

One day closer

Half a year after the dragon's parting, the fox finally got over the loss. Things started to turn back to how they were. I, too, have missed the dragon for quite a while. The foxes sorrow was felt by all her slaves. She let off steam by intensifying the training or, depending on her mood, torturing unfortunate ones. Some did not survive her desolation. I have been very lucky to see the sun rise every day during that difficult period. She seemed to have certain interest in me, but I've no clue whether that is good or bad. It has now been quite a while since she last tortured one of us. Her glance pierces through every soul and breaks every will to revolt. Her eyes are like an ocean; large, calm and emanating dominance. She truly is a remarkable person. The parting of her first disciple also changed her personality slightly. She became more focused on the training and well-being of her servants. One thing always fascinated me, though. Why was she so obsessed with Arceus's wish? The Mistress was immortal and had an amazing amount of strength, not to speak of her beautiful curves. She could easily rule the world, or at least huge parts of it. No, she only had a few goals. She wanted to see her dragon again and to make the God's wish reality. The fox would not be content with any other outcome.

The feather I am writing this with shakes in my paw. The words I write are becoming scribbly and messy. This anxiety is deeply rooted within every one of us. Our self-confidence is hardened and polished by The Mistress, but she made sure there are always gaps only she can pass. Only a couple of minutes remain until I see her again. My hands are getting sweaty as the letters start to dance. No, I have to focus. I have to face my punishment, or however you want to call it. I wonder why this has happened to me, as I put the feather back in the pot of ink. I take a deep breath and dry my paws at my pants, which are nothing more but simple, white fabrics stitched together. The shackles around my wrists and ankles rattle quietly as the D-rings hit the metal. The restraints make me feel strangely secure. Plus, they are standard slave-wear. I eject myself from the wooden stool, turn around and walk blankly towards the door. There, I stare at the doorknob for a moment, then try to open it. The door is unlocked. That must have happened when I was writing. Simple slaves like me are locked up during our spare time, to find inner peace, The Mistress says. We are only allowed to go out during certain hours or once we completed our assignments. Mine was to write this story, a biography of our Mistress.

I let my paw slide off the doorknob and walk back to my desk. The paper is still where it was when I stood up, and I pick it up. I leave my room after blowing out the candle with a hasty step. The sound my paws create when every time I take another step echo through the dark hallway. The hall is narrow and poorly cleaned, which makes it look like a dungeon. With the paper in my right hand, I take the staircase with two steps at a time. The Mistresses quarters are located two floors above, on ground level. I pass a couple of other slaves as I run, greeting them briefly. One of them had a higher rank than I have and I should have bowed, but I couldn't care less, since this was for The Mistress.

The room of our Mistress is beautiful in comparison to a plain slave room. Her room is around five times as big, has large windows in the back, a soft throne and a nicely filled willow table. In the middle of that table towers a thick candle, always lit. I have never seen it out before, never. It is rumored that once the fire goes out, The Mistress will murder all of us

in cold blood. Next to that candle sits a basket, which is always filled with the most colorful fruits, food I have not yet tasted ever in my entire life. The room is richly decorated with amazing pieces of art and drawn portraits of herself. Her bed is at the very end, under the windows. Beside her bed is a closet, filled with unknown items. The Mistress is extremely good at drawing, and sometimes, rarely, draws something for one of servants. Some say she is pretty narcissistic, but they are blinded by ignorance. I admire her in any way.

The time is now. I reach out for the doorknob that will lead directly into her office. I take a loose hold of the metal, gulp and gather all my courage, then push the wooden door open. It smells particularly pleasant inside the room, as if she expected a visitor. I scan the room quickly and then close the door behind my back. The sun has almost set and lights the room up well. A pair of ice-blue eyes and a friendly smile welcome me. I freeze instantly as I see The Mistress sitting on her mighty throne. She is wearing an exceptionally graceful outfit today. Four titanium bracelets decorate her wrists and ankles. Around her neck sits a leather, buckled collar. It reminds me of my own; she must emphasize equality. A white skirt and blue stockings cover her lower body. A bra in the same color as the stockings cover her chest, the fox's tummy uncovered. Her glance pierces right through me and I feel the paper slowly sliding out of my grip. I stand like that for almost a minute, when a voice, soft as snow but with confidence as hard as steel, echoes through the room.

"You have come. Very well." The Mistress says.

A chill runs down my spine and makes me shiver slightly. I walk up to the table and avoid her eyes.

"Have you completed your task," She pauses for a second, frowning as she continues.

"Riku?"

The Mistress knew my name? I never knew. I put the sheet of paper on the table, my hands shaking. The paper sticks briefly to my two center paw pads. I take a step back and decide not to answer.

"What? Won't you bring it to me?" The fox says on an indignant tone.

My heart skips a beat. I have made a mistake! I grab the piece of paper and trot towards her, putting it down right in front of her feet, which are resting on the heavy table and then take my distance. The Mistress puts her feet on the floor and grabs the story, then reads silently for a couple of minutes. It feels like hours to me. She occasionally glances at me, smiling. I check the room in the meantime, admiring her taste and skill in art. After a long moment of quiet reading, she suddenly bursts out into laughter. I am startled and jump back a little.

"This is so very good!" She exclaims, radiating happiness. "You have done exceptionally well with your task so far, Riku. You have impressed me."

The Mistress taps the paper with her small paw and stores it into one of the drawers of the table. I feel appreciated for once and warm feeling spreads across my body. The Mistress then hops up from her throne. I kneel and bow out of respect, my nose close to her feet.

"T... Thank you!" I exclaim, shivering. I hear how she walks around my body.

"Aside from writing stories, you would also make a great table. Your back is perfectly straight." She mocks me, bringing me in embarrassment. I don't know what to answer.

"Don't worry. It would be a waste of talent to make you my table. Besides, I already got two others for that."

The Mistress snaps her fingers and the door opens a few seconds later. Two slaves with the same rank as me run in. They kneel and bow, like me. The fox then prods her toes into my nose.

"Get up." She commands.

I push myself up from the warm floor and glance shortly at her. Her smile has gotten more deviously.

"Riku, behold true obedience." She says calmly.

The two slaves, whom I remember from my block, undress entirely. They fold their simple clothes and put them on the ground. The Mistress asks them to turn around. Their backs, full with deep and painful-looking welts gape at me. Fresh, bright red blood has painted their fur. One of them groans silently as he stretches out. I glance shortly at them, entranced by their wounds. They must be in great pain, I think.

"Aeon thought it was smart to bully a fellow slave. Aeon, get over here."

The light-furred, young wolf turned around, grinning. He grimaced, I notice. He reminds me of insanity and evil. The Mistress grabs something from the drawer in the table. Her smile disappeared as she looked at the wolf standing in front of her. Their eyes just met, when the wolf suddenly attacked her with a hooked punch. Then I realized.

The Mistress is not a mortal being and should not be messed with. She easily blocks the canine's arm, breaking it as she smashes it to the side. The fox continues with multiple jabs to the chest with the item she just took from the drawer and finishes the assailant off with an elbow to his nose and stomach. The wolf drops himself to his knees, gasping for air and cries out in pain. His left arm dangles loosely from the shoulder. He howls but is quickly silenced with a swift roundhouse kick. The canine's body collapses to the left, the weight cracking more bones in his arm. I gaze open-mouthed at the event. It takes a few seconds before I grasp what has really happened. What I have just seen is imprinted into my mind. The person I am serving is a demi-God and she will break all of us if she has to. I take a step back and gulp, then try to speak.

"...M-Mistress...?" I whisper.