

Lesser Gods Chapter 12

By

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SCENE 1

CLARK (NAR.)

Not going to lie, I did not imagine my...re-home-coming... re-new-home-coming... to be quite like this. I just thought there'd be more camaraderie amongst the Five less... Tension. For the hundredth time, Rhea runs her hands through her hair in frustration.

RHEA

If we really think Apollo did this, we need more than just him letting me and Clark get taken. And his history with Iris. Eros, AGAIN, I'm not asking about what happened that morning. She died hours before. I'm asking about-

EROS

I am trying to talk about an angle I haven't thought about because I've retold the same story a billion times!

CLARK (NAR.)

Eros and Rhea, who up until an hour ago I had only ever seen either about to or already making out in front of some flashbulb, seethe at one another. Charon clears his throat.

CHAR

Maybe he should just tell me. It is kinda-

CLARK (NAR.)

Rhea cuts him off with a bark.

RHEA

We cannot seriously be worrying about that right now. At this point I wouldn't care if you fucked Iris in my bed and smoked my cigarettes after.

CLARK (NAR.)

There's a harshness to her voice I haven't heard before. Eros closes his eyes.

EROS

I just wish for a second, you thought about how hard this is for me.

CLARK (NAR.)

Persephone rolls her eyes theatrically, sighs.

PERS

This too shall pass. We just need your cooperation for another few minutes and then you can stick your head back up your ass until you can get back to getting high and getting fucked.

CLARK (NAR.)

Eros turns on her.

EROS

How can you think things are just going to go back to normal?

PERS

You don't need to tell me things have changed. Dion is-

CLARK (NAR.)

Her voice cracks like her throat covets his name. Rationing it out as if one day she'll open her mouth to speak of him and there will only be hot air. There's a beat of silence.

RHEA

Just tell us everything you remember about Apollo that night.

CLARK (NAR.)

Rhea says just above a whisper.

EROS

He kept asking me about my meeting with Iris. How I thought the last one had gone... Some... personal stuff. How she seemed. But he wasn't asking like he cared. He was asking like he was waiting for me to say the wrong thing. He was in a bad mood.

CLARK (NAR.)

Eros runs a hand over his face.

EROS

When you dropped me off he was waiting up. Said Iris had called him looking for me.

PERS

They're not supposed to be in contact.

CLARK (NAR.)

Pers says with an odd sing-song quality. She's been throwing out tidbits like this for the past hour with an odd amount of glee.

EROS

Apollo was trying to get me not to go. Said I was too fucked up. Offered to go over and talk to Iris for me if I wanted.

CLARK (NAR.)

Eros props his head up now, looks directly at Rhea. He directs all his words at her.

EROS

But, I think he thought I was way higher than I was because I was just... happy. Anyway, I went over to hers using the tunnels. She was going on about the time since her injection and her temperature and whatever. I kissed her before she could finish. I didn't usually, I just... wanted to.

CLARK (NAR.)

My eyes shift to Rhea, who stares Eros down, unblinking and unmoved.

EROS

Maybe it was the drugs but, everything about her was brighter. Sharper. Anyway, we had sex and then lay there talking for a bit.

CLARK (NAR.)

Rhea doesn't look charmed, which is obviously Eros' intent. But she doesn't turn away. Persephone cautiously glances at her before speaking.

PERS

What did you talk about?

EROS

Nothing important.

PERS

Anything could be important.

CLARK (NAR.)

Persephone says.

EROS

We talked about what we would name it. If it worked. If we were allowed.

CLARK (NAR.)

His trademark smile, his glassy, merry eyes... The ghost haunting his face has evicted the memory of both. He clears his throat.

EROS

I went to sleep on the couch.

RHEA

Romantic.

CLARK (NAR.)

Rhea whispers.

EROS

I usually did, and I think it made her feel... bad. But that night she'd actually asked me to.

PERS

Because he was coming over.

CLARK (NAR.)

Persephone is back to business.

PERS

Hera can't leave your Brick, Rhea. She's there right now. With him. He's not going to leave her side. What if she does something to set him off what if she-

CHAR

What if Apollo didn't do it?

CLARK (NAR.)

Char asks. Persephone approaches where he sits in the corner. Counts each new piece of evidence on her fingers.

PERS

The last time Eros saw Apollo he was offering to go over there. We know from the recording that Iris was expecting someone else. He just confirmed she was talking with Apollo that night and he HAS been acting weird. He's happy to be with Hera again-

CLARK (NAR.)
Rhea huffs.

PERS
But there are... cracks in that. AND he saw what happened to them and did nothing.

EROS
Maybe Apollo just thought it was smarter to stay hidden.

CLARK (NAR.)
Eros mumbles.

RHEA
Eros, we were in real danger. Orsino... hurt me. I was-

CLARK (NAR.)
Rhea pauses, uncomfortable and unfamiliar with what she's about to say.

RHEA
I was scared.

