

Lykos Redemption

Ch. 2: Arcadia

Coulter DarkClaw

Melaeneus and Nyctimus--the eldest and the youngest of the sons of Lycaon--traveled into the city. Their eyes wandered, taking in the sights and sounds of so beautiful a city. The streets were paved with marble. The buildings were all high quality marble, even in the slummier area of the city. It was a city of riches and a city so vastly different than the way that they had left it when they were kids. In their time in the City of Arcadia, there was only one paved road, only one building so richly developed. It was the building they could no longer enter. No matter how much they wanted to visit their childhood home. Zeus' warning had been clear. And they weren't ones to try the patience of a god.

"It looks so different from when I was last here Nyk. I can't believe how much has changed." Melaeneus said to his brother. It was obvious that Mel was nervous. Even with his cloak covering him. Nyctimus knew by the slight quiver in his voice. The plan was simple. He would go door to door and apologize for the things that he and his brothers had done.

"It is still the city we grew up in. Even if it looks a little...fancier than I remember. Do not let the guards catch us, though. I am pretty sure that the new King has put a price on my head. By being associated with me, you would surely be in danger, too. He thinks that I want the throne for myself, seeing as I am the 'rightful heir'. I could not care less about the throne. Only the people of Arcadia could make me take up the throne again. I care nothing for that power." Nyktimus replied nonchalantly.

"Brother? Why do you not want the throne? The people of Arcadia loved you if I remember correctly. Why would you give up a role for which you were born?"

"Mel, I know my destiny and it isn't to lead this city. It is to lead my brothers on a path of redemption for what they have done."

"How? Apollo's Oracle? When did you go to Delphi?"

"No. This is the path that I have chosen for myself." Nyktimus replied as they approached the first house of one of the citizens which the Lycaonids (name given to the sons of Lycaon) had wronged. If Melaeneus remembered correctly, it was the house of a fairly effeminate man, whom they knew was dating one of the palace guards. Demeas, Lycius, Macednus, and Portheus--if Melaeneus remembered correctly--had raped this man. They had taken turns raping him viciously and at the end had even castrated him. Melaeneus

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\*\*1 orgyia=6.09 ft.; 1.85m

\*\*\*4 talents=228lbs, 103.4kg

\*\*\*\*Himation=Grecian cloak worn by adults

^4.6kondoloi=7 in; 17.78 cm

^\*3 daktyloi=2.28 in; 5.8 cm

^\*\* Akoníto=Aconite; Wolfsbane

had chosen this house, because it was one of the most horrific of the acts committed by his brothers. One of the most horrific events that he'd ever watched, too scared for his own life to actually stop what had transpired. Nyktimus knocked on the door and waited.

The door opened just enough to allow the person inside could see who was at the door. "YOU! Why would YOU come back? Finally work up the courage to fuck me yourself?" The man at the door almost screamed at them. Then he noticed Nyctimus, "Your highness? What are you doing, my King? Why would you pass any time with this monstrosity of a brother?" He directed at Nyk as he bowed.

"I am not your king. I am here in support of my brother, who is trying to make amends for the wrongs committed by our brothers, and his own cowardice."

The effeminate man feigned surprise, "He seriously doesn't think that he can walk up here to THIS house and beg of ME forgiveness?"

"Leon, listen to me. I didn't think that they'd go as far as they did, I know that's no excuse and I know that I cannot give you back what you have lost, but I still must beg your forgiveness. I do this because it wasn't right what they did to you. It wasn't right for me to stay back and watch like a scared little pup while they did what they did to you. I am sorry that I wasn't stronger, that I didn't stand up for what was right when I should have. I cannot say I am sorry enough. However, I won't say anymore because words will not bring back what you lost."

"WILL YOU JUST SAY IT?! THEY RIPPED OFF MY TESTICLES, GODSDAMMIT!" Leon screamed at the top of his lungs; surprisingly this didn't attract as much attention as Nyctimus thought it would have. Obviously people were used to this man's outbursts.

