scar across his belly that he claimed was made by some fur that he called a Dark Agent.*” The stallion lifted his polo shirt up, exposing the scar that the femme traced lightly with her left index finger before she looked up at him, slack jawed. “*You are my first mate, my first love and number one in my heart,*” she said softly, putting her paw to her mouth as she sobbed quietly, realizing that it really was her long-dead first mate, in the flesh, somehow alive again.

Torvald was about to hug his first wife to comfort her when the male tiger spoke up; “Uh, where are we? I sure hope you speak English because I don't understand the language you're speaking.” he offered up.

“You're in Southern California, at my home off Glenn Ranch Road in the Portola Hills, to be exact.” Tor replied to the tiger in English. “My name's Torvald Svensen.”

“I'm Franklin Hellyer.” the striped one retorted, looking a bit confused. “You know, the last thing I remember was being out drinking near Ceres with my best friend Wally Connell. We were shit-faced drunk, just totally plastered from drinking Jack Daniels. Wally lost control of his car while we were driving down Hatch Road and his Camaro went off the pavement, right into an irrigation canal. I could have sworn that I had drown because I distinctly remember a feline angel coming to claim my soul.”

This information stunned the huge stallion so he needed to clarify something. “This might sound strange to you but you need to stay with me on this. Did your friend Wally Connell have two sisters named Victoria Angela Connell and Valerie Jean Connell?” The tiger looked at Tor strangely as he answered him.

“Yeah, Wally has two younger sisters. The oldest one, Vicki is my girlfriend and I’m going to propose to her when she graduates from high school.” Frank replied. “So, how do you know Wally, Vicki and Val? Were you a neighbor of theirs?”

“Oh Good Grief!” Torvald blurted out, shaking his head. This was getting complicated in a hurry. “Listen, why don't we all go inside and sit down. This is going to take a very long time to explain.” Before he could repeat that thought in his native tongue to Wilhelmine, another very familiar femme voice called out, getting the group's attention.

“Excuse me! I seem to be lost and I don't . . . know . . . where . . . ?” Her voice trailed off when the huge stallion turned to face the femme bay-colored equine walking down the gravel drive towards them. “Torvald? Torvald Arend Svensen, is that you?” she queried, looking very confused by the situation.

“Maryanne Leanna Jensen?” he countered, feeling just a little sick to his stomach from the stress. His life was going sideways on him and there didn't seem to be anything he could do to stop it.

“Well, it was Maryanne Leanna Svensen, the last that I knew,” she offered up, still seeming to be confused as she looked at the surroundings. “Tor, tell me; where are we? This certainly isn't Schuyler, Virginia or any part of Virginia that I'm familiar with for that matter. I've never observed automobiles that looked like those fancy contraptions parked over there and the general feel of the area is all wrong. Where in the devil are we?”

“Toto, We're not in Kansas anymore,” the berserker muttered under his breath, guiding his small party towards his temporary home. He knew this wasn't going to go well at all.

###

Rumjal slowly came to, wondering what had happened to him. The last thing he remembered was looking at the three fem-furs that had confronted him in the hallway outside his office, followed by a flash of blinding blue light. As his vision came back to him, the three femmes in question were leaning against the wall across the room from him, staring at him with definite smiles on their mugs. That didn't bother him as much as the fact that he was not bound to the chair he was sitting in. He was, however held to it firmly by some spell that he couldn't sense, let alone defeat. The pachyderm was greatly bothered by the fact that the room was totally unfamiliar to him, which meant only one thing; he was not in his own realm.

“Rumjal, so nice of you to join us,” Jenna said smoothly as she came into his field of vision. “I thought we might talk a bit and you could agree to a few things that might save your very existence.”

“Do you know who you're messing with?” he shot back, trying to break his bonds to no avail.

“Do *you* know you you're messing with?” Jenna retorted. “Your powers don't even come close to ours, my misguided minor Fallen Deity.” The otteress lifted a mug to her lips and sipped her hot chocolate before she continued. “If we wanted to, we could get you banished to the farthest corners of the universe, strip you of all of your powers, or worse. Much worse.”

“Yeah, right. You don't have a snowball's chance in . . .” The pachyderm quit talking when Jenna continued speaking in a very grave tone.

