

# Iruña

Sparrow looked up from his book at the unexpected sound. He couldn't be sure with the music playing, but it seemed like there had been a knock on his door. It couldn't be a package delivery – it was far too late at night. Most likely it was the downstairs tenant who always thought the loud music from another neighbor was coming from Sparrow's unit. Sighing, he walked to the door and opened it; he felt a cold rush of air from the January night blow through him and into the apartment.

"Iruña..." he said, feeling the familiar name resonate through his mouth. He stepped back slightly in surprise.

She looked up at him from under her dark hood with a wry grin. "Aren't you going to invite me in? I have something for you," she said, gesturing with the bright pink gift bag in her hand.

“Um, sure, of course,” Sparrow said, gradually getting his bearings. “I, um, didn’t expect to see you again.”

She glided into the room as if nothing had changed, pulling her hood down around her neck as she came in. “It’s *freezing* out there,” she said, shivering. “And I was going to be in the neighborhood, so I thought I’d drop by.”

“Can I hug you at least?” Sparrow asked.

Iruña looked at him sternly. “You know the rules, Sparrow.”

“I do,” he said, hanging his head.

“Oh, don’t be such a downer,” she said. “Speaking of downers, are you listening to *High Violet*, alone in your apartment, on a Saturday night? That’s pretty dark.”

“Look who’s talking,” he said with a smirk, gesturing at her black, floor-length, lace-trimmed dress.

Iruña pouted coyly. “There’s a difference between *being* dark and *dressing* dark. Besides, I thought you *liked* my style,” she said in feigned offense.

“I do, I like your style very much,” Sparrow sighed. “Too much, honestly,” as he gazed wistfully towards her. She had slipped off her dark cloak, and now the gleaming brightness of her pale skin nearly glowed through the intricate lacework of the dress. The deep V-neck revealed her ever-present

pendant, a weighty metal *lauburu*, the comma-headed cross of the Basque country.

“Come on now, let’s have a sit,” she said, gesturing towards the couches at the end of the room.

“Very well, very well,” Sparrow said. “I’d offer you a drink, but... you know.”

Iruña rolled her eyes. “You know what I’m here for, right?”

“Yes,” he said flatly. “Just like last time. You want me to cum for you.”

“And yet,” she said, her mouth a grim line.

“And yet,” he sighed.

“C’mooooon,” she pleaded, bending towards him. “Don’t you know I *need* this?”

“I just don’t understand it, Iruña. Every time, you show up late at night, you won’t touch me, and you want me to cum for you, with no explanation. After what we went through, let’s just say I’m not in the mood,” he said, looking away.

She traced her hand along the back of the couch. “I get that,” she said. “Well, could you take your pants off at least?”

“Seriously? I can’t even touch you and you want me to just take off my pants?” Sparrow asked incredulously.

“I mean we’re not going to get anywhere if we don’t start there, right?” Iruña said, a little flustered. Then, in a softer, quieter voice, “Please, Sparrow, for me?”

“Okay, sure, why not,” he said with a sigh, pulling off his pants and underwear and folding them neatly on the couch beside him. “See, Iruña, nothing,” he continued, lifting up his penis by the head and letting it fall unceremoniously back between his legs.

“I see you’re going to make me do all the work here,” she said sadly.

“I mean, if I could touch you, or you could touch me,” he said, tentatively reaching towards her.

“NO,” she said loudly. “I’m sorry, Sparrow, but no,” she continued, looking away.

“I know,” he said sadly.

She looked off in the distance, then suddenly looked back and said brightly, “Hey, I remember that t-shirt, that’s the one you wore to our first date!”

Sparrow smiled. “Yeah, it’s one of my favorites. I was so nervous; I wanted something I would be really comfortable in.”

“Oh you *were* nervous, so nervous,” she giggled. “I remember how you got in a huge fight with that waiter who was

intentionally misgendering me. You got so caught up yelling at him about my pronouns that you forgot my name,” she laughed.

“Yeah, I remember that,” Sparrow said, joining in her laughter. “But to be fair, you had just been telling me the complicated story of your name, how *Iruña* was the Basque name for the city of Pamplona. How back in the 1600s someone in your maternal line barely escaped the city during the witch hunts...”

“Yes, the witch hunts of Navarre, that’s right,” Iruña nodded.

“Yeah! And how that *lauburu* pendant was all she was able to take with her. And then it was passed down, generation after generation, and was now yours. So there was a lot for me to remember!” Sparrow continued.

“You seem to have remembered it very well,” she said approvingly. “But that night you called me *Pamplona* while loudly defending me,” she said, laughing.

“Well at least I got the city right, even if it was in the wrong language,” Sparrow pouted.

“It was actually very sweet,” she said shyly. “Nobody had stood up for me in quite that way before. That really changed the date for me, despite your crappy t-shirt.”

“Hey,” Sparrow said, “What’s wrong with this t-shirt?” laughing again.

“Nothing at all,” she said. “Though I enjoyed seeing you *without it* even more,” she continued softly.

“Would you like to see me without it again?” Sparrow asked, more serious now.

“Yes, I *would*,” she said, the slightest of blushes appearing on her pale cheeks. Sparrow took off the t-shirt, now naked on the couch before her. “Oh, I do miss that,” she said longingly, looking over the length of his slim body. “Do you remember that night, how after we made love, I taught you to say my name properly?”

“I do,” Sparrow said, his voice growing distant. “It’s one of my favorite memories.”