"Calm yourself, Leon. I may have something to ease your pain. While I doubt you use them, anyways, I may be able to give you your testicles back." Nyctimus said as he looked in his bag. He was looking for one of his vials. He dug out a long slender vial containing a golden liquid. There was a label written in a heavily slanted Greek print. It read, "*Aíma Gorgónas*". "Ah yes. This was not easy to obtain, Leon. I have no need of it. However, I think it will aid in your plight."

"Thank you, your highness, I still am not willing to forgive this," He motioned over to Melaeneus, "his cowardice. However I must say that this act helps alleviate some of the anger I have felt toward your family for quite some time. It will be hard, your highness...but I will work toward forgiving your brother. Of course it would not hurt if Melaeneus would possibly talk to Demetrios. If he could get him to talk to me again, I would be more willing. His brothers drove Demitrios away with that rape. I was 'never the same' after what they did to me..." Leon replied, taking the vial. He uncorked the vial and tipped it back.

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"I will gladly talk to him. Where is he?" Melaeneus said unnecessarily.

"Still a Castle Guard. He is off an hour before sundown." Leon Replied.

"Are you indeed healed?" Nyctimus asked looking at the young man's groin. He was of a decent build. Obviously not wanting or in need of food--a change from the descriptions of the 'scrawny bitch' that his brothers had described. Of course seven and a half years can do that to a person. Especially under such a generous king. He was built not like a warrior, but rather a sprinter or a messenger. His face was handsome enough with a heavy brow and a hard chin. He would have been fairly masculine if not for the way in which he carried himself. That fact and the fact that he was indeed obviously ostracized by the community were what told him that the man was the bottom in the relationship. Which was probably what led his brothers to believe through their twisted, purely evil logic that raping him was okay. After all--they would think--he gave up his right to citizenship the moment he first let another man invade his most intimate of orifices.

"Indeed I am. Thank you, your highness. It means a lot for you to come here."

"Again, I am not your king. Nor am I a prince of Arcadia. My family gave the throne up the night my father killed me." Nyctimus said as he walked away. He didn't catch the bow that Leon had given him.

Melaeneus had given Demetrios ample time to exit the castle and show up at his home. So it wasn't a shock to Mel, when a burly man, maybe a little over an *orgyia*** tall, and around four *talents**** in weight. A pretty well-built man. He fit the role of palace guard rather perfectly. It was a surprise to Melaeneus that a man who was so masculine only appreciated the company of other men (If you could even call them that). It was as he approached his house that Mel got up and off the wall against which he was leaning. He looked at the man and said, "Demetrios? It's been a while."

"M...Mel...Melaeneus? I thought... Zeus was pissed...How are you... Why are you..." Demetrios looked at Melaeneus with a stern expression, "This is about Leon, isn't it?"

"Dem, look, Leon was severely wronged by my brothers. For you to leave him because they gang raped him. That's just cruel. I know it's been eight years since you broke it off, but in order for me to regain my humanity," Mel removed his cloak revealing the semi-wolfish appearance of his body, "I need to seek forgiveness from those who I've wronged and rectify their situations as much as I possibly can. It is the only way in which I can redeem myself in the eyes of Zeus. He is still very aggravated with my family and my returning to sapience hasn't helped matters any. Even if Zeus said he's happy that I've regained my humanity."

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Demetrios looked perplexed, then angry, then relieved, "Huh...You royals are all the same. You only think of yourselves. Even when you are trying to help someone, it is only because you have already figured out how it will benefit you. I am not with Leon anymore, because he has refused to forget what it is that your brothers did to him. I cannot be constantly reminded of what he went through verbally, when I already see the broken and beaten Leon lying on that floor so long ago. Every time I think of Leon, It's no longer the sweet man that I met fifteen years ago in gymnasium... It is the image of him bloodied on the floor eyes devoid of emotion. Do you know how terrible that is?"

