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**Irileth**

Slowly, she stirred.

Opening her eyes, Irileth slowly became aware that she was tucked inside the most comfortable bed that she ever had the pleasure of sleeping in. She was warm, thick furs of the finest quality covering her. Then, her mind clicked as she registered light breathing and an incredibly warm and muscled mass at her side.

She turned and found herself staring into the sleeping form of her Lord, Balgruuf.

Her eyes widened before her mind slowly bombarded her memories of what had happened the night previously. Fully aware of what happened, the Nightblade deflated.

What had she done? What in Tamriel's name had she done? She had gone and slept with her Lord! The impudence of such an act!

"Mrm..." Balgruuf whispered sleepily under his breath. Irileth bit her lip, struggling to contain the smile that threatened to form on her lips. Who knew the big lug could be so...adorable? Just seeing his sleeping face right now made her mind think of dangerous thoughts, such as taking a finger to poke the Nord's cheeks.

As long as no one knew, her mind treacherously whispered, it was alright. Convinced of the merits of such an act, the Nightblade struck a finger out and poked Balgruuf's cheek.

"Mrmm..." he muttered.

At this, her willpower was drained. A satisfied smile broke out on her face.

Irileth did not know if this would happen again, or if Balgruuf would be interested in it, but at this moment, she allowed herself to be greedy. Now, Balgruuf was hers and hers alone.

"You're mine....my love," her mouth whispered out the deepest thought in her head.

And as if on cue, the big lug's eyes stirred and the brightest eyes that Irileth had ever seen were opened.

Irileth froze.

Balgruuf seemed to study her for a moment and Irileth felt, no she was naked under his gaze. For what seemed like an eternity, Balgruuf spoke.

"You're the most beautiful and amazing woman in the entire world," Balgruuf said softly, his voice deeper than normal.

Irileth flushed, her cheeks warmed, and her eyes widened at the sudden praise. And to make it worse, the big lug leaned forward and kissed her.

The Nightblade melted.

The kiss was not long, internally disappointing Irileth (Not that she would admit it out loud), but it was a kiss that Irileth enjoyed anyway. At the very least it wasn't an entirely chaste one, that was for sure.

"So..." Irileth dreaded as Balgruuf's tone turned into that dreaded teasing drivel that she both hated and loved. "You love me, huh?"

If her skin had the pale hue of Balgruuf's, the man would have seen how pink her cheeks were. And with him teasing her again, she'd resemble the most vibrant tomato on Nirn. Irileth considered denying what the man said but at this moment, something told her that she would have to be completely honest with him.

She had no clue if they'd have the chance again.

Mustering her courage, Irileth answered with dignity.

"I...am not opposed to you, my Lord."

"It's alright to admit you love me, you know," Balgruuf teasingly added. "Aw, don't tell me big bad Irileth is in fact a massive sweet-roll in the inside?"

Irked at his teasing, the Nighblade moved from her position and straddled the man. Under her, Balgruuf's smirked as he gazed at her toned form. Red eyes narrowed as Irileth leaned down on him.

"I love you, you massive Nordic lummox. Now, are you satisfied?" the Dunmer growled huskily.

She blinked as she felt something poke her from below.

"No..." Balgruuf rumbled, a deep rumbling sound that made something in her click. "Not yet."

"But we just-ah!" Irileth moaned as she felt the tip of his cock rub her entrance. Her lips quivered as her mind and body recalled his length inside her, on how hot and thick it was. Her body shook at the feeling of the hungry emptiness inside of her that was fed by him, how it connected their souls into one fleeting moment of ecstasy and light. She wanted to feel it again, she wanted that promise of intensity again. She wanted to feel that eternity again.

"Someone's excited," Balgruuf remarked.

Irileth shut him up with a deep and passionate kiss.

She forced her tongue in, and her entire being danced as she tasted Balgruuf. The man in turn, kissed back and their tongues met in a flurry of lust, lewd noises escaping their lips. Below, she rested her folds on his length and slowly, rubbed herself against his hardening cock. Balgruuf did not stay idle, his hands coming onto her hips and her body electrified as she felt his fingers lower down to her ass.

"Mhmmm," Irileth mewled as his rough fingers squeezed her rear. The shocks going through her body was even more pronounced, and a deep fire in her burned as her body yearned and screamed for his length. Irileth pulled back from the kiss and fully sat on top of Balgruuf. She licked her lips in anticipation as she positioned herself slowly, her pussy burning for Balgruuf's cock, and slowly, she lowered herself onto him.

"Hot. Hot. Hot. Hot. Thick. Thick. Thick," her being screamed as her eyes threatened to roll back into her head as she impaled herself on Balgruuf's length. Below her, Balgruuf groaned deeply, the sound making her inner being even more wilder.

Irileth began picking up the pace, her walls wrapping down onto Balgruuf's cock hungrily and greedily, a union that her body did not want to let go of. Irileth moaned, uncaring of volume, as her body enveloped her Lord, her Master, her Balgruuf!

And no one elses!

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"How long?"

"Hm?"

