

Lesser Gods Season 2 Chapter 6

By

Colleen Scriven

SCENE 1

PERS (NAR.)

Did you ever play hide and go seek as a kid? You know, the game where you get all your friends together only to show how good you are at isolating yourself from them? The trick was never to go for the best hiding place- too obvious. The real trick was to camouflage yourself into your surroundings. Hide in plain sight.

Let their expectations and lack of creativity do all the hard work for you. Then, when you reveal yourself, all they can do is smack their heads and wonder "How?"

Hera. Talc. Char. Eros. Clark. Rhea.

Who, I wonder, is hiding in the shadow of our confidence?

I lay back on my bed. Exactly 3 pillows short of what I would have requested. I keep my nose as far from the stale, stiff sheets as possible. Trace my finger tips along my collar bone. I won't be getting any sleep before dawn. Too many of my friends in bed with me.

I am immediately able to remove Clark and Talc from my suspect list. Talc because he lacks any real motive. And he can't see. If Apollo was in bed or sleeping- then yeah I guess Talc could have. But he was in the middle of the floor. Like he'd been standing. Besides, Talc would never be able to sneak up on someone without telling them a 20 minute story first about the last time he tried to murder someone... or something. Don't get me wrong- he's creepy. But he didn't do this.

Then we have Clark, who I would have ruled out even if he hadn't been with someone else pretty much the whole day. Eros is so obvious. But why wouldn't he admit he did it? Rhea-

SOUND: WHISPERING

PERS (NAR.)

I spend a moment convinced the whispering outside is just in my head. The way a wind sounds like a voice when you're home alone.

SOUND: LOUDER WHISPERING

PERS (NAR.)

I slip silently into a pair of fur lined slippers by the foot of my bed. Creep towards the door. It occurs to me for the first time- whoever hurt Apollo could also hurt me. Because I'm important. And 20 times more likely to figure out who did this than anyone else. My hand drifts instinctively to my stomach. Rests there. I wish it would fucking kick now. Or just do- something to let me know it's there. It has my back. I'm not so alone here-

EROS

(MUFFLED)

I'm not doing this for ME.

PERS (NAR.)

I pull the door open when I hear Eros' voice. He and Rhea start when they see me.

PERS

Well, old habits. Huh guys?

RHEA

I still have Apollo's blood on my shoes.

PERS

Whatever gets you in the mood I guess.

EROS

Persephone.

PERS

Rhea, aren't you supposed to be up with Hera?

PERS (NAR.)

She shifts a little. Fixes her stooped posture- so used to being draped on Eros she's forgotten how to stand straight.

RHEA

I needed to talk to everyone.

PERS

Is that why you're down here?

RHEA

More or less.

PERS (NAR.)
She sighs.

EROS
Can we come in?

PERS (NAR.)
Eros whispers, throwing a glance over his shoulder. I shrug, and step aside. Watch as they duck the low doorway into my car. I wonder how different my space must look from their vantage point. Rhea drops onto my bed.

PERS
Can you not do that?

PERS (NAR.)
She opens her mouth to say something but just puts her hands up in surrender. Stands on the opposite side of the car from Eros, who leans against a window. Cool glass pressed to the back of his bare head.

I stay where I am by the door, preferring to stay out of the direct pull of tension between them. Unable to ever tell if they're about to fuck or fight.
I clear my throat.

PERS
So what are we doing here, friends?

EROS
We need you to agree with us.

PERS
Well that depends on what in God's name you two have agreed to.

RHEA
We don't want to let anyone know Apollo is hurt.

PERS
You know eventually people are going to realize Apollo is dead? And then whoever-

PERS (NAR.)
I lead, looking at Rhea.

PERS
Did this will only get in more trouble.

RHEA
It wasn't me.

PERS (NAR.)
She says through gritted teeth.

EROS
We know that. So we think we should just.... push him off the train when we're in the middle of nowhere.

PERS
Are you insane?

EROS
That's what's best for everyone. Particularly...

PERS (NAR.)
And his eyes drift up towards Rhea.

PERS
You've got to be kidding me.

PERS (NAR.)
But before Thing One of Thing Two can respond- there's a knock at the door a few inches from my head.

HERA
(THROUGH THE DOOR)
Persephone, it's Hera.

PERS (NAR.)
Shit. I think, letting my face do all the talking. The two tall idiots frantically look around the room for somewhere to hide- but there's nothing large enough. Except the bed. I jerk my head in it's direction and they exchange a quick glance before sliding beneath it. I pull my blanket down to cover their dirty shoes. There's another knock. And I take a deep breath, then relax my eyes as if I was just sleeping.

I open the door.

HERA
Hi.

PERS (NAR.)

