

Under the Christmas Tree in NY

Von DarkRapsody

Kapitel 1:

Her sword slashes through another one of those pesky Lamias. They just keep coming, and when you think you finished one wave, another one is already on your doorstep. Arturia wipes away the sweat on her forehead. With that done, she can get her bounty and settle down for some food.

Excited for a really big cheeseburger they have in a small shop a few streets away, she dissolves her sword and gets on her way.

She has been working for a headhunting agency for the past half year, since...well since that happened. It pains thinking about, so Arturia often just force stops her thought train and gets back to her business mode.

Today's profit is enough to pay for the entire week's meal and her rent. Just for some Lamias, that is. Maybe next week she should go for something even bigger?

Absorbed in her own thoughts, she walks down the sidewalk, until she arrives at her goal. The streets are now opened to save walking again, and the people spill outside like beans and start chatting and flood into the stores.

At least her Agency always saves the people first, before she starts her job. Nobody would want to have a really big Spriggan stomping on you on accident, or Arturia hurting a pedestrian.

The door opens swiftly and the air conditioned warm air welcomes her comfortably back.

"Damn, good job out there!" The secretary behind the front desk is a young lady with wavy brown hair and glasses on her nose. Always a smile on her face and sometimes a bit talking too much.

"Ah, don't worry about it. Wasn't much of a hassle." Arturia waves at her and signs the paper on the desk. In exchange she gets an envelope handed, filled with those beautiful paper bills.

Trying to hold back her excitement, she excuses herself and leaves the shop quickly. Finally burger time! With a bit too much swing in her step the young woman makes her way to her beloved diner.

The smell of grease and meat welcomes her back like a mother and her child in her arms. Today is the special "Three layers of meat with extra cheese" day, which is one of the weekly highlights and the reason she goes here once a week. The woman behind the counter recognises her already.

"You want the Special?"

"Of course." Arturia answered and paid her. "Add an extra Soda today."

With the food on her tray she sits down in one of the comfortable corners next to the

huge window. Watching the cars while eating can be quite calming sometimes. Odd, but good.

Arturia munches down her food too quickly, and the sweet taste of soda just barely quells her desire for this shabby fast food that would absolutely ruin her health if she goes on like this. With a sigh Arturia cleans the remaining trash and checks her phone. No new messages, but a few social media notifications. Upon opening instablam, a familiar face greets her and sends a light shock through her body.

Damn, not you...

It's a picture of a snowy landscape and a handsome fair haired young man in the center. He poses extravagant and smiles extra wide, just as if he had to prove how happy he is living his life and going skiing in the mountains.

The post is relatively new by @ gil.gold, and @ clayman is tagged as the photograph. Ah, so he is going with Enkidu but not another woman...

"Urgh what am i even thinking?" Arturia reminds herself loud and pinches her cheeks. No time for jealousy, I'm over this!

Frustrated she slams her phone face down on the table and tries to distract herself by staring outside. The sky is dark and the forecast said there might be snow for christmas. If that is the case, it might be quite a nice weekend to spend alone. But she was sure that Merlin messaged her about coming to visit...

Quickly Arturia scrolls through her old messages and finds said conversation. Merlin said he is going to have some business here in New York and would stop by for a few hours and give her a present. He might be an idiot sometimes, but he always cared for her, even after a certain breakup happened.

The memory still stings, it has already been a year but still she cant stop thinking about Goldie.

One day he approached her, they went shopping together and Arturia only agreed, so he could carry her shopping bags. But in the end he proposed to her out of nowhere, completely catching her off guard.

Then things happened, an argument after another followed and doubts why she said yes emerged pretty quickly. And so she called off the engagement.

The ring he gave her is at home in a small blue box, completely covered by her stuff in the closet. Yet ever since they stopped talking about a year ago, Arturia still feels somewhat restless. Maybe a bit of regret.

But he was such a fool, annoying and arrogant, it was too much. This was a good decision, she keeps telling herself to be more confident in herself.

Half an hour later, her phone pings her a new message. It is from Bradamante, one of the other groups leaders in the headhunting agency. This cunning woman leads the Knights, they are tasked with more heavy takedowns that require more than one sword.

15:03 Wanna go shopping? U^ ^U

Arturia thinks for a moment, and then just types out her answer.

15:05 Where do u wanna go

The response is there in a flash.

15:05 just Vinci center they got cute new stuff (□□□)V

15:06 k lets meet up in front half hour?

15:06 aight sure!!!