CLARK (NAR.)
Eros snorts.

EROS
Well you didn't have to be. They wouldn't kill you.
They reassured me of that when I wished they would most.

CLARK (NAR.)
My gut lurches. Whether or not I want to admit it, I've spent a few moments in these last few days being jealous of Eros. I uhm... don't know how well I've been hiding that. But his charm. His apparent ease in social situations. The fun he has. The adventures he has with Rhea. Probably, honestly, even the boring moments he has with her. I thought when I met him my connection with Rhea- however platonic- would help me feel less inferior. I'd never need to tell him what happened, only I just needed to know. I thought I'd keep the knowledge of the kiss as just a private keepsake. Looking at him now, knowing a shadow of what's happened to him.... I don't want it.

RHEA

I think I know how we can get out of here.

CLARK (NAR.)

Rhea breaks my stream of thought.

CHAR

When did we get to THAT?

CLARK (NAR.)

Char asks.

RHEA

I'd rather get locked up for the rest of my life than let something happen to Hera because I didn't try and get out of here.

CLARK (NAR.)

I think of Rhea's memory of striking Apollo when he scared her. I wonder if she's thinking about that now.

RHEA

We have all done things we aren't proud of this week. Now is maybe the last time we'll get the chance to do something because WE think it's right.

PERS

What's your plan?

CLARK (NAR.)

Persephone says lowly.

RHEA

We know their top priority is keeping us alive. So.. we have to threaten ourselves.

EROS

Count me out.

CLARK (NAR.)

Eros interrupts.

EROS

I know what they ARE willing to do to us and whatever this is isn't worth it for me.

CLARK (NAR.)

Rhea closes her eyes. Swallows something. Then speaks quietly.

RHEA

Fine. Char?

CHAR

Let's get the fuck out of here.

CLARK

I'd like to help.

CLARK (NAR.)

I grew up studying one version of Hera. I feel like I met another. And through Rhea, well, I got to know someone I'm willing to be brave for.

CLARK

I have an idea.

CLARK (NAR.)

I say over all the alarm bells sounding in my head.

SCENE 2

RHEA

Try not to hurt yourself.

RHEA (NAR.)

I say quietly to Clark.

CLARK

Thought that was the whole point.

RHEA (NAR.)

He says, but I can tell he's getting nervous. He has had a whole ten minutes since he suggested this to think about how stupid it is. We are all spread out inconspicuously around the cell, but he and I lean on a wall closest together.

RHEA

Luckily you have such a short distance to fall.
Although next to Persephone, you look pretty tall.

CLARK

Maybe we should do this with you, the impact you'd make from
up there could bring the building down.

RHEA (NAR.)

I smile, keep my eyes on the barred cell door. My eyes drift
to Eros, slumped in the corner, picking at his socks. He
looks exhausted. I want to grab him by his stricken face and
promise him once Hera is okay, I want to talk about all of
it. He can confide in me about what he felt for Iris, from
affection to guilt. I want to curl into him and feel the
place where he keeps his secrets. I want to kiss him with
contrition and ask him to name my debt... But not now. None
of that now. I need to stay focused. Hera is in danger.

CLARK

Rhea?

RHEA

Hmm?

RHEA (NAR.)

I ask him, unglueing my eyes from Eros.

CLARK

I just want to say, before this begins. Be strong and
cunning, but be safe. I... I uhm-

RHEA (NAR.)

But I raise a hand to stop him. Footsteps are approaching
somewhere outside. I grab his face by the ears-

RHEA

It's go time.

RHEA (NAR.)

He nods. And begins to breathe heavily. I run to the door.
Bang on it.

RHEA

Help! Help! He's having a panic attack, he's-

RHEA (NAR.)

The guard looks quickly into the cell, confused. Clark
clutches his chest.

GUARD
I'm sorry, I don't-

RHEA (NAR.)
Clark falls over. Nearly hitting his head on the bench.
Damn, that was close.

GUARD
Let me radio for backup.

RHEA (NAR.)
Fuck. Fuck. It isn't urgent enough. I guess it's time for
plan B. Sorry Clark. I look over my shoulder at Char, who
jumps to his feet, crosses the cell to Clark and picks him up
off the ground. Then without hesitating, he punches him in
the face. Hard. Maybe too hard.

GUARD
Hey!

RHEA (NAR.)
The guard, alarmed waves a keycard and opens the cell, he
runs to Char and Clark, restrains the hulking Char by
grabbing his arms. Char doesn't fight too much, which makes
it easier to GRAB the gun from it's holster. The guard
freezes, still holding Char.

RHEA
Don't move.

RHEA (NAR.)
I say, even though it's a little redundant.
Pointing the gun at him, I pull Persephone to me. Turn the
weapon on her.

RHEA
Don't follow us.

And I drag Persephone out of the cell with me.

PERS
Turn the fucking safety on.

RHEA (NAR.)
She hisses.