“I want you to know, I have eleven sorceresses that are class five or higher, three Master Mages, one very powerful psychic mind-destroyer and a femme Elemental Controller that carries a huge grudge over what

you did to her mate. I think you know who I'm talking about. Wendi wants to scatter your atoms to the Four Cardinal Points while you still live, one atom at a time.”

“You wouldn't dare let her attack me!” the gray one blurted out.

“I really would let Wendi have a go at you, not to mention the fact that I really think I could get Aslaug to have a turn at you, too. All I have to do is to tell her that it was your idea to have Kenji try to take out the Svensens.” That got the pachyderm's attention.

“Hold on just a minute, here. Let's not be too hasty, Jennifer. What do you want to talk about?” Rumjal asked nervously. He had no desire to ever tangle with the Valkyrie. Not after what she had done to Anane.

“Listen closely because I won't repeat myself.” Jenna began. “We want you to give protection for Torvald and Victoria Svensen. Not just some cheap lip-service but real protection. No harm will come to them, ever. You will protect them from your buddies down here, no matter what the cost. If you fail, we turn you over to Aslaug. If there's anything left, Wendi gets the remains.”

Rumjal grimaced at the thought. “Do you know what you're asking me to do? You're asking me to change sides, you twisted, demented witch! I can't protect them unless I distance myself from the Malefic Council!” That's when one of the other femmes spoke up from across the room.

“Listen, the Svensens are retiring from being Agents so they really don't belong to either side at the moment.” the shapely pronghorn doe offered up from her spot by the wall. “Jenna is serious, though. You really don't have a choice.”

“You're right; there is no choice!” the pachyderm agreed. “Either I do your bidding or I get destroyed!” he mused out loud. Mental images of Aslaug, covered in his blood while she killed him flashed through his mind. He was brought back to the present by Jenna speaking to him again.

“Not only do we want protection for the Svensens, but we want that same protection for their entire extended family.” Jennifer put forth. “I think we're being very generous here. You get to keep your little group of followers that think you're the greatest thing since sliced bread and the Svensens plus their extended family will all enjoy the rest of their lives in peace.”

“But I can't just up and change sides . . .” Jenna interrupted his plea to drive home her point.

“Listen closely. It's either you do this for us or we give you over to the Angelbreaker. Make your choice.”

“You have me cornered,” he suggested, thinking this over. There was no good way out of this for him.

“Well?” the doe asked. “Speak up or I go get Aslaug. Wendi's already on her way so I don't need to find her.”

Rumjal cringed because this was a 'No Win' scenario. “I agree. I will do your bidding.”

“How nice of you to agree to help out,” Jenna said in a cheery tone. “Don't worry, the spell that holds you to that spot will release you in a few minutes. Just remember what Aslaug did to Anane.”

With a flash of blinding blue light, the four femmes were gone. While he waited for the spell to release him, the minor deity gave thought to his situation. Maybe he could tell the Council that he was going on a

vacation or something like that. At least long enough to figure out how to get out of this very disagreeable arrangement.

The gravity of the situation finally sunk in when he realized that he would have to begin protecting the Immortal Couple right away. Rumjal just wondered; who would protect him from the Council.?

###

Kenji had gotten extremely bored with this tedious waiting for his pending demise at the paws of the Angelbreaker. So much so that he had walked down to the Big-Box home improvement store that was near the motel he was staying in, just to have something to do.

Wandering around inside, he was amazed at the junk that this particular retailer was offering for sale. Since he had his 'unlimited funds' at his disposal, he decided to pick up a few tools to do some wood carving, just to occupy his time. What irked him was the orange-vested idiots that worked there.

No one seemed to know where the paw-carving tools were so he was forced to find them himself. After that, he was dismayed by the firewood they were offering up as lumber. Even their best quality material that carried a premium price was warped, knot-riddled and still very green.

The clouded leopard had found some wood that was actually a wall molding that was reasonably straight, so after selecting the best pieces for himself, he was just roaming around, looking at the materials that were for sale. Kenji stopped in the cabinet department, appalled by the junk that was offered up as premium grade cabinetry. The cabinet boxes were made mostly out of particle board, put together with wood staples and some kind of a hot glue. Totally unacceptable to him. The painted cabinets were all particle board, doors included from what he could deduce.