"How do you think I feel? I had to watch my brothers rape your paramour because I'm too much of a coward to have tried to stop them. I don't see Leon bloodied on the floor. I see his face in utter pain and agony with my immediate younger brother over him. I can't get that image out of my head..." Melaeneus shook his head sadly, "Leon he still feels for you. It would mean a lot to him if you would at least try to rekindle what you once had before my family ruined your lives."

"Your journey will be a long and arduous one, Mel. I bid you farewell. I bear you no ill will, I hope you know, Mel. You were never as cruel as your brothers. You just never had the balls to be the older brother that they severely needed. It's nice to see you finally grow a pair to some extent." Demetrios looked at Melaeneus and sighed. He walked toward Leon's house as Mel stayed behind.

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Nyctimus found Melaeneus sitting on a bench in the central forum in the city. His cloak and hood were still on, but Nyctimus in some way could tell that there was a change in his brother. He was sitting stiller than Nyctimus remembered around the camp fire they sat at the night before they came into the city. Sitting next to him was a woman in a golden silk *himation*\*\*\*\* with blood red borders and a brooch with a pomegranate on it. Around the back of her head and resting on top of her ears were golden laurels. Her hair was a beautiful golden blond like the color of the setting sun reflecting off the ocean. Her skin a perfect, unblemished olive. Her eyes dark and sad. It was Hera. "Mother Hera? To what do we owe the pleasure?" Nyctimus bowed deeply out of respect for the goddess.

The goddess eyed him keenly with some level of respect, "Lord Zeus sent me to see your progress. It appears that my oaf of a husband is good for something. He punished your family in a way that he reserves for the cruelest of men. I heard your oath, young Nyctimus. Hecate relayed it to me. That was a very dangerous thing that you did, I hope you know. Taking on the role of redeeming your family. That, young lad is an enormous goal. I suggest starting small. Start with Melaeneus and then try and redeem the rest of your family. It will take time. Understand that. Also understand that it will not be possible for you to redeem them all.

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"Now come and see what progress was made today. Melaeneus has indeed redeemed his cowardice some today. He still must deal with much more before he regains his full humanity. However, he stands before you with more of himself human than before." She reached out and delicately and lowered the cowl of Melaeneus' cloak. What was shown was the fully human head of his brother Melaeneus, if a little bit scruffier than when they were younger.

Nyctimus gasped. "Brother! Your ears! They have returned to their human shape." And it was true. Instead of the pointed more wolfish ears he had before coming to the city, Melaeneus' ears were just as round as the day before he was turned into a wolf. His lips were turned up into the shape of a smile that was reflected in his dark brown eyes.

"Yes, that is right, young one. His redemption is just starting. He has in front of himself now a long journey. In which he will be challenged and opposed. It is the way of things, child. Those who seek to redeem themselves will always face those who will hold onto grudges with all their ignorant might. I leave you with this, that you may survive your next encounter." She said as she set something delicately on the bench next to where she had been sitting and lifted herself off of the bench before leaving in a burst of pomegranate leaves.

"Brother, what do you think she meant, 'survive our next encounter?'" Melaeneus asked as he picked up a silver knife, dropping it immediately and yelping as the rather pungent odor of burning flesh reached both his and Nyctimus' noses. Melaeneus looked at the blade as if it were possessed and looked at his hand where a significant burn was slowly healing itself. "By the Gods!"

"Let me see that." Nyctimus picked it up and looked at the handle. From what he could tell, the handle was made from aconite root. It had been dried and lacquered, however, it was apparently still poisonous to his brother. It was a knife of the finest quality and craftsmanship. Its blade was silver-plated bronze. The blade was in the shape of an elongated tear drop with the round end near the handle and the pointed end the tip of the blade. The blade itself was around four and a half *kondoloi*[^] long by about three *daktyloi*^{^*} wide. Inscribed in the blade was the word "*Akoníto*^{^**}". Nyctimus chuckled. It was going to be an interesting couple of months...

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