RHEA
I already did.

RHEA (NAR.)
I whisper, the barrel just above her ear. We hustle down the
hallway, I struggle to pull her and convincingly threaten
her.

RHEA
This is going better than I-

GUARD
Freeze!

RHEA (NAR.)
I spoke to soon. I turn to see another guard just 10 feet behind me. He raises some kind of- what is-

GUARD
This is just a stun gun. No one wants to hurt either of you. No one-

RHEA (NAR.)
The man goes DOWN. Eros is on top of him. Striking him in the face, over and over. The man barely has time to ask him to stop before he's spitting blood and what looks like teeth up onto Eros' dark red knuckles.
Persephone and I look on, shocked. Eros takes the taser and shoots the guard at point blank range. His body convulses over and over. Breathing hard, Eros stands.

EROS
Let's go.

RHEA (NAR.)
He brushes past us and through an exit.
It's dead silent outside. No one is on the street, I'm so surprised I lower the gun. Persephone sticks it back to her own head. Eros yanks the hood of a car up.
I guess he's going to drive.

PERS
What the fuck was that?

RHEA
I don't wanna know.

RHEA (NAR.)
Eros SLAMS the hood of the car down, opens the driver's side door. Me and Pers jump in the backseat. We barely close the door before Eros peels off.

RHEA
My Brick, okay?

EROS
I heard the plan.

RHEA (NAR.)
I watch his eyes in the rearview mirror. He jerks the wheel this way and that as we careen down the too-empty street. He grips the steering wheel with white, bloodied knuckles.

PERS
Not going to lie, I didn't think we'd get this far.

RHEA (NAR.)
Persephone says in the silence.

PERS
What's the next part?

RHEA
We get to mine, we get in there, get Hera, get out.
Then just start driving, if you're okay with that Eros.

RHEA (NAR.)
Eros doesn't acknowledge me.
I look out the back window. No one is following us. No one is ahead of us. Which is good. I'm not confident he wouldn't hit them with the car. I shift my weight, just slightly, towards him.

RHEA
Er, are you okay?

EROS
What's that?

RHEA (NAR.)
And I follow his stare to the Bricks, their block swamped with men and women. We slow down, approach more cautiously. The closer we get, we can see their focal point- Persephone's house. They hold signs with her name, photos of her.

PERS
What the fuck?

RHEA (NAR.)
She asks in my ear.

RHEA
We'll never get by them.

PERS
But I might.

RHEA
Do you really think that's a good idea?

PERS
Are you going to come up with a better one in the next 500 feet? I'll distract them. Eros, drop me here-please.

RHEA (NAR.)
For the first time, his eyes flicker to me in the mirror. I nod. He slows down.

PERS
Give him hell.

RHEA (NAR.)
And for the first time in my memory, I reach out and hug her.

PERS
Get it together.

RHEA (NAR.)
She says, before opening the door. As it shuts, we pull away. Revealed to the crowd now, the people burst into a thunderous applause. Slowly, people start creeping towards her.

EROS
Should we go back?

RHEA
I don't-

RHEA (NAR.)
And then a familiar detective pushes past the masses and grabs Persephone by the arm. Oh god, is that better? Is that safer? Is she-

EROS
Go.

RHEA (NAR.)
Eros says, now stopped in front of my Brick.
Persephone's possible future danger is eclipsed by Hera's
immediate one. I tuck the gun into my pants.

RHEA
Thank you.

RHEA (NAR.)
He doesn't look at me, just stares down and nods. I open the
door and run into the house. Everything is still... Do I call
out for her? Do I just run up stairs? Do I-

APOLLO
Hi.

RHEA (NAR.)
I take a sharp breath in and turn to see Apollo in the
kitchen. Holding a glass of water. He sips.

APOLLO
How was your trip?

RHEA (NAR.)
His voice is calm.

RHEA
Where is Hera?

APOLLO
Just lying down.

RHEA
I'm going to-

APOLLO
These have been difficult days. You really scared her.

RHEA
That's why I want to talk to her.

RHEA (NAR.)

He just stares at me, sips. Without turning my back on him, I creep towards the stairs. Apollo drains the last of his glass. Smiles. And before I can even blink- throws it at me.

I turn to dodge it and it hits me in the back of the head. I raise my hand to the site of impact but Apollo grabs me. Throws me down on the ground, my hand cuts on a small piece of glass. I grab a bigger shard beside it and flip onto my back- SLICING Apollo's hand.

He screeches, slaps me. I taste his blood in my mouth. He shoves me, I stumble back and fall over the couch. I scramble to get to my feet, pull the gun out.

Just an arm's length from Apollo I point it at him. He stops, breaks out into an incongruous grin.

APOLLO

Are you going to kill me Rhea?

RHEA

You killed Iris.

RHEA (NAR.)

I say, my voice shaking. He seems to consider this statement.

APOLLO

Yeah. I guess I did.