“Who put this shit together?” he mused out loud, opening and closing the door of a display cabinet, noting it didn't close squarely. “I would be ashamed to admit that I had hung this cabinet.” he added.

“Sounds like you know your stuff,” a black-furred Labrador stated, making Kenji look up at the tall, muscular male that was pushing a load of lumber on a cart.

“I think I know my stuff, as you put it, since I was a master furniture maker in Japan.” the feline replied. “See, this door had a huge gap at the top and the hinges won't allow you to adjust this door to fix that. It would have to be rebuilt to repair this.”

The canid nodded as he looked at the issue. “Think you could rebuild this door to straighten it?” he asked.

“I would have to make a new door,” Kenji stated, looking it over. “This hot glue would only make things problematic to the repair. It would be better to start fresh. Quicker, too.”

“You know, I need a cabinet maker for a project that I'm working on,” the dark one brought up. “Would it be possible that you're looking for work?” he queried.

“I could be persuaded to work on a project, since I'm currently between jobs, awaiting another fur to come here looking for me.” That wasn't the whole story but it would do.

“Okay, I'll pay you forty-one dollars an hour for your work, provided you're as good as you say you are.”

the canid offered. "My name's Burke. Jim Burke. I own Orange County Renovators, Incorporated."

"My name is Kenji Nishiguchi but you can call me Ken." the felid replied. "Where is this job that you speak of? I would have to ride a bicycle there, since I currently have no vehicle to use."

"Where are you staying? Maybe you can hitch a ride with me." Jim asked.

"I'm staying at the Motel 5 just down the street."

"Tell you what," the canid began, "I'll pick you up at six. I live nearby so I drive by that motel every morning."

Kenji smiled. "I will be waiting."

"Just bring your paw-tools. I have table saws, band saws, moulding machines, routers and other power tools at the site."

"Thank you," the leopard said as he offered a paw to the burly canid.

"No problem," Jim replied, shaking Kenji's paw firmly. "I really need an experienced fur on this particular job. I've heard from a family member that the femme home-owner is very fussy about her home. If that is truly the case, I need an expert to put the kitchen and one of the offices, her office, back together."

Kenji watched his new employer wander off in search of supplies, glad that he now had something to occupy his time with. Knowing what he needed as far as tools went, he headed off to that area of the store to find the particular items that he required. At least now the wait for the Angelbreaker wouldn't be so tedious.

###

Rumjal found the fur he was looking for so he walked into the diner, casually sat down across from his mark and picked up a menu, just to attempt to blend in. After the male across from him ignored the pachyderm for a minute or two, the gray one cleared his throat to get the fur's attention.

"Oh, Rumjal. Sorry, I didn't see you sitting there." the badger stated, trying to keep a straight face.

"Morgan, you damned well knew I was sitting here." the elephant replied quietly. "Listen, I have a problem that I need your help with."

"What can I do for you?" Mr. Sleight put forth, lowering his menu to see his adversary better.

"Well, Jenna and her group has blackmailed me into giving the Svensens and their extended family protection from the Malefic Council. If I don't do as they say, they will give me over to Aslaug and Wendi." That information got the badger's attention.

"No shit?" Morgan mused, setting his menu on the table and crossing his arms. "Life's a bitch, isn't it?" he added as a smile slid across his muzzle.

"This isn't funny!" Rumjal hissed.

“It is from my standpoint.” the badger shot back. “You've just been seriously fracked over by those witch femmes, buddy. You do know they mean business, don't you? This ain't no bovine shit, Rumjal, they will follow through with that threat.”

“I realize that, Morgan. What can I do to get out of this before it gets out of paw?” Not only was he nervous, Rumjal seemed to be a bit panicked, too.

“You know, I'm not sure how you can get out of this, my old adversary. Maybe you could talk with Harold Talmadge, get him on your side and have him do some bargaining for you.”

“Morgan, don't say that!”

“Listen, if you don't like that idea, maybe you could go to Jenna and grovel at her feet for a while. There is the very slim possibility that she might relent.”

Rumjal knew that wouldn't work. “Um, no. She blackmailed me so I can't see her going back on that. Do you have any other ideas?”