I peer around her to the closed hallway of bedroom doors behind her. There's a THUMP within one of them. She JERKS her head towards the sound with none of the poise of the old Hera, and all the fierceness of the new one.

HERA

We should go inside.

PERS

Uhm, maybe we should just talk out-

HERA

Persephone.

PERS (NAR.)

She says in the most old-Hera way possible. In control. I say nothing, just turn around and walk deeper into the room. She follows. Shuts the door behind her. Locks it. Her eyes scan every surface in the room. They rest on the bed for just a second.

HERA

I like your room.

PERS (NAR.)

She says, swallowing the Mr. Hyde sneaking into her voice.

HERA

It's... sweet.

PERS (NAR.)

She finishes, fingering the tassel of a lampshade older than both of us. I sit on the edge of the bed. Taking up a lot of space so she thinks I don't want her to sit. I watch her continue to squirm. When Rhea was missing, she was freaked out. Exhausted. But it was nothing like this.

HERA

Rhea is gone. For now. My head is pulling me in a million directions.

PERS (NAR.)

She begins, walking to one side of the car. Then the other.

HERA
You know how I feel about him.

PERS (NAR.)
I nod.

HERA
But, you know how I *felt* about him.

PERS (NAR.)
I half-expect her to stop here. Drop to her knee and look up to me, hold my hand. Smile and say something easy, sentimental. But she doesn't. She continues to pace back and forth. I keep waiting for her to calm down on her own. To assimilate to this new stress, manage it like always. But she doesn't. The more she stalks from side to side, the more worked up she seems to become. She works the sleeve of her sweater over with a nail to the point of nearly fraying it.

I want to say something comforting, but it's just occurred to me... she's the second best suspect on this train. My skin prickles with dread. To hear Rhea tell it, you'd think Hera has bulked up to super human status. But really, I've barely noticed any changes- except maybe she looks better in sleeveless dresses. Now, however, I'm thinking about how much of a physical advantage even THAT would give her over me. Surely Eros would come out from under the bed if-

She drops her voice.

HERA
I- I need your help.

PERS
Hera, whatever happened. I'm sure there's an explanation. A justification.

HERA
We need to get him off the train. We need to get him help.

PERS (NAR.)
Doesn't she realize, she has more to lose than anyone? She can't hide behind any viability.

HERA

I can't let him die like this. I know, I know what he is. Better than anyone else alive but he... he needs to live. I swear I will make him miserable every day for the rest of his life- I'll make Rebekah get him off your back. Whatever you want.

PERS (NAR.)

She's holding herself now. Looking somewhere between vomiting and weeping. I don't know what this is, but it isn't guilt. And besides, why would she want him to wake up so badly if she did it?

PERS

Hera, I don't know how I can help you.

HERA

We're going to vote on whether or not we should stop.

PERS (NAR.)

I know Rhea and Eros are just a few inches below me. Their bodies nearly pressed together in the dark. Straight backed and silent, staring up at me as if from graves.

But Hera is here, looking right into my eyes. I have to stay as neutral as possible until we see how this thing shakes out. I run the numbers in my head.

PERS

I will say we should get him help.

PERS (NAR.)

But she doesn't relax.

HERA

We already know what Eros wants. Rhea will probably vote the same. And Clark with her. Charon could go either way.

PERS (NAR.)

Now, finally she stops moving. She sits on a chair in the corner of the car.

PERS

Well, if the majority votes against you. Us. Us. Whatever happens will be on their conscious.

PERS (NAR.)

Yes, that's how I'm going to play this. Of course, I think we should stop. But the majority rules. Hera shakes her head.

HERA

I can't leave this up to a vote. That's why I need your help.

PERS

Okay.

HERA

You could make anyone do anything right now.

PERS (NAR.)

For the next six months at least.

I can practically hear Rhea think beneath me. I get up and cross to Hera.

HERA

If you said you had an emergency or- or anything. They'd stop for longer- Apollo would-

PERS

Hera, Hera I can't.

HERA

But you just said you don't want him to die like this.

PERS

Yeah but... I also think we're in this together.

PERS (NAR.)

Wow, I should be president once Rebekah's had her turn.

PERS

We have to focus on us.

PERS (NAR.)

She's quiet. Somewhere far away.

HERA

When you last saw him, did he still have the bag?

PERS
What- oh yeah. Yeah his purse.

HERA
Someone hid that for him to find on the train. He couldn't figure out how to open it.

PERS
What?

HERA
There was a note. The bag is gone now. We don't know who left it or what was in it- but what if that's what this is about?

PERS (NAR.)
Now I really hope those two are listening.

PERS
That would mean one of us has it.

