Sootputra: The Unsung Hero

Chapter 32 Solace

“Is it important to keep him. Everything that princess said about that peasant is true. “

“Shut up.” A familiar voice said.

“Why are you still defending him? We have suffered enough humiliation because of your affiliation. Can we even trust him? He can just be using you.” Another one said.

“I said Shut UP!!!!” Duryodhan yelled.

Me and shon were just outside the door of the medic chambers. The kaurav brothers were in there talking to The injured prince. My blood was boiling but someone else had taken a faster response. Shon barged in without taking any precedence.

A feud, and bloodshed would’ve occurred if not for the intervention of me and Duryodhan. Shon was struggling to let go but both my hands grabbed him by his waist.

“Shon, calm down.” I said.

“No!!

They don’t know a single fucking thing and they have the right to blab on!?” He strugglingly said.

“People!!” Shon Shouted.

“That’s what he want.

People who he trust, People who cares about him. He’ll do anything for them.

Because that’s what he wants. People! Recognizing him. Treating him like he is. A hero.”

Shon said grievingly. Tears were rolling down his eyes. His voice cracking as I held him.

“You know, I was just a small child but I clearly remember it. The attack of the beast on our village.” He looked at a bed ridden Duryodhan.

“Maa and father had left for Aunties home in the next city. She was sick at the time. Brother took care of me. Vrushali brought the food for us. ” Shon stopped for a second, he was probably assembling the memories in his mind.

“Shon stop.” I whispered.

“NO!!” He yelled. After clearing his throat, he continued.

“Suddenly, people started screaming. We heard ripping sounds of cloths, tumbling utensils and fire in the village. It was fairly close to our house.”

“We all were scared including bhai. But he didn’t faltered. I remember, he carried me on his back to the roof and he himself stayed down. ”

I grabbed shon by the arm and forced him to walk away.

“Wait!!!” Someone other than him shouted behind me.

“Let him continue” Vikarna said. I looked at the injured prince. He nodded. My grip loosened on Shon.

He took a deep breath “From that height, I saw it. The beast. It was tumbling the houses like they were haystacks. I saw it, it was …. a bear.

’Being on height meant nothing if he can easily take down a house.’ Bhai said.

He grabbed a knife from the kitchen and grasped a nearby plough. By then the bear had come very close. I could see the red eyes that shone in the night. Bhai’s legs were trembling as he stood in front of it.

That’s the first time I noticed it, his armour. There he was, a boy barely in his teens standing on the road, literally shinning like a hope of day. Before it can even move he made a run for the nearest hut to our house. The bear soon followed. We could hear it growl, Bhai screaming in pain. The whole village gathered in front of the house carrying pickaxes, pitchforks and blunt weapons in their hands. Waiting for the beast to emerge.

I was crying sitting on the roof. The silence from the hut and the groaning sound of the bear ensured everyone that Vasusena had become a feast for it. But then he came in light. Standing at the door, he was bloodied. His bright golden armor shone like a sun covered with blood, His eyes red, with blood dripping from his hair.

The last words he said before fainting and falling to the ground was ’Shon’. That day I cried. I cried to the fullest.

My father when talking about Bhisma always said that ‘The day someone saves you, he becomes a hero for you.’

He is that for me. I’ve grown watching his back. Following his path. Because I know that he will, always, protect those who love him and those he loves.

I blindly trust him. Maybe that’s why the Crown prince does too.”

………………………………………………

The cold was gripping me by the sides as if wrapping around me. My gaze fixed on the moon. The only thing that I really wanted was some kind of closure or a feeling of satisfaction but at last like all other things in life, they had also become unreachable.

Any other time I would have appreciated the view, The night blue sky, twinkling stars, cool breeze and no other sound to disturb it. But the location was a nightmare. It was the same balcony from which I had jumped down that day. My room was right behind me. I didn’t wanted to step inside. My eyes could not see her today though. Her raven balck hair, black eyes and the mole under her chin. I vividly remember every detail. But Why?

Most of the guest had already left for their own kingdom yesterday, we would’ve left too had it not been for Duryodhan still lying on the bed. Most of his brother’s except for Vikarna and Dusashan have already went to Hastinapur this morning. Tomorrow was our time to leave.

The sound of footsteps came in my ear. They were slow and irregular. They barely echoed in this empty corridor.

“You shouldn’t be alone” He said.

“Neither should you.

You should rest as much has you can.”

“aeh…That arrow just grazed me. It’s nothing I can’t take.”

“It went right through you. It wasn’t grazing it was piercing.” I said to him.

“heh, …You should at least look at me when speaking” Duryodhan was taking the help of the walls. I didn’t replied to his statement. “You’re scared aren’t you? Scared that they might finally look into your eyes and know who you are. You are like a glass right now. A careful nudge and you will shatter.”

“I have already been shattered. Can’t even collect the pieces, no matter how hard I try.” I said.

His hand patted my shoulder. “What do you need right now, Karna? Tell me. What will help you heal?”

I looked down. My hands were trembling. I think he is right about me. The only thing that can save me right now is…..

“Home!!” I wanna go right now.

“Can I go to Anga? Now?” I asked giving him a broken look.

“You should have left way earlier friend.” He said.

“I know why you stayed. You don’t have to worry about me.

The only thing right now you need is solace.”

…………………………………..

“That was……” He paused. “……some insight.

I didn’t knew that it affected you this way.”

“You are keeping a count right?” Karna said smirking.

“Karna, that was our first meeting. ” Krishna looked at him with a mortified look.

“It went well, …… not the way I had expected.” Karna couldn’t even move his head to look at him

“Karna, I just want to tell------”

“Yeah, yeah. Can you just hold on? I am getting to a good part.

A part even greater than that swayamvar.”

“uhm….. hmmm…okaaaayyyy” Krishna was stumped.