“Okay, how about this?” Morgan began; “You go to the Svensens, tell them how you've been fracked over by Jenna and talk them into the notion of acting like they've switched sides. Tell the Council that the entire Svensen clan belongs to you now as your Dark Agents and hope Surt doesn't start nosing around.”

Rumjal shook his head slowly. “Morgan, that sounds so preposterous, it might just work.” he admitted. “So, I'll need to put on my best bargaining face and hope to Hades that they agree to help me.”

“You'll need to make it worth their while.” Morgan interjected.

“I have no idea what to offer them.”

“Offer them that protection, you goof-ball!” the badger replied cheerily. “I'm sure they would appreciate any and all protection that you could provide them from attacks by the Underworld.”

“Gah, I was hoping you would have a better idea than that.” the gray one admitted. “That was the only thing I could think of. You know, there had to be something that they need that I could use to sweeten the pot with.”

“Rumjal, I think some protection while they live out their lives in peace would be a sweet enough pot. Go talk with them. All they can say is 'no' to your request.”

“I guess that's it, huh?” the pachyderm mused. “Well, thanks for the advice.”

“You're welcome, Rumjal.”

Morgan watched the huge gray one get up from his seat and walk out of the diner, hanging his head in defeat. The badger knew Jenna had some ulterior motive with this blackmail but what it was, he had no idea. It would eventually make itself clear, though. With Rumjal in the mix, it shouldn't take long.

###

Judge Talmadge sat down across from three beings that were his supervisors, knowing he was probably going to be read the riot act for his role in the Svensen trial. John Motlow, an aging ibex, Sean Doherty, the human on the board and Zianda, the tall, slender gray Centari were all somewhat unreadable to the canid. The human spoke up, explaining the situation.

“Harold, we have been bombarded with complaints concerning your involvement with Torvald and Victoria Svensen. It would seem that you're making them a pet project of yours, sending agents to look for them, giving them counsel when you shouldn't and sending a bodyguard to look after them of all things, writing it off as a miscellaneous expense on your person checking account. What do you have to say in your defense?”

The scruffy canid felt very uncomfortable under the board's scrutiny as he answered for his actions. “Well, okay, so I did make a pet project out of the Svensens. I did that only because Odin and *The Almighty* were not protecting them. So Torvald did something that made *His Pompousness* upset? That's a give, considering I have first-paw experience with that. He expects all of his operatives to know the rules to the letter but he won't publish the rules! It's almost as if he's making them up as he goes!”

“That is still no reason for doing what you did.” Zianda put forth.

“So, it's just fine for a Dark Agent, Counselor John Murcheson to work right under your noses, railroading two very nice furs, but I shouldn't get myself involved in helping them out?” Harold asked.

“We were unaware of that information concerning Counselor Murcheson.” Mr. Motlow stated.

“Aw come on!” the judge blurted out. “You had to know about it!”

“I'm sorry, Harold. I'm being honest when I say we were totally unaware.” the gray one reiterated.

“So, what do you want me to do now? Turn my back on them?”

“You are too involved to do that now.” Mr. Doherty brought up. “You must now see this through to the end.”

“I was afraid you were going to say that,” the judge said in a sad tone, inwardly jumping for joy. He knew he would now get his chance to even things up at a high cost to the Malefic Council. He knew he would take out at least a few of their Agents if not a few major players before he was through.

###

Harold kept thinking about his good luck, if you could call it that, while he made his way back to his offices in the capitol. At his destination, the cab he was riding in slid to the curb and he paid the driver, tipping him a few credits before he got out and walked across the plaza to his building.

As he made his way across the mall, Harold noticed a fur that he hadn't seen in many years, over three hundred, give or take a few decades. That fur was sitting on a bench, looking very dejected, like he had just lost his best friend. Feeling that something was up, the canid headed in that direction. As he grew near, the fur in question looked up at him, still seeming to be depressed.

“Rumjal, what brings you here?” Harold asked, sitting down by the huge gray one. “You took your sweet time in coming here to say you were wrong and that you were sorry.”

"It's not that, Harold." Rumjal turned to face his old adversary and shook his head. "Yeah, I was wrong, I guess, when I started that war between those two religions and I'm sorry that *The Almighty* made you immortal just to screw with you when you and Morgan tried to intervene."