RHEA (NAR.)

And he laughs.

APOLLO

Whoops.

RHEA (NAR.)

I drop the gun a few inches, point at his leg and pull the trigger.

But nothing happens.

The safety.

Apollo grabs the gun from my hand, throws it and pushes me HARD into the bookshelf. He wraps his fingers around my neck. Throttles me.

RHEA
(CROAKING)
Just gonna kill me too?

APOLLO
Well this is a little different.

RHEA (NAR.)
He says.

APOLLO
Because I don't think I'm going to regret this.

RHEA (NAR.)
I stare, unblinking into his light eyes, his beautiful features screwed up in rage. I feel with my hands, grab the thickest book I can and bring the corner down hard on the back of his head. Instinctively, he brings his hands to the wound. But I strike him again in the forehead hard enough to draw blood. Disoriented I kick my leg out at him and he falls, smacking his forehead on an end table. He doesn't move.

SCENE 3

HERA (NAR.)
I don't really dream when I sleep. If I see anything, it's barely decipherable images and moments. Colors. Sounds. Nothing that makes sense by the time I wake up. That's why what I'm looking at now is so noteworthy. The scene I find myself in is vivid and terrifying. I'm laying in the semi darkness of my room on my side and staring at Iris. Magazine ready and propped up on one elbow, she stares at me. Slowly she reaches a hand out, I want to pull away, but I can't. I'm paralyzed. Her freezing hand softly touches my arm. She smiles, circles the spot where Apollo must have injected me.

IRIS
I have one too.

HERA (NAR.)
Her fingers leave my skin and point to a spot on her own neck.

IRIS
Little different I guess.

HERA (NAR.)
She smiles, a too big throw-your-head-back-and laugh-grin.

IRIS
Hera. Say something.

HERA (NAR.)
She says, half a question. But just like the past few years, I find myself having so much to say but not a word for any of it. Even when I knew she was struggling, I didn't care. How could I protect Iris when I was already protecting Rhea? No one could accuse me of not doing enough, right? Why should it have been me to reach out, to bridge the gap between us. Maybe if I had, she wouldn't have met Apollo that night. No. No.
This was him. Him. How could I have missed it?

IRIS
Hera.

HERA (NAR.)
She repeats, grabbing my hand. She holds it.

IRIS
It should have been you, shouldn't it have?

HERA (NAR.)
She asks as someone just a few feet behind her, Apollo, materializes. He approaches her, lecherous. As if she feels him, just a few feet behind, her eyes grow wide.

IRIS
He was yours. He was always yours. His heart, his mind, his lies, his rage.

HERA (NAR.)
Her voice, higher, more frightened, my hand still in hers, she pulls it to her face.

IRIS
Say something!

HERA (NAR.)

But instead of me finding my words, Apollo finds his hands wrapped around her throat. My eyes shoot to him but as if anticipating my response he winks, and grips her neck tighter.

IRIS

Just say anything.

HERA (NAR.)

Iris squeaks, apparently unaware she's about to die. Apollo chokes the life out of her, inches away from me. I lay there, paralyzed for what seems like hours.

SOUND: GASP, SHOWER

HERA (NAR.)

I resurface from the abyss of sleep like a diver breaking through a ceiling of water. Wait- maybe literally. Why am I-

RHEA

Thank god.

HERA (NAR.)

My sister switches off the shower.

RHEA

Sorry, we didn't really have time to let the water warm up.

HERA (NAR.)

While I try and comprehend what is happening, she pulls me to my feet. Although it's been barely a week since I last saw her, she looks older. More exhausted. She has a bruise forming on her neck. Without thinking, I embrace her. She smells like sweat and... air? Like plants? Whatever it is, it isn't her usual cigarette smoke and bourbon. She could have gone to the moon and back these last few days for how far away she's seemed-

RHEA

Okay, okay. Yes, yes me too.

HERA (NAR.)

Smiling, she pushes me away. I guess there'll be time for that later.

RHEA

I love you too but we need to GO.

HERA (NAR.)

She says. I open my mouth to respond but then there's a CRASH downstairs- We both freeze. She jerks her head towards the bathroom door.

RHEA

Eros is going to meet us around the side.

HERA

How are we going to-

HERA (NAR.)

She jerks open the window in response.

RHEA

It's going to be fine. We're tall. Just hang and drop.

HERA

Hang and drop?

RHEA

Is it possibly more dangerous than-

HERA (NAR.)

And we hear Apollo's voice accompany his feet on the stairs.

APOLLO

Hera?!

HERA (NAR.)

We stand perfectly still.

APOLLO

Hera.

HERA (NAR.)
He repeats, his voice softer. And closer.
Rhea half shoves me out the window.

RHEA
You got this.

HERA (NAR.)
She says, her trademark confidence refusing to shake. I grasp
the stone ledge of the windowsill, take a deep breath.

RHEA
Sorry, you do have to get this faster.