PERS (NAR.)
She shrugs, and looks back to me. An invisible wall has slipped between us in the small space now. She's stopped trying to appeal to me with raw emotion and is now using something I find much more appealing- logic.

HERA
I don't know, Pers. There's always the chance this was someone we haven't even considered. I mean, worst case scenario someone was targeting him because as far as the world knows, he's viable and successful. Like you.

PERS
You want me to believe someone is going to attack me next?

HERA
The Persephone I've always known would never put all her trust into someone else. Especially this group of someone elses.

PERS (NAR.)
And she stands.

HERA
We can be off this train in a matter of hours.

PERS
I'll think about it.

PERS (NAR.)
I concede as Hera glides towards the door.

HERA
Pers-

PERS (NAR.)
She slides back into vulnerability.

HERA
Hiding the truth is something Apollo does, not us.

PERS (NAR.)
And she leaves. I wait a few moments before whispering.

PERS
She's gone.

PERS (NAR.)
Rhea rolls out from under the bed first. I wait for her to comment on any of what she just heard. Her sister's obvious distress. But instead-

RHEA
I'm going to talk to Charon.

PERS (NAR.)
She slowly opens the door, peeks out. There must be no sign of Hera because I watch her slip out the door and hear another close moments later.

PERS
Guess she got enough one on one time with you.

PERS (NAR.)
I say as Eros crawls out from under the bed, he shakes his head.

EROS
You know how this is for me.

PERS (NAR.)
He studies me.

EROS

I don't know what happened to Apollo. Neither does Rhea.

PERS

What do you know about the bag?

EROS

Nothing. I saw it in his room. But it was closed.

PERS

What time was that?

EROS

Around 8. We only spoke for a few minutes. He was trying to tell Hera the truth.

PERS

Would that really have been so bad?

EROS

Yes, he was pissed off. Seething. I don't know why but-but he wanted to tell her just to make himself feel better!

PERS

Er, calm down. You're probably right. He was a jackass.

EROS

He was a lot worse than that. But if you have your way, he'll wake up and tell you for himself.

PERS

Hey, I've spent a lot of time with him-

EROS

Not nearly as much as I have.

PERS

Ugh, god. I am so so tired of this "Who's life is the worst?" game. You're life sucks and my life sucks and Rhea's life sucks. We all lose. Happy?

PERS (NAR.)

He's quiet for a moment.

EROS

You aren't really thinking of having an emergency or whatever, right?

PERS

I don't know. I'm thinking it over.

EROS

Well, I promise you Apollo didn't think over killing Iris. And when he did have time to consider what to do next he went with- let anyone and everyone else get accused. And whatever happens happens.

PERS

Can you really live with letting him die?

PERS (NAR.)

He stoops down, leans into my face.

EROS

I look forward to it.

PERS (NAR.)

He leans back, tries to blink the blackness away from his eyes.

EROS

Vote how you want. But I think what you said about sticking together is right. We're all we've got.

PERS (NAR.)

He takes me by my arms. Runs a thumb along the curve of my shoulder so tenderly, for a second I'm terrified he's going to kiss me.

EROS

Persephone.

PERS (NAR.)

And he pulls me close to him, I breathe a sigh of relief when I only feel his hot, sweet breath in my ear.

EROS

I'm not going to let anything happen to you.

PERS (NAR.)
And I wonder, just how many people our God of Love has
promised that to today.

SCENE 2

RHEA (NAR.)
Char, are you sure?

CHAR
Absolutely.

RHEA (NAR.)
He nods, serious.

CHAR
I don't know if anyone has as much to talk to Rebekah about
as I do.

RHEA (NAR.)
His perfect smile appears somewhere in his dense beard.

RHEA
You aren't... afraid?

CHAR
I mean, a little. But- you've got my back. Right?

RHEA (NAR.)
The question at the end is strange.

RHEA
Of course, dude.

RHEA (NAR.)
He hugs me, tightly. He's not wearing a shirt because of
course he isn't- the skin on his chest is hot to the touch.

RHEA
Woah, are you okay?

RHEA (NAR.)
Alarmed, he pulls away.

RHEA
You feel like you're a million degrees.

RHEA (NAR.)
He smiles a little again.

CHAR
Nah, girl. I'm good.

RHEA
Okay. Great.

RHEA (NAR.)
I say as he reclines back on the lower bunk. He stretches out. Absent mindedlEy tracing his pecs.

CHAR
I gotta ask you something. Kind of awkward.

RHEA
No, I haven't fucked Clark.

CHAR
Ha, no. No. Not that. But, kinda in the ballpark.

RHEA (NAR.)
He reaches for my hand.

CHAR
I want to try copping tomorrow.

RHEA
What?

CHAR
I know, the timing sucks but... I have a good feeling about this.

RHEA
Char, are you kidding.