Looking up at the gray one, the judge spoke his mind. "If it's not that, what is it? We haven't seen one another for centuries so it seems odd that you're even here at all." Harold was curious as to the why in all of this. The pachyderm had his full, undivided attention now.

"Okay, it's like this," Rumjal began, telling the canid the full story about how Jenna had shafted him. The judge just sat there, listening, jaw agape. Finally pulling his thoughts together, the canid spoke.

"Rumjal, you're been totally fracked over and then some!" he mused. "You do know that she means . . .?" Rumjal interrupted that thought to save some time.

"I know I'm screwed," he admitted. "Whereas Mr. Uppity-Pants made you immortal and then left you to your own devices, Jenna has literally made me have to change sides! I can't help the Svensens unless I bring down the wrath of the entire Malefic Council, right on top of my head!"

"No, there might be a way out for you," the canid suggested, rubbing his chin in thought. "What if I go with you and introduce you to the Svensens? We'll explain your plight and then suggest the possibility that this could work out to all of our advantages. We will tell the Council that they're all agreeing to be Dark Agents but all of the mission requests have to go through you, before you and you alone contact Torvald and Victoria with the particulars.

"We'll find some real easy jobs that they can fail at miserably, with the excuse to the Council that they were Agents Of Light before this, not evil operatives. While all of this is going on, we can set up a few furs on the Council and bring them to justice. Don't think that I don't know about how you want to change things in the Underworld. If you help us, we'll help you."

"Harold, that sounds so insane, I bet it will work." Rumjal stated.

"I'm pretty sure this will work, at any rate." Harold brought up as he looked at his watch. "You know, it's into the afternoon on the Svensen's planet so maybe we could time it to be daylight, tomorrow morning for them when we get there."

"Uh, you know, I had better tell you about something I did right before Jenna screwed me over." the pachyderm told the judge. "This might have an effect on what we're going to try to do."

"You couldn't have done much to mess this up." the canid stated. "So, what is this complication?"

Rumjal explained what he had conspired with Zagam to do, shocking Harold deeply.

"Good Gravy!" the judge spat out, looking at the pachyderm as if he had two heads. "Yeah, you're right, that's an issue, for sure. Zagam was quite correct in his thinking when he suggested that particular scenario to you. Well, looks like it's time for us to do some spin control."

###

Knowing this was going to be a mess, Torvald opened the front door to his temporary home and allowed

the three furs to enter before him. As he stepped inside after them, you could have heard a pin drop.

*“Wilhelmine, I'm sure you remember Victoria and this is her sister Valerie.”* Tor explained to his first wife, guiding her over to the tigress because he knew she spoke old Danish with some fluency. “Maryanne, this is my current wife, Victoria and her sister Valerie.”

“Your current wife?” the bay-colored femme asked coolly, giving her 'husband' a strange look. This didn't add up at all.

“Yeah, about that,” Tor began; “Uh, I really don't know how to say this politely; you've been dead for a long time, Sweetheart. I should know, since I was there at your funeral.”

“Dead?!?” Maryanne blurted out. “You have to be joking with . . . you know, I do remember being very sick with Influenza.” she admitted, realizing there was a big hole in her memory. “And to tell you the truth, I really don't remember anything after that time, either.”

“I guess I should tell you this is January, 2017.” Tor offered up.

“2017?!?” Maryanne and Frank both blurted out. The bay mare suddenly fainted into the stallion's arms, her mind overloaded by that information.

While Torvald put Maryanne on the couch and made her comfortable, Victoria made her own discovery.

“Frank Hellyer?” she questioned, positive as to who the tiger male was that she was looking at in her living room.

“Yeah, I'm Frank . . .” His voice trailed off as he made the connection. “Vicki? Is that you?” he asked.

“Yeah, it's me.” she replied, giving her old beau a crooked smile. “You remember Valerie, don't you?” the tigress added, motioning to her sibling, who was currently standing by the kitchen counter, arms akimbo, looking totally gob-smacked.

“I remember Val.” he replied. “I was following some of that conversation, Vicki. Is he really your husband?” the tiger asked, pointing at the huge blond fur.

“We will be married twenty-six years this October tenth.” she pointed out.