HERA (NAR.)
Thank you, Rhea. I swing my legs over the edge, pause at how
truly terrifying the 20 foot drop looks from up here.

RHEA
Hey, this is just the ground from a different perspective.

HERA (NAR.)
Rhea says, as if reading my mind. There's a million retorts I
want to make, but I decide there's no time for any. I clutch
the ledge and push my body over. I hang there, suspended,
before Rhea chirps-

RHEA
Brace yourself-

HERA (NAR.)
And she throws my arms off. I have a flash of outrage before
I'm falling. My breath catches- and I have just enough time
to realize I'm falling before I hit the bushes. Hard. There's
barely a second before Rhea CRASHES beside me.
She smiles.

RHEA
Sorry for pushing you but, you always spend a little too much
time thinking. Well, except when it comes to-

HERA (NAR.)
And she nods up towards the window.

HERA
Thank you.

HERA (NAR.)
I say. She shrugs.

RHEA
Don't thank me, I'm the one who got to hit him.

HERA (NAR.)
She begins to climb out of the bushes.

RHEA
Bonus: it was with my copy of *Crime and Punishment* which is-

SOUND: HORN.

RHEA
Come on.

HERA (NAR.)
As if suddenly remembering we're fleeing, she pulls me out of the shrub and towards the waiting car.

SCENE 4

PERS
What the hell is going on out there?

PERS (NAR.)
I spit before my ass even hits the chair in Black's office. I barely have time to register her absence.

PERS
Wait where is-

ORSINO
Pretty exciting day.

PERS (NAR.)
The detective says, leaning too casually on the edge of the President's desk.

PERS

Yeah, well it's about time you figured out Apollo killed Iris. We did and we were dealing with about a million other things.

ORSINO

That's a pretty big accusation. Although, maybe not seeing as you've accused just about everyone else.

PERS

This is different.

ORSINO

How?

PERS

Because he had motive and opportunity and-

ORSINO

Motive? You can't really tell me he was the only person with a problem with Iris.

PERS (NAR.)

This guy has clearly NEVER known who did this- why is he shooting down answers just because I found them? I don't want his fucking job just because I'm better at it.

PERS

Why don't we save the questions for Apollo? If you don't believe me, talk to him.

ORSINO

I have.

PERS

Well do it again. This time, press him on why he offered to go over to Iris' that night. You should go get him right now, you should-

ORSINO

Persephone, we can take a break from the investigation for a moment. After all, we have celebrating to do.

PERS (NAR.)

I try not to betray my own confusion. Something slides over his face- a smile at someone else's expense.

ORSINO

It's kind of beautiful really, an underdog story- if you don't mind me saying.

PERS (NAR.)

I'm sure I will mind as soon as I know what he's talking about. He struts to a small bar behind Black's desk. Pours himself something. He's taking his time, enjoying my ignorance.

PERS

Look, I don't know or probably care but-

ORSINO

You don't know?

PERS

Clearly.

ORSINO

Sorry, I just thought you'd be able to... feel it.

PERS

I'm definitely feeling something.

PERS (NAR.)

He grins, a lopsided, crooked smile.

ORSINO

Persephone, you're pregnant.

SOUND: HIGH PICTHED SILENCE

PERS (NAR.)

My brain can't possibly summon the correct emotion to respond to this news with. Instead, it grabs the one it's most comfortable with.

PERS

You're fucking lying. Like you did to Hera.

PERS (NAR.)
I spit, my voice exuding anger.

ORSINO
The situation has changed drastically since then. There would be no point in lying to the public at this point.

PERS (NAR.)
Could this actually be true? There is an intense desire to raise my shaking hand to my abdomen, but instead I cross my arms over my chest.
Orsino raises his drink.

ORSINO
To saving the species.

PERS (NAR.)
And watching his smirk it occurs to me for the first time, I'm probably supposed to be happy. Thrilled. But I can't. When I grasp at that part of myself it feels like stepping off a cliff.

ORSINO
We did it.

PERS
How far along?

ORSINO
Two weeks.

PERS (NAR.)
This whole time I've been- Before Iris was found, before Dion was- Dion. I do the math like a man slowly ascending a scaffold.

PERS
You didn't even give a shit when he died.

ORSINO
Dion?

PERS
Who the fuck else? You didn't even give him a funeral.

PERS (NAR.)
Orsino watches me for a few seconds, faking confusion.

ORSINO
You think he's the one who impregnated you?

PERS (NAR.)
His clinical vocabulary, his voice, makes my ears want to bleed.

PERS
I know it's his.

ORSINO
Well, that would mean he was having an illicit affair with his ward. Which is-

PERS (NAR.)
Like he was having an affair with me. I think.

ORSINO
Illegal. Grounds for imprisonment. If it's true, it could taint his whole reputation.

PERS
I have a pretty good feeling he'll be remembered for something else.

ORSINO
He was deemed nonviable months ago.