CHAR
Why would I be kidding?

RHEA
Because copping is the last thing I want to do right now.

CHAR
It's not like you're going to have the baby tomorrow.

RHEA
You're being an idiot.

RHEA (NAR.)
He YANKS my hand towards him with such force I SMACK my head on the top bunk.

RHEA
Oh fuck.

CHAR
I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

RHEA

Get off me. I shove him away

CHAR

I don't know why I did that. I'm sorry.

RHEA

What is wrong with you?

RHEA (NAR.)

I say getting to my feet, head throbbing. He just stares at me, speechless.

RHEA

Don't let me hear you bring up copping again.

RHEA (NAR.)

At this he gets to his feet. His Stupid hot face twisting in confusion.

CHAR

You don't get it. This is. For me. The time.

RHEA (NAR.)

He presses his eyes shut. Sweat beading on his brow.

CHAR

I'm sorry, I can't think.

RHEA

Well try being smacked in the head.

RHEA (NAR.)

I spit, leaving him there and heading for the- the- I don't know where I'm heading. I just-

CLARK

Rhea? You alright?

RHEA (NAR.)

Clark appears in the doorway of my room.

RHEA

What are you doing in my room?

CLARK

Waiting to talk to you. And your... new second head?

RHEA (NAR.)

He says, gesturing towards the lump on my forehead.

CLARK

Let's put something on... ah... here.

RHEA (NAR.)

I follow him to my room. And my mini fridge. He takes my water bottle out- presses it to my head.

CLARK

Here, sit.

RHEA (NAR.)

He leads me to the bunk. Sits me on the edge. Looks seriously into my face. Small, tidy features focused. He holds one finger up.

CLARK

If you don't mind, please follow my finger with your eyes.

RHEA (NAR.)

He moves back and forth, I track him. Feeling very stupid.

CLARK

Ah- okay. Now, keep your eyes open.

RHEA (NAR.)

He hits a small button on his ID bracelet and it LIGHTS up. I wince.

CLARK

Your pupils are responding.

RHEA

Cool.

CLARK

It means you aren't concussed. Cool indeed.

RHEA

Where did you learn that?

CLARK

Ah, looks like I know something you don't.

RHEA (NAR.)

He smirks

CLARK

What happened?

RHEA

Maybe we should just each keep our secrets tonight.

RHEA (NAR.)

Clark frowns.

RHEA

It was a dumb, Char thing. I was trying to talk to him about the plan.

RHEA (NAR.)

His face goes blank. Which is not a good thing.

RHEA

Because we need to distract Rebekah to keep her from noticing Apollo is absent.

CLARK

Yeah. Yeah.

RHEA

Also spoke with Pers. She'll go along with it only as long as the majority votes for it. Otherwise- I mean she actually thinks we should get him help.

RHEA (NAR.)

He sits next to me.

RHEA

Which is crazy right?

CLARK

I... I don't know.

RHEA (NAR.)

He spins to me, face so easy to read I could do it from the other side of the room. Not just a few inches away.

CLARK

Why? Why do we need to decide what happens?

RHEA

Because we can.

CLARK

Rhea.

RHEA

Clark.

CLARK

Rhea, why? Really, an hour ago you seemed unsure. What's changed?

RHEA

Well Eros-

CLARK

You've been with Eros?

RHEA

Yeah he came to me to let me know, the reason he pitched this was because of Hera. Because she's the most at risk of being punished. Like, worse than we are.

RHEA (NAR.)

He's quiet, thinking this over. Realizing how right I am.

CLARK

I think that's a very convenient thing for him to say.

RHEA (NAR.)

Or that.

RHEA

You seriously think Eros did this?

RHEA (NAR.)

Can't they ever leave whatever rivalry out of things?

CLARK

I seriously do. I found his chewing gum in the room where we found Apollo. Even though he never mentioned being there.

RHEA (NAR.)

This... this is... news to me. When he approached me earlier tonight all he did was talk about Hera.

CLARK

He didn't... say he did or didn't do this?

RHEA

No. It makes sense he'd want her to protect her. She's always been like his sister too.

RHEA (NAR.)

It only took me an hour to realize Hera didn't want or need me there. I thought if I sat quietly, she might bounce ideas off me. Let me in. But every time she remembered I was there she only pushed me further away. Eros was waiting at the bottom of the stairs for me. He was just as cold as he's been for months, but we both agreed we needed to help Hera. I can practically feel his skin on mine again, just there at our elbows, hidden under Persephone's bed while Hera paced around the car. His expression was vacant- like it always is when he's really focusing. His saucer eyes glowed in the darkness. It felt like... some kind of parallel universe to the one we used to live in. Our bodies- cold inside and out- stiff and side by side, bore no resemblance to the one's that spent so many hot days drippy and melded together like candle wax. Too fused for either of us to stand and turn on the AC.