Arturia slips into her winter jacket and waves the counter lady goodbye, then slips on the gloves and braces for the cold wind outside. The Vinci Center is one station away, but Arturia got her monthly subway ticket and uses it frequently to just drive around the city.

It doesn't take long for her to arrive. In front of the huge building, that has way too many windows, already stands a tall woman with two big ponytails. That is Bradamante in her glory. Always noticeable in the crowd just by looking for her hairstyle.

"Ahhh, thanks for coming on short notice!" Bradamante hugs her tightly, her cold face touches her cheek. How long has she been waiting here? Arturia was in time, but it still concerned her a bit.

"Where do you want to go first? Need to do any last minute christmas shopping?"

"Hmm, i have pretty much everything i need but they got a really cute new clothing brand in and i wanted to check out what they have in store." Bradamante thinks posing exaggerated, and then claps her hands.

"Let's go, I'm freezing!" Arturia smiles at her cheeky and fresh behaviour. Sometimes going outside with your friends or coworkers more in this case helps to feel better. Maybe they are friends, their case is a bit blurry.

Inside an extremely huge christmas tree greets them, the lights shine so bright you can't look into it directly.

"Wow, i haven't been in here since they put this up. That is gigantic every year, huh"" notices Arturia and shields her eyes.

"Oh yeah, i wanted to see this year's decoration too!" exited Bradamante snaps a picture, probably to post it later to instablam. Maybe Arturia should do the same, to show how much fun she has to him. Damn, i'm not the same as him! Internally she slaps herself and concentrates on the upcoming shopping tour.

The lady knight swoops through each floor, picking up a few new items here and there. Arturia just lets herself being caught up by her enthusiasm and finds herself a pair of pretty new winter gloves.

At the end of their tour they sit down in one of the small cafes on the ground floor. Bradamante pays, so Arturia cant really complain about it.

"Wait, come closer. I need a picture for instablam if you don't mind."

"Hm, yeah sure." Arturia takes out her phone too. Bradmante has a really cute strap on her phone, and her nails are decorated with small snowflakes.

She is just much more pretty and girly, maybe that's why she couldn't keep up the relationship? Perish the thought, everyone is pretty in their way. This girl next to her is just a bit more stereotypical cute.

"Aaand cheese!" They both post with a peace sign.

"That turned out soo cute, you are so adorable when you smile!" This compliment seriously flatters the young woman.

"Ah, really? Sometimes I think i am not." Shyly she takes a sip from her coffee.

Bradamantes eyes widened as if she was in genuine shock.

"You were engaged to the sexiest man on this planet, and you think you are not pretty? I wish I could bonk you with my Atlante!"

That one made her actually chuckle.

"Sorry, lately I've had my thoughts. A bit of...i don't know." frustrated she puts down her cup.

Bradamante finished posting their cute selfie.

"I tagged you by the way" and then puts her phone aside, fully listening to her.

"I mean, you totally had the chance with him and you already told me why you broke the engagement. It is okay to have afterthoughts, so you have two options."

Arturia listenes up, Bradamante puts on her dramatical voice.

"Either you try again and find out if your feelings are genuine or you goddamn forget it and look for someone else! If you are into blonde guys I have a few on the list. Suzu probably too if you ask her, she has been to a few mixers."

"Ah, I thought i'm over this. It's time for something new. But something in my heart lately just feels different about this."

Why don't you ask Merlin about this, he is the pro in stuff like this! Well, I can't give you more than my advice. "

"I appreciate it, thanks for being here." Arturia is a bit more calm now, but asking Merlin is a bit too weird. He is like her big brother and telling them about your love problems is not always optimal. Bradamante looks up to him, so she tries to slip him in here and there. But she is loyal to her husband Ruggiero through and through.

They empty their coffee, chatting about this and that, work and life and eventually part ways. It's darker outside, and time to get home to make her meal.

Maybe today she should treat herself a good pudding or chicken wings? The thought of some chicken wings already makes her happy.

On the train she posts the picture of the tree, thanking Bradamante for the wonderful day. The selfie already got liked by a few people she knows.

The first notification pops up, and it shakes her up quite a bit again. It's a certain @gil.gold.

Arturia reminds herself to stay calm and not get all weird over a like. Good for him, see how good I live my life! God, she sounded stupid in her thoughts.

Arturia puts her phone back into her bag and gets out at her station.

Everything just has to continue every day the same and maybe looking for someone else will help her get off the case Gilgamesh.

But some things are easier said or thought than done.