PERS
Well fire whoever made that decision.

ORSINO
It could be anyone you were copping with.

PERS
I only had one other session that-

PERS (NAR.)
Oh god.

PERS
No.

PERS (NAR.)
I say the second I think it.

ORSINO
I wouldn't look at this as a negative.

PERSEPHONE
A negative? A fucking negative?! You want me to pretend that Dion's... Dion who died protecting me- you want me to erase him from this to replace him with-

ORSINO
It fits the preexisting narrative.

PERS
I'm not going to give this to Apollo.

PERS (NAR.)
Acknowledging this is even an option is enough to make me scream with rage.

PERS
Seeing as your viability data was so wrong about Dion, Apollo probably isn't even-

ORSINO
You think people would be celebrating if they found out Dion was responsible? He's not in a position to be studied, let alone impregnate anyone else.

PERS
Was that a joke?

ORSINO
Look, I know you're upset but if we say it's Apollo we can frame this as not just the only success, but the first of many.

PERS
You can't be sure it'll work with anyone else.

ORSINO

Well we sure as hell didn't think it'd work with you.

PERS (NAR.)

Here, he is right. Everyone will be surprised, a few people might be disappointed. But they should be so in themselves. The fault was clearly never in me, but always in them... Iris who had all the resources, Rhea who had the genes... Me, who had nothing. Wait-

PERS

How am I supposed to tell Rhea and Hera?

ORSINO

You don't care about what they think of you. A few days ago you tried to convince me Rhea killed Iris. And Hera has never really given a shit about you.

PERS (NAR.)

Could it be so easy, to turn off any redeeming qualities I've assigned the two of them? Return them to vapid, self absorbed effigies?

ORSINO

Besides, they could already know.

PERS

How?

ORSINO

The same way everyone knows.

PERS (NAR.)

And he smiles again like a warning shot. One that hits you anyway. I won't give him the satisfaction of asking anymore question. He picks a tablet up off Black's desk, scrolls, hands it to me.

ORSINO

You've already told them.

PERS (NAR.)

And I'm taken aback as I read a joyous little blog post detailing my own miracle and how happy I am to share the marvel with Apollo.

ORSINO

Sorry if I went a bit heavy on the exclamation marks, but I figured if this wasn't a time to go overboard on them, when would be?

PERS

This is... so fucked up.

ORSINO

Not how I would put it, but-

PERS

You can't just do this. Put words in my mouth. Make me-

ORSINO

Isn't this what you wanted? To finally be the star of the show?

PERS (NAR.)

And there's a silence that he takes as a concession.

ORSINO

You might as well enjoy it, because if you don't cooperate, if you go running your mouth regarding anything Apollo-especially Iris-related, we can make these next 9 months, hell, the rest of your life pretty damn unpleasant.

PERS

More unpleasant than having to hold hands with a murderer?

ORSINO

Oh, you'd be begging for that. You'd barely be allowed any human contact. Move into the lab full time. A sow for breeding and constant probing, until you die. Which we'd make sure would not be for a very, very long time.

PERS

No.

PERS (NAR.)

I croke, my mouth suddenly dry.

ORSINO

Then get ready to take a few fucking pictures.

PERS

And here I find myself reminded of what I promised you what feels like a year ago... I am not a victim. No, I have become something else entirely. And everyone is going to fear me.

SCENE 5

RHEA (NAR.)

The door SLAMS behind Hera and I'm so happy to be sitting next to her in this car I throw my arms around Eros and the driver's seat. We have time to fix whatever is broken, we-

REBEKAH

No hug for me, huh?

RHEA (NAR.)

I start. Retreat from Rebekah.

REBEKAH

You can start driving now.

RHEA (NAR.)

She orders Eros, who obeys.

REBEKAH

Glad to see you're okay. You scared me. Luckily, we knew exactly where to find you. And we got Eros as a bonus.

RHEA (NAR.)

Hera looks to me and then to Rebekah.

HERA

I don't think we've met.

RHEA (NAR.)

She says cautiously.

REBEKAH

Ah, yes. Hera. I'm Rebekah Gold.

RHEA

She's from the Void.

RHEA (NAR.)

I say. At this, Hera straightens up.

RHEA

You can't just lock us up. We won't cop, we'll go on a hunger strike, we'll-

REBEKAH

That won't be necessary. We're just taking you to get some tests done. Make sure you're still in good health.

RHEA (NAR.)

She turns in her chair, but he gaunt smile falters when she sees my neck.

REBEKAH

Oh god, your neck.

RHEA

That's from Apollo. He's dangerous and he killed Iris, he needs to be locked up, he-

REBEKAH

That's no longer possible.

RHEA

Why? He's right in there.

RHEA (NAR.)

Something glows behind Rebekah's eyes. Her breath quickens, only slightly.

REBEKAH

It was just confirmed that Apollo and Persephone have had a success.