Could he have been thinking about beating Apollo?

I guess so.

And... that doesn't bother me. I think, with no sudden burn of surprise, no dull ache of pain. That absence alarms me even more than my suspicion.

CLARK
Rhea?

RHEA (NAR.)
Clark says, lightly touching my hand. He leaves it there.

CLARK
I'm not telling you this because of- because I'm jealous of him.

RHEA (NAR.)
He shakes his head.

CLARK
I think I am actually the least jealous of him I've ever been.

RHEA
I don't know why you'd ever be jealous of him. He's a mess.

RHEA (NAR.)
I tell him. And... although I GET the big... alarm bell reason Clark would be jealous of him- kind of hard to pretend I don't after me and Hera's earlier conversation- Clark shouldn't wish he was anything like Eros. He's cuter, for one. Yeah, Eros is tall and swagger-ey. But it's really his smile that draws you to him. An uneasy and untroubled grin that reminds you there's no point in living if you aren't having a good time. Clark though, he's got these really gorgeous eyes. And the blonde hair- which pretty much no one has.

But I don't tell him any of that- instead I go with.

RHEA
You're a better conversationalist.

RHEA (NAR.)
I say- biting my tongue so I don't finish with- "Eros and I did not do a lot of talking." Not to say with Eros it was just physical it was more like... chemical.

Oh man do I not want to think about this right now.

RHEA (NAR.)

Look, Clark. Eros might have done this. He... probably did. But, also, anyone could have done it. I don't want to not deal with that but right now I just want to make sure my sister doesn't get fucked over.

CLARK

I just... Don't-

RHEA

Don't answer until the morning then. Okay?

RHEA (NAR.)

I'm not in the mood to find out if Clark is a better debater than Eros.

CLARK

How's Persephone voting?

RHEA (NAR.)

He asks- which reminds me-

RHEA

What were you guys talking about?

RHEA (NAR.)

I ask, to distract him and also because I really am curious. He pauses. Lies down.

CLARK

What do you think?

RHEA (NAR.)

He says, propping his head up on his arm.

RHEA

The...

RHEA (NAR.)

I trail off, gesture vaguely to my stomach.

CLARK

Baby? I think the whole thing is equally hard for her to wrap her head around.

RHEA

Well she doesn't act like it.

CLARK

Maybe only around you. It is... impressive how little you two understand each other after all this time.

RHEA

She doesn't make it easy.

CLARK

No. But neither do you. She just... I think... wants something you have. Always has.

RHEA

That's such bullshit. She's the one who's carrying. She's the most important fucking... however she puts it.

CLARK

No, look, since you were kids... you have been some kind of... star of the stars.

RHEA

Because of Hera. I promise you- if I weren't a Sacred Sister, it would have been the Iris show.

RHEA (NAR.)

I say, lying down beside him. Feeling a little annoyed I have to explain this.

CLARK

That isn't true. You've had 23 years to alienate everyone and despite your best efforts- you haven't. There's just some kind of alchemy going on here-

RHEA (NAR.)

He gestures to my face.

CLARK

Probably a combination of reluctance, arrogance, nerve. Nervy as hell, actually.

RHEA (NAR.)

He's just a few inches from my face, our feet tangled up so we're facing each other on the small bed.

CLARK

But what I think really, really separates you from everyone else? You, Rhea, are scary as hell.

RHEA

Why's that?

CLARK

Because when you really want something, you can make it happen in a way no one else can.

RHEA (NAR.)

I swallow, surprised by how dry my throat has become. I talk over my heart- beating hard.

RHEA

I think I should try and get some sleep. Otherwise I'm going to get really scary.

CLARK
Okay.

RHEA (NAR.)
And he moves to get up.

RHEA
No, no. Stay. If you want.

CLARK
Okay.

RHEA (NAR.)
I kick off my shoes, he does the same. I reach out, snap the lamp off. And lie back down. Our backs are pressed against each other. I hear him breathing in the dark, but my body can feel him- warm and awake behind me.

RHEA
I should warn you, I've been sleep walking.

CLARK
Okay.

RHEA (NAR.)
Is all he says before I hear him turn, and gently lay his arm over me. His breath is in my ear now. I know he's awake. Every nerve ending in my body is wired.

RHEA
Have you ever tried it?

CLARK
What?

RHEA
Getting what you want.

RHEA (NAR.)
There's barely a half a second's pause.

CLARK
I don't want to sleep with you.

RHEA (NAR.)
He says, using the arm he had around me to flip me quickly onto my side. Now I'm facing him.

RHEA
Then it's a good thing I'm not tired.