Irileth lay snug at his side, letting the Nord stroke her hair as they shared the warmth of the furs over them. Irileth had been letting her head rest on his chest, the best pillow that she had ever had rested on. She wouldn't admit such a thing to Balgruuf however. It would only make the big lug twice as insufferable.

Thinking back to Balgruuf's question, Irileth sighed as she snuggled into her Lord.

"Since Cyrodiil," Irileth revealed.

"Ah," Balgruuf's voice expressed his surprise.

Irileth looked up at Balgruuf, her eyes narrowing. "What did you think was going to happen, Balgruuf? Teasing me, flustering me, being so...so..."

"Handsome, charming, and being so insanely attractive?" Balgruuf supplied teasingly.

"Insufferable, you ox-headed fool!" Irileth fumed. Balgruuf raised a bushy and blonde eyebrow.

"You love insufferable men?" he inquired.

"No. The man which I love is you," Irileth emphasized. It rankled the proud Dunmer to be so vulnerable and open. As a Nightblade, her lot was to be in the shadows and thus, necessitated a personality that did not exactly sponsor openness. But with Balgruuf, Irileth was willing to take the extra step and risk, to be open.

It was new, she had to admit, but with the man she was with now, Irileth felt that going somewhere new would be alright at least.

"Well, I'm not exactly saying no to you, Iri." Balgruuf revealed. Her heart soared, and her hopes blossomed. The next expression that Balgruuf wore threatened to stifle everything in her.

"You are aware that in my position, I cannot be public with you. I am a Lord, you are my Housecarl. While it isn't uncommon for Thanes and Housecarls to be together and even get married, I am not some minor Thane where we can get away with it. I am the son of a great Jarl and thus, I must make decisions that will benefit Whiterun and my House." Every single word that left his mouth was like a stab in her heart. Oh, what did she expect to happen? That this was some fairy tale where everything would go right for her? But where they were now, with the warmth that they shared, Irileth would not abandon it for anything.

"I am aware, my Lord." Irileth answered. Despite her feelings, she mustn't forget their positions in life.

"And knowing that, do you still want it? To be lovers?"

The Nightblade stared deep into Balgruuf. A part of her wanted to stop, the realities of the situation speaking to her rational side. Such a thing would be incredibly dangerous and risky. But then again, she was a Nightblade and a former member of the Morag Tong to boot.

Doing things secretly, and in the dark, was her specialty.

"I do," Irileth answered.

"Then let us be-"

A steady stream of knocking at the door assaulted their ears. Her eyes widened for a moment in panic before her training set in. Sparing Balgruuf one last look, the Dunmer leaned forward and delivered a passionate kiss before her mind searched up a spell. Magicka flowing through her, the Nightblade cast Inviibility and soon, she was gone from the world.

Fumbling on his bed, Balgruuf reached for a robe and hastily put it on. With his modesty in place, Balgruuf cleared his throat as he spoke, "Enter!" he commanded.

The door swung open and a guard strode in. Thankfully, the man was sensible enough to ignore the piles of clothing on the floor and the smell of their love-making in the air. The guard saluted first before speaking. "My lord, the Steward has returned from Solitude. The Jarl is going to announce something in a few minutes and thus, requests you to dress immediately and present yourself."

As the guard was speaking, Irileth had silently positioned herself and made herself as silent as possible. In the spell, she could move freely but not do much else or the spell would wear off. She glanced at Balgruuf and saw something unreadable in his eyes.

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Irileth waited until Balgruuf had dressed himself and left with the guard. Sure that no one else was in the room, she released herself from the spell and collected her clothing. Dressing herself, the Nightblade made her way out of Balgruuf's room and made her way to the Great Hall.

There, she found the Hall fully packed with an audience fully enraptured as they gazed towards the dais where the Jarl and his family stood. Before the Jarl, the steward was reading something from a great scroll.

"....this be the words of our High King and Lord, Istlod! Hear ye, hear ye!" the Steward spoke loudly.

"**The Rising of the Reachmen and their usurpation of the rightful authority of Jarl Hrolfdir of Markarth is in violation of our laws and customs. Not only have the Reachmen rose against their Jarl and their King, they have risen against the Empire and His Imperial Majesty. And thus, We do hereby declare the Reachmen outlaws, fugitives, and rebels. All righteous Nords have Our blessing to act as they see fit to restore order and reclaim the Reach.**" he finished with a breath.

For a moment, there was stillness and silence in the air.

Suddenly, Balgruuf stood from his seat and bellowed, "***HERJA!***"

"***HERJA! HERJA! HERJA!***" the crowd roared. The men stomped their feet, the women cheered. The guards crashed the butts of their spears against the floor or pounded their chestplates with mailed fists. In the Great Hall, under the shadow of the dragon Numinex, the Nords of Whiterun cheered as the cried out for Season Unending.

They cried out for Herja.

Later, Irileth learned that Herja meant one thing.

War

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A/N: I was desperately looking around if there was Nordic word for war but I gave up and settled for the Norse word for it instead. I hope ya’ll enjoy the update!

Also, a mighty thanks to the chads who are supporting me on Patreon but most especially to Mahad for his support!

I shall continue to make content for all ya’ll to enjoy!