RHEA

They what?

HERA

Oh no.

RHEA (NAR.)

Hera whispers.

RHEA

What?

RHEA (NAR.)

I repeat, because what I'm thinking can't possibly be true. It can't-

REBEKAH

Persephone is pregnant.

RHEA

She's going to have a baby.

RHEA (NAR.)

I say out loud because the gravity of the thought is too much to keep contained. Floundering, I turn to Hera, who is stone-faced despite the tears sliding down her cheeks.

REBEKAH

I know, it's wonderful.

RHEA (NAR.)
Rebekah says, beaming.

REBEKAH
Persephone just confirmed Apollo is the father.

RHEA (NAR.)
Hera bites her lip.
The father. A father. A mother. A baby.

REBEKAH
These will be exciting days for all of us.

RHEA (NAR.)
Rebekah places a hand on Eros' arm. He flinches at her touch.
I think of him and Iris naming their never-to-be baby.

REBEKAH
We can use what we know about Persephone's breakthrough for you. I think we're going to do it, Rhea.

RHEA (NAR.)
She is obviously, unsettlingly, truly overjoyed. This must be what the people outside of Persephone's home were feeling. What we all should be feeling. So why does my mouth taste like acid?

REBEKAH
Especially, under a new administration-

RHEA
Wait, what?

REBEKAH
President Black will be stepping down.

RHEA
She would never do that. Especially not now. Right, Her-

RHEA (NAR.)
But my sister just stares out the window. Somewhere I can't reach her.

REBEKAH
She feels immensely responsible for what happened to Iris. She will formally be accepting responsibility.

RHEA
But Apollo did it.

REBEKAH
Well have better use for him than life in prison. There is no crime worth jeopardizing the future of the species.

Black will apologize for over prescribing Iris, giving her dangerous hormonal and mental side effects which led to her taking her own life.

RHEA

Why would Black do any of that? She loved Iris. She would want Apollo to be punished.

REBEKAH

Well, Black is feeling responsible for a lot of things right now. And Orsino and myself have agreed to not discuss them if she peacefully leaves office.

RHEA (NAR.)

Hera is still not listening. Thank god. Rebekah isn't the most subtle. She watches me. Would Black really rather step down than let Hera find out the truth? Is she willing to go that far to protect her? Am I?

REBEKAH

There will be an official announcement tomorrow morning. Although everyone seems to already know. Still, I look forward to celebrating with you.

RHEA (NAR.)

And she climbs out of the car. We're parked back by the capitol building. Eros, Hera, and I all sit in silence. Eros breaks it first.

EROS

Why do I feel like everything is going to get worse?

RHEA

Hera?

RHEA (NAR.)

I whisper. She turns to me.

RHEA

Hera, what do we do now?

HERA

We celebrate. Take their pills. Cop. Smile. Save the species. But we don't forget this. We are okay. Safe. We'll figure everything else out tomorrow.

RHEA

And she hugs me tightly and finally, I sob.

SCENE 6

SOUND: HEELS CLUMPING ON MARBLE

HERA (NAR.)

Rhea trots beside me, nervously adjusting the scarf around her neck.

RHEA

Who knows, maybe this will be the next big look.

HERA (NAR.)

If she had her way, she'd let the whole world see the marks Apollo's fingers left on her neck. But we're under strict orders to say nothing of what happened that night and the one where he killed Iris.

We continue walking down the hallway, taking twice as long because of Rhea's labored steps. A janitor is taking down some of the framed articles and artifacts on the walls. All the remnants of Rosalind Black's former career.

HERA

Excuse me-

HERA (NAR.)

The man is currently holding the photo from the day the Five were born. Wait, sorry, the six I guess. Although Clark obviously isn't pictured.

HERA

Can I have that?

HERA (NAR.)

The janitor shrugs and hands it to me. Black, 22 years younger and Rhea only about 22 minutes old. Shylock is there too, sporting the rare smile as he looks down at my sister, Charon, Eros, Iris, and Persephone. For the first time, it occurs to me we'll have a whole new baby to photograph.

RHEA

Are you good?

HERA

Black deserves a moment of thanks for Persephone's success.

HERA (NAR.)

Rhea looks away, shrugs.

HERA

She spent her whole life working at this. I know when I was... well, I think she was more excited than anyone.

RHEA

Yeah.

HERA (NAR.)

Rhea says flatly.

I know she and Black weren't the best of pals, but I was sure my sister would have sympathy for her right now. Who wouldn't when we-

CLARK
Hi.

HERA (NAR.)
We turn to Clark, dressed as formally as Rhea but wearing it more naturally.

HERA
Look at you.

RHEA
You look like James Bond.

CLARK
Not sure who that is so I'm just going to say, "thank you".

RHEA
It's a compliment. He is a very sexy British spy. All you need is a martini, which you would definitely make me drink anyway.