RHEA (NAR.)

I say just before he pulls my face to his. His lips soft, but strong and wow he- is really, really kissing me.

His mouth on mine is confident and so unlike it was before in the woods. There's a totally unexpected rush all through me, that I don't have time to understand. Every thought and feeling running through my head at the speed of the train itself.

Clark pulls away suddenly, breathlessly.

CLARK

Is this alright?

RHEA (NAR.)

In response I find myself pulling his lips back to mine. Needing very badly something as solid as him on this transient tin can. He climbs on top of me-

CLARK

Ah.

RHEA (NAR.)

He says as he SMACKS the back on his head on the top bunk. He bites his lip in pain.

RHEA

Do you uh, need me to check your pupils?

RHEA (NAR.)

He grins, lean down, comes close enough that his lips brush mine when he speaks.

CLARK

How do they look?

RHEA

I- I genuinely cannot tell.

CLARK

Guess we'll have to risk it.

RHEA (NAR.)

He says, kissing me again enthusiastically. I respond- beginning to unbutton his shirt. My fingers fumble in the dark.

RHEA

I hate that you wear these shirts.

RHEA (NAR.)

I say, my lips desperately struggling to keep contact with his through my smile.

CLARK
I will literally burn it.

RHEA (NAR.)
He says as he traces my neck with his lips. I push him away for a second so I can whip off my shirt.

CLARK
Yeah, see. That is so much easier.

RHEA (NAR.)
His touch is light but sure- like a rock skimming still water. I trace my fingers up his back- under his shirt- and back down again. Pausing when I reach the waistband of his jeans. I stare up at him-

RHEA
Is this okay?

CLARK
This is- already so much better than okay.

RHEA
And then he's kissing me so ardently and purposefully- I can think of nothing else.

...

RHEA (NAR.)
Later, I lie very still. Afraid to wake Clark up. I can just see part of my face reflected back to me in the window. I study it's long lines. His soft arm draped again protectively over me.

APOLLO
Well, he's definitely gonna help you kill me now.

RHEA (NAR.)
I start when I hear Apollo's voice in the doorway. I turn my head up to him... or what's left of him. His face is half it's usual handsome self... the other half is bloodied and swollen.

APOLLO
Gotta give you credit for offering him something I couldn't though.

RHEA (NAR.)
He says, smiling and showing just how few teeth he has left.

IRIS
Even if you could, it would have been a little disappointing.

RHEA (NAR.)

My skin ripples with goosebumps as I follow the sound of the voice to the other end of the car. Iris is seated in a chair there. Her blonde hair neatly braided, her eyes bright as ever. But her skin grey and cold looking.

RHEA

I- I- Iris?

RHEA (NAR.)

I ask. Panic creeping in.

IRIS

Shhh, keep your voice down.

RHEA (NAR.)

She whispers.

APOLLO

Don't want him to wake up and expect round two.

RHEA (NAR.)

Apollo says as he saunters over to her. He sits on the arm of her chair. They stare at me.

IRIS

I appreciate this, you know. Haunting him was no use. Fucker can't feel guilt.

APOLLO

She's not doing it for you. She's doing it for Hera.

IRIS

Doesn't matter, does it?

APOLLO

I think it does for her.

RHEA (NAR.)

I try and respond but no sound comes out.

APOLLO

Think she'll fuck Talc to?

IRIS

I doubt she had sex with Clark just for his vote. He also said, what? One nice thing about her.

RHEA (NAR.)

Apollo shrugs.

APOLLO

Doesn't matter.

RHEA (NAR.)

Iris STANDS abruptly, causing the chair to topple over-clattering to the ground. I look at Clark- but he's still asleep. Iris drops to her knees in front of me. She reaches out and grabs my hand.

Hers is clammy and cold, like something you'd pull from the bottom of a lake.

IRIS

You'll need to take care of the bag.

RHEA

I don't know anything about the bag.

RHEA (NAR.)

She just smiles a little, and pulls me to my feet.

APOLLO

It's no fun if you just show her.

IRIS

Aren't you busy bleeding internally somewhere?

RHEA (NAR.)

Iris throws over her shoulder as she pulls me towards the door. I'm just in my underwear and tee shirt- the air in the hall is cold. But Iris doesn't notice. She takes me to the end of the car. Pauses in front of the little red door labeled "FIRE EXTINGUISHER WITHIN."

She drums her finger tips on it, then backs up. I'm so very, very afraid to open it. But even more afraid not to. I pull the door open with a small squeak and then I see it- a leather bag. Stuffed into the cabinet. It's open. I reach inside but find nothing. Why is this here? Why is this-

But when I look up to ask Iris, she's gone. No one is in the hall. Except Clark. Looking very, very concerned.