“So, I'm uh . . . almost fifty-two now?” the tiger mused.

“I'll be fifty-one this year.” Victoria stated. “Frank, why don't you sit down. How you came to be here, I don't know exactly but I'm sure that it had something to do with driving a wedge between Torvald and myself. Once I have a short discussion with Torvald's first wife, I'll tell you what's happened since we were in high school.”

*“Victoria, what has happened to your arms and legs?”* Wilhelmine finally asked, sitting nervously in a chair by the tigress, running her fingers up and down one of the arm casts just to feel the hard, slightly rough surface for herself.

*“Torvald and I were attacked by a Dark Agent. We were injured but as you probably remember, we're immortal.”* was Victoria's reply. “I should tell you that you're no longer on your own world, but you're on my home world, the one that

*Torvald now calls his home.”*

*“This all seems very confusing to me.”* the blond femme finally admitted.

*“Just don't let yourself get upset.”* Tor suggested, kneeling down in front of the two of his loves, one past, the other present. *“We will help you through this, Wilhelmine. Some fur has caused you to be somewhere where you do not belong but I'm afraid that you may not be able to return to that place where you belong, either.”*

*“The last thing that I remember was that I was dying, Tor.”* Wilhelmine told her first husband. *“The Saxons had killed Frode Gunnarsson, my second husband and they had hung Axel and butchered him. I am almost sure that I was killed trying to escape them. I was helping our daughter Dana to leave the village after they had cut down her husband with an axe. She was badly injured herself from defending the village so I had to help her to walk. We were confronted by several Saxons and that's the last thing that I remember.”* After a moment she added, *“I do not know what happened to Gytha. She was off picking grapes with her husband and kits when this happened.”*

Torvald could see from the look in Victoria's eyes that she had followed that conversation quite well. Knowing it would come up, he asked his current wife in English, “What do we tell her about the children?”

“What can we tell her?” the tigress replied. “She will know exactly who they are just as soon as she sees them.”

“Then what do we do? Ask the kits to come over or would that cause a disaster?” the huge blond fur offered up.

“I don't know.” Victoria finally replied. “Um, am I correct in thinking that she's your second wife Maryanne?” the tigress asked, indicating the still unconscious fur on the couch.

“She is Maryanne Leanna Svensen, in the flesh.” Tor confirmed. “We'll have to tell her about Brad, Ron, Nancy and Alicia. You know she's where Alicia's middle name 'Leanna' came from, right?”

“I had heard that mentioned.” Victoria offered up.

*“I hate to interrupt, but I need to bandage up my leg a little better.”* Wilhelmine stated. That's when the fact that she was still bleeding from her leg wound came to Torvald and Victoria's attention.

*“You had better let my sister fix you up.”* the tigress told Wilhelmine.

*“I will allow your sister to doctor me.”* the blond femme replied. *“I have always trusted Tor's judgment and since you are his mate, I will trust yours, too.”* After a moment, Wilhelmine added, *“It gladdens my heart to see that you are still with Torvald, doing the work that is for the good of all furkind.”*

The elder tigress grimaced at that statement. *“About that. We're trying to get out of the business, to tell you the truth. Our new objective is to help out those Agents that were unwillingly recruited to do the dirty work of the Gods.”* Victoria stated. *“I will tell you more while Valerie tends to you.”*

While Frank was made to turn his back so the injured femme could remove her leggings, Tor looked around the living room. There were three of the most important femmes in his life, all together at the same time and in a manner that should have been totally impossible. Whoever had done this, had meant this to be malicious. Now whether it turned out to be malicious or not, was yet to be seen.

One thing the berserker did know to be a fact was this; the fur that did this had just forfeited their life. He couldn't really see allowing this to slide, considering the pain and heartache that it would cause. Here were three furs who would now have a heck of a time re-integrating with the modern world. Not so much for Frank but Maryanne was not used to all of the modern conveniences and poor Wilhelmine was going to have an impossible time with the modern world as a whole. She came from a time of candles and firewood, not fluorescent fixtures and natural gas heat.

Noting that Valerie had things under control at the moment, the stallion headed for the medicine cabinet where he hoped to find some Tylenol for the headache that was coming on fast. It was going to be a nasty one, too.