HERA (NAR.)
He looks away, suppressing the small patches of pink appearing on his cheeks... Oh, no. I look at Rhea. This is the last thing we need, although to be honest after the last week a love triangle would be easy to handle. Not that I know much about how Eros and Rhea are. She's spent almost no time with him since they were released back to their chaperones yesterday.

RHEA
Should we get this over with?

HERA (NAR.)
She suggests. We continue down the hall-

APOLLO
Hera.

HERA (NAR.)
There is no part of me that wants to turn, to acknowledge Apollo in any way ever again. Rhea stops, spins to face him. I put a hand on her shoulder.

HERA
I've got this.

HERA (NAR.)
Apollo takes a step towards me and then stops.

From the distance you can just make out the heavy concealer covering the place where Rhea struck him. A few days ago I would have described his eyes as pleading, but now I know they're just lying for him.

APOLLO
I need to talk to you.

HERA
Whatever it is, just say it here in front of all of us.

APOLLO
Look, I know you're angry. And confused. And I know that I-

HERA
Tried to kill my sister.

HERA (NAR.)
He opens his mouth to speak, but instead drowns his words with fresh tears. Sorry singular tear. Sliding perfectly down the face I would love to bash in right about now.

APOLLO
Is that what she told you? I'm not saying she's lying I'm just saying she was probably scared. And confused. Like we all are right-

HERA (NAR.)
I laugh. I actually, truly laugh in his face.

HERA
Apollo, my mind is incredibly clear. Finally. That's how I know, without any doubt, that I have never hated anyone as much as you. And I will continue to hate you until I die. Or, preferably, you do.

APOLLO
Hera, don't cut me out just like this. Even if it isn't how I'd like, I still want you in my life.

HERA
Oh, I'm not going anywhere. In fact, I'm going to stay even closer than ever. Waiting for any opportunity to remind you of who you really are. Sure, you'll have your freedom and your fame. But you'll never have what you really want. You are mine. But I will never be yours.

SCENE 7

RHEA (NAR.)
I could watch my sister tear Apollo a new one every. Damn. Day.
She turns on her heel and struts away from him, leaving him shocked still.

RHEA
That was awesome.

HERA
Well, it's only the beginning.

RHEA (NAR.)
She loops her arm in mine. Clark walks fast to keep up with us as we walk outside and into the brilliant morning sun. The crowd applauds at the sight of us.

CLARK
Wow.

RHEA (NAR.)
Clark breathes, nervously pulling at his tie.

RHEA
Get used to it.

RHEA (NAR.)
He half smiles at me. Eros and Char are already on stage seated awkwardly behind the podium. We cross to them. Char stands, kisses me on the cheek. Eros rises, hugs me quickly. I guess sleeping in his own bed didn't warm him back up to me.
Time. There's time for that.
I promise myself.
My sister finds her seat at the base of the stage beside Rebekah. How strange it is to see her again in the place where we first met under such different circumstances.

ORSINO
Weird being back here for such a different reason.

RHEA (NAR.)
Orsino says lowly in my ear.

ORSINO
Maybe soon we'll be back here for you.

RHEA
My celebration or my memorial?

ORSINO
Who knows?

RHEA
He winks, approaches the podium.

ORSINO

(THROUGH SOUND SYSTEM)

Ladies and gentlemen, there is no greater honor than having the privilege of making this announcement... After years of work by a tireless staff we have had a success with our program.

SOUND: CHEERS, APPLAUSE

ORSINO

The units behind me; Eros, Charon, Rhea, and Triton-

RHEA

Who is-?

RHEA (NAR.)

I turn to Clark.

RHEA

That's your name? Triton is your name?

CLARK

I much prefer "Clark."

RHEA

I can see why.

ORSINO

- Will continue their work remedying the Great Repopulation Crisis with new data gained from the recent success.

RHEA (NAR.)

Orsino grins to the crowd.

ORSINO

How incredible it is to discuss the future- which will exist thanks to a unit who has fought our plight tooth and nail... Please welcome, our salvation...

RHEA (NAR.)

And Persephone steps out onto the stage shrouded in an immaculate purple gown. Purple. Fitting for her new status as queen.

I haven't spoken to her. I haven't wanted to. There's no way this is Apollo's, why would she say it was? Does she need him that badly for her perfect... family? Family. I guess the uhm... "Sacred Sisters" are a little less sacred now, huh?

ORSINO

- And of course her ally in this fight...

RHEA (NAR.)

Apollo appears at her side. All smiles- no flash of the person angry enough to strangle me last night.

Who laughed when he remembered killing Iris. He and Pers
clasp hands, raise them to mad cheers from the crowd.
I stare at them, mourners one moment. Revelers the next.

Iris is dead.
Black is gone.
Charon is untrustworthy.
Eros is lost.
Clark is here.
Persephone is pregnant.
Apollo is a murderer.
Hera is angry.
And I... I don't know what I am.
But the world is louder now.

END OF EPISODE