“You had the hardest time with the *eñe*,” she said. “You kept saying ‘*Iroona, Iroona*’, thinking you’d figured it out,” she continued, laughing.

“And then you gently held my cheeks with your hand and said I had to hold the *eñe* in there, and every time I would say it, you would squeeze my cheeks at just the right moment. *Iruña, Iruña*,” Sparrow said, smiling at the memory.

“And you learned so quickly after that,” she said, clapping her hands with delight.

“Well, it wasn’t easy. I practiced over and over after you left that morning,” he said, looking down and smiling. “I knew you were going to be really important to me, and I wanted to be able say your name properly.”

“I didn’t know that,” she said softly, and was silent for a moment. “There’s so much I didn’t have time to find out.”

“Yeah,” Sparrow said dejectedly.

“OK, enough of that, let’s think of some sexy memories,” she said. “What about the birthday where I got that toy for you? You didn’t even know what it was yet, but I remember I had you face down on the bed on your hands and knees. You were so hard you were dripping with precum before I even touched you, just in anticipation!”

Sparrow’s face went dark. “Iruña... don’t you remember? That was the night that everything... fell apart,” he said.

“Oh,” Iruña said slowly. “Oh, right.”

“Right,” Sparrow said, looking down at the floor.

They were both silent for a few minutes, thinking about that night and everything that had happened. Eventually Iruña lifted her head again, smiling slyly. “Oh *I* know a memory that will get you turned on.”

“At this point, I really doubt it,” Sparrow said, not looking at her.

“Well, I’m going to try anyway,” she said, getting up on the coffee table on her hands and knees, crouching directly in front of him. “Remember that sex party we went to at Tango’s place? The big ramshackle house by the water? I think maybe it was our third or fourth date?”

“Oh yeah,” Sparrow said, a small smile coming to his lips. “That was a wild scene.”

“You were so freaked out,” Iruña laughed. “You had made these really cute cutout pants that left very little to the imagination, but you were just clutching onto my hand for dear life.”

“I, uh, felt very *exposed*,” Sparrow said with a laugh.

“And then that stupid Natalie came and started trying to fondle you through your pants without even asking,” she said with a grimace. “And you asked if we could just leave.”

“Oh, yeah, I remember, that was a low point,” Sparrow said.

“And then I talked you down and coaxed you into that big, overstuffed easy chair Tango had in the corner, do you remember?” she asked.

“I do...” Sparrow said slowly.



“I sat down first, and had you sit down between my legs, with your back to me,” Iruña continued, “and then I wrapped my arms around your body and held you so tight.”

“I do remember,” Sparrow said, sitting up. “I felt so safe with you holding me, it was an amazing feeling.”

“And do you remember what I did next?” she said with a sly smile.

“Um, yeah, you reached into my pants,” he said, blushing. His penis had started to harden, and Iruña noticed immediately.

“Mmm-hmm,” she said, slowly getting off the table and making her way around the couch until she was behind him, leaning down to place her mouth directly by his ear. “And then I started whispering to you.”

“Yes, you did, with your mouth grazing my ear,” he said wistfully, his penis now almost fully erect. “I didn’t know what you were saying but it turned me on so much.”

“Some of it was in the ancient tongue, in Basque, some of it was in Spanish, some in English, but mostly I was just telling you how much I wanted you to *cum* for me,” she said softly, more slowly than she had been speaking before.

“Yes, yes,” Sparrow said, his hand moving to his penis, almost in a trance.

“Yes, my dear one,” Iruña said, her voice changing, growing lower, “I want you to *cum* for me, you are safe here, with me, dear one, don’t you *want* to cum for me?”

“I do, I do,” Sparrow said, lost in her words, stroking himself rhythmically.

“That’s a good boy, that’s my good boy, yes, *cum* for me, dear one,” she said, lilting almost musically into his ear, “will you *do* that for me, dear one?”

“I will, I *will*,” Sparrow said, stroking hard now, his body beginning to convulse.

“Yes, my dear, sweet Sparrow, let it all go, let it all come out!” she said, her voice rising powerfully just as he came, the thick white semen covering the dark skin of his abdomen, slowly rolling down towards his legs.

“Oh Sparrow,” she said, moving from behind the couch to face him, almost in tears. “My dear, dear, Sparrow, you’ve done it, you came for me!”

Sparrow nodded, unable to speak in this moment, his eyes wet as well. She quickly came around to his side of the couch, leaning towards him, bringing her face right up to his.

“Thank you, Sparrow,” she said softly, “for everything.”

As she leaned down further to kiss him, Sparrow closed his eyes, and felt the cold rush of air travel through his body again. When he opened them again, she was gone. He sighed.

He thought back to the night a year ago, before her eyes had pleaded with him not to cry, before she was on the ventilator, before the ambulance to the ER, before she collapsed in the bedroom, before he was on all fours and trembling with anticipation, before the birthday dinner, right back to the moment when she had appeared at his door. “I have something for you,” she had said, just as she had said every time she had appeared in the dark months since. Every time before, she had left in tears. This time was different.

Wiping himself off with his underwear, he looked over at the counter to see that the bag she had brought was still there. He walked over to it, reached inside, and was surprised to feel the weight of her *lauburu* pendant in his hand. Rubbing his fingers along the back, he felt an inscription he had never noticed before. He held it to the light, and could make out a series of letters, carved deeply into the metal in an ancient Basque hand:

“*Betirako, Iruña*” (for always, Iruña)