CLARK

Rhea, how did you know that was there?

RHEA

Clark, I-

CLARK

I don't think we want him to wake up.

RHEA (NAR.)

He says, gravely.

SCENE 3

HERA (NAR.)

I sit on the carpeted floor of the domed car for I don't know how long. Eyes fixed on Apollo ten feet away. What an idiot he is, to get himself- and me- into this fucking mess. I feel so stupid having to ask Pers to help me... what? Save him? This isn't fair.

After everything he did, I should be allowed to fucking hate him, guilt free. Choosing whether he lives or dies- that isn't fair. I'd envisioned myself hundreds of times over the last few months just destroying Apollo but when I was in Pers' car, I caught sight of myself in the darkened glass. Asking her to help me save him.

That's the real me. Scared. I can't tell you why, but all I can tell you is I've never been more certain of anything than that we can't let this happen. We-

CHAR

Hey, Hera.

HERA (NAR.)

I turn to see Char and Eros at the top of the stairs. Char has his arm around a mattress.

CHAR

We gotta move him.

EROS

It's what's best for all of us.

HERA (NAR.)

Eros says, straightening.

EROS

You too. You know that.

HERA (NAR.)

I let him continue. Trying to see the scrawny, stumbling kid who I had to make drink a glass of water before he passed out after a long night. Who would sometimes slump over, fast asleep on my shoulder in the backseat. Who was compassionate and trusting to a fault, getting busted for giving a joint to an undercover cop. Twice. The same guy....

I don't know how my sister recognizes that goofy kid in this man. I don't.

Char approaches Apollo first. There would be no point in me trying to stop them now. I've lost. Maybe I've done enough.

They drop the mattress beside him. Eros steps towards his head. Drops to his knees.

HERA

You need to keep his head as still as possible. Here-

HERA (NAR.)

I don't push Eros so much as will him away. He takes a step back and I slide my hand under Apollo's head.

HERA

Eros, get ready to slip the mattress under him as soon as we lift him.

HERA (NAR.)

He says nothing.

HERA

Got it?

HERA (NAR.)

I ask. He nods, looking frankly a little scared.

HERA

Good. Char-? One arm under his midsection here and the other around his knees.

HERA (NAR.)

Char nods and falls into place. I adjust my arm accordingly to keep Apollo's big head as still as possible. I place my hand in front of his nose. Still breathing. Stubborn as always.

HERA

Ready? Three, two, one-

HERA (NAR.)

And we lift him only six or so inches up while Eros slides the mattress underneath him.

HERA

You have to keep him on his side.

EROS

Okay.

HERA (NAR.)

Eros says softly. He and Charon lift the mattress carefully, Apollo curled on top like a sleeping puppy. Eros looks from him to me.

EROS

It's going to make things easier.

HERA

I hope it does for you.

HERA (NAR.)

I tell him. Knowing it won't. Whether it's drugs or drinking or Rhea or his hair or even Apollo- Eros is going to exorcise everything else from his life before he realizes he is the artist of his own unhappiness.

I watch them slowly descend the stairs.

Why they don't just drag him? Put him out of his misery. There must be such a tiny, hard wall between the place where they let Apollo die and the place where they kill him.

The sun is beginning to rise. Outside. Illuminating a small collection of buildings rapidly approaching. No sign of smoke or movement. They must still be sleeping.

Lucky them.

TALC

You okay?

HERA (NAR.)

Talc asks.

HERA

Yes.

TALC

I wouldn't be if I were you.

HERA

Well, then it's lucky you aren't.

HERA (NAR.)

He walks towards my voice. Drags his finger tips along the long window.

TALC

This is my favorite time of day.

HERA (NAR.)

He slowly removes his dark glasses and puts them in his pocket.

TALC

Not too bright outside, but just light enough no one has turned on anything in here.

HERA (NAR.)

He takes a few steps closer to me

TALC

When I was a kid I had a lot of seizures. Damaged the ole optic nerve.

HERA

And now you can't see anything?

TALC

No everything is just too bright. And has blurred into one big cloud of fog. I spent the first few years totally obsessed with what people thought about me. Couldn't read their faces, hand gestures, hell- for all I knew, they'd walked away before I finished talking. I got so in my head about it, I tried to just be... invisible.

HERA (NAR.)

Hard to imagine Talc having any kind of self consciousness. Even though he might not be able to tell, I still feel a little uncomfortable so obviously staring at him. His eyes are heavily lidded, I can just barely make out their light blue irises. He turns, startling me a little.

TALC

And then I figured out how to fix the problem.

HERA

Just ask them?

HERA (NAR.)

He breaks into his little crooked smile.

TALC

No, stop giving a shit. It didn't matter anymore if they liked me or hated me or found me annoying. Only one person I gotta live with.

HERA (NAR.)

He turns back towards the window, unaware of how close the little station is now.

TALC

That's why I voted we get him help.

HERA (NAR.)

Here is where I would like to point out that for a person who claims he doesn't care what people think, he spends an awful lot of time trying to get me to like him.

TALC

I am sorry about everything he did to you. I think it's admirable you still wanna help him. A real testament to your goodness.

HERA
Could you not say that?

TALC
I just-

HERA
Everyone spends so much time talking about my fucking "goodness." Maybe I just don't want him to die because that's too easy an out.

TALC
Is that really it?

HERA
No.

HERA (NAR.)
I say, rubbing my temples.

HERA
But maybe it's part of it.

HERA (NAR.)
And I consider for a moment, possibly trying to explain how... how... Since we were 13- since we were old enough to even try to understand the responsibility placed on us, Apollo and I made a promise to each other to do this. To fix things and stick it out. And when we became chaperones, that may have shifted but it didn't change that we knew what we were working for. Even after he started fucking around, even after I ended things... Even after he killed Iris. The only thing he owed me was still this; to be around. For me to hate.
But to be here.

TALC
The train is slowing down.

HERA (NAR.)
Talc says. He must feel it. There's a pounding on the steps.

RHEA
Hey, Char's going to go knock on Rebekah's door. Distract her. You guys should probably deal with whoever we're meeting.

HERA (NAR.)
Rhea says. Looking only at me.

HERA
Char?

HERA (NAR.)

She shrugs. Classic Rhea. I know why Eros is doing this, but Rhea is a little trickier. I'm trying to give her more credit than just going with whatever he says- but then what? He did this and she's protecting him? I doubt he'd confess to her. So, she did this? No. No the timeline is wrong. There was maybe only a 20 minute window I wasn't with her and that was... the afternoon. Which leads me to the real reason I think Rhea is doing this. It's easy. It's easy to let him die.

TALC

Just a second.

HERA (NAR.)

Rhea nods, descends. We've pulled into some kind of station now. Everything is covered with snow and silent.

SOUND: SPEAKER

REBEKAH

Good morning everyone and welcome to Winnipeg! Please remain on the train. Stay in your rooms.

HERA (NAR.)

Has anyone been in their rooms at all tonight?

REBEKAH

Truman and Ford will exit to retrieve supplies.

HERA (NAR.)

And as promised, a pair of wide shoulders and dark knit caps hop off the train and make sets of footprints in the pristine snow.

TALC

You uh, think the doors are locked?

HERA (NAR.)

Talc says as he places his glasses back on- slides them up his long nose. He drags his hand along the window- feels his way towards the stairs at the back of the car.

TALC

Char should be in Rebekah's car by now. I think I can hold off Rhea and Eros. Good luck.

HERA

He says, before descending. I hear him slide open the door at the foot of the steps.

RHEA

Where is she?

HERA (NAR.)

Rhea says as I cross to the stairs at the head of the car- the ones that will spit me out right by the door to the outside. I step lightly- making little noise on the metal stairs. I take a deep breath before opening that door- my exit from the train will need to be as fluid as possible. I'm definitely faster than Rhea.

I look down at my shoes- black boots. I'd be faster barefoot but I've never ran anywhere in snow. I roll my shoulders, take a deep breath- clear my mind of any reason I might be doing this other than to do it. Then I throw open the door.

RHEA

Hey!

HERA (NAR.)

Rhea shouts- but I don't turn to her, I grasp the big metal handle on the door- PUSH. It grinds open and I take off.

RHEA

Hera! Get out of my-

HERA (NAR.)

Rhea again. But I can't see her or Talc- who must be holding her back. Because I'm running across the white platform. I can't see Truman or Ford. Not that I'm looking for them.

Anyone.

Anyone else. My feet PUNCH holes into the snow- a few inches deep- I slide to a stop in front of a door labeled "OFFICE." I POUND on it's door. But there's no-

RHEA

Hera!

HERA (NAR.)

Rhea is now leaping out of the train. She lands- skids. Falls. Eros is close behind her, he doesn't stop to help her up. I start running again. Under an overhang and into the station. It's cold but there's less snow in here. Only a few piles where the ceiling has broken. Broken- that's weird. Footsteps. I hear Eros and Rhea and I start running again. Long strides. I feel every muscle in my body pull and contract like the perfect part of some machine. Arms pumping, breath appearing in thick clouds in my face.

People. Person.

Where is everyone? I make a quick impression of the inside of the station- a cavernous structure with a high, high ceiling. Many doors. A few shops. A news agent's. I grab a paper as I pass. The date is from... ten years ago.

END OF EPISODE