

Lesser Gods Chapter 10

By

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SCENE 1

SOUND:A CAR HUMMING

CLARK (NAR.)

I waited up for her. I know that maybe the thing I was supposed to do would be go after her, but, look it was pretty obvious she didn't want to be near me. For whatever reason. So I cleaned up. And waited. And waited some more. When she reappeared a few hours later, she actually seemed surprised to see me. Not surprised I was still awake. Surprised I even existed.

RHEA

Oh.

CLARK (NAR.)

She said.

CLARK

Are you okay?

RHEA

I'm just going to sleep.

CLARK (NAR.)

She looked... hunted. Frantic. Like she was about to start weeping. She strutted to the other side of the room and lay down. I watched her curl into herself. She shuddered. I quietly approached her, and lay down with my back to hers.

RHEA

What are you doing?

CLARK

I'll be the wall tonight.

CLARK (NAR.)

And she said nothing for a long time. We just lay there. Eventually she turned and laid her head on my chest. I felt her eyelashes flutter each time she blinked, hoping each time they closed they would stay that way. But she was awake for hours. As the sun rose in the small window facing the east, she spoke again-

RHEA

Clark?

CLARK
Yes?

RHEA
We have to go back.

CLARK (NAR.)
I was surprised, this was something just yesterday she was so opposed to...

CLARK
What changed your mind?

RHEA
Hera was never pregnant.

CLARK (NAR.)
I sat up so quickly her head nearly smacked onto the floor.

CLARK
What?

RHEA
It was a publicity stunt. So people would think they were making progress. It was all a lie.

CLARK (NAR.)
The magnitude of this- if it is true- cannot be understated. The hurricane of attention and admiration that formed around Hera years ago was unparalleled. The rest of the world thought she was going to save the species with Apollo... When things... fell through, we were all devastated. I still can't even imagine what that did to her. For the first time, I got a good look at Rhea's face... She hadn't been crying. She'd been shuddering with rage.

RHEA
Black has to be destroyed.

CLARK
It was her?

RHEA
She got elected because of what she did to Hera. She ruined her.

CLARK (NAR.)
She was kneeling, fists clenched.

RHEA
Hera has blamed herself every fucking day for something that never even happened! Her whole LIFE is built around this lie.

CLARK (NAR.)
Just a few inches from her, I could almost feel her hot breath on my face.

RHEA
My sister has not been the same since it happened. She... hurt herself. Apollo- Fuck, even Apollo didn't deserve this. She isn't like me. She gave and gave for what? For a person who was ready to sacrifice her for a little good publicity? We have to fucking end her.

CLARK
How did you find this out?

CLARK (NAR.)
She aggressively ran a hand through her long hair. For a second, I worried she was going to rip it out.

RHEA
Rebekah.

CLARK (NAR.)
My stomach turned.

RHEA
I know you don't trust her. I don't know if I do either. But on this... This is what she was working with Char to expose.

CLARK
Did she kill Char?

RHEA
NO. No. She tried. I know. It's fucked. They worried he would expose them.

CLARK
Rhea, she tried to kill your friend.

RHEA

Because he put them all in jeopardy.

CLARK

Who's dead?

CLARK (NAR.)

She inhaled and then exhaled sharply.

RHEA

Dion. Persephone's chap.

CLARK (NAR.)

After everything that girl went through- and he wasn't just her chaperone. Oh god, I still can't bare to think about it.

CLARK

That's horrible.

CLARK (NAR.)

I told her.

RHEA

I know.

CLARK

Rebekah's just going to let us go back?

RHEA

We have to do something for her.

CLARK

No. We can't help her! Not after what she's done- what she tried to do.

RHEA

I need to deliver this drive-

CLARK (NAR.)

And she held up a small silver piece of metal.

RHEA

When we arrive, I can demand a meeting with Black and stick this into her computer. It will only take a second.

CLARK

Rhea, we can't trust Rebekah. You don't even know what that does.

RHEA

I know we want the same thing. I'm just helping her take down Black! And then I can blow the lid off this whole place too.

CLARK

And then what?

CLARK (NAR.)

This stopped her. Her anger faded for a moment, was replaced by thought.

RHEA

I don't know, someone else will be in charge. Maybe someone like Shylock. Maybe Shylock him-

CLARK

You're looking at this too personally.

RHEA

You're fucking right I am. Look, Clark, I'm leaving. Stay if you want.

CLARK (NAR.)

I had no choice. She knew that. I figured even if we were sent to some kind of prison... I would at least be used to it. And I'd get to interact with anyone but her. That definitely seemed like a plus. Besides, I couldn't let Rebekah take her off alone.... That's how we ended up in a not-large-enough metal shipping container in the back of a truck. I'm essentially sitting in Rhea's lap, which would be humiliating even if last night's kiss hadn't happened. She isn't paying any attention to me though. She's just clutching that drive and staring off into space.

CLARK

Will you tell her?

CLARK (NAR.)

I ask over the hum of the engine.

RHEA

I don't know.

CLARK

Well, I'm sure she'll be happy to see you.

CLARK (NAR.)

She nods.

RHEA

I keep thinking about the last time I saw her. When I was being arrested. She looked so scared. These last few days...

CLARK (NAR.)

Rhea shrugs.

RHEA

I guess I'm just worried when I see her, I'll realize how scared she must have been this whole time.

CLARK

She's going to be happy you're okay. If anything, she'll be mad at you. And in that case, she'll probably be quite happy to be back to business as usual.

CLARK (NAR.)

Rhea rolls her eyes and I breathe an audible sigh of relief to see her acting like herself.

RHEA

Thank you for... being pretty good company.

CLARK

You're not so bad yourself.

CLARK (NAR.)

I wonder how she'll treat me in the real world. Will I just be a member of the gang? Will I lift weights with Char and drink whiskey with her and do... whatever Persephone likes to do with her? Will Eros like me?

Will she tell him we kissed? Not that it matters.

Rhea does not want me. Like that. Which is fine. So fine.

Better... Than the alternative. If you think about it.

Especially since we're both going to rot in a political prison.

SCENE 2

DOCTOR

And please take one of these, and three of these, and...

PERS (NAR.)

Without waiting for him to finish rattling off my dosage, I take the small cup from his hand. Down the pills in one mouthful before chasing them with water.

PERS

Thank you, Antonio.

PERS (NAR.)

I say to the doctor who I know perfectly well is called Tybalt. I stare, waiting for him to tell me I'm not even in the right play.

DOCTOR

Have a nice day.

PERS (NAR.)

Tybalt (or Antonio, depending on how spineless he's feeling) says with a shit eating grin.

I step into the hallway and smack directly into the brick wall that is Char. He must also be coming from his physical.

CHAR

Hi.

PERS (NAR.)

He mumbles. I haven't spoken to him since our little chat about his new friends. For a person so large and so confident, seeing him grovel would have been disturbing had it not been so infuriating. As he sat on the corner of my bed, his large body contorted to cower behind a throw pillow clutched in his hands, his handsome features screwed up in anguish, I listened through the screaming inside my head. I couldn't tell what he expected me to feel. Bad for him? Because- oh how terrible his guilt was! I assured him I could think of worse ways to feel.

CHAR

How'd it go in there?

PERS (NAR.)

He says sheepishly.

PERS

Still breathing.

PERS (NAR.)

I speak, although by his face you'd think I hit him.

I wonder how we must look to anyone watching us... Maybe it's his visible shame but for once I might seem taller.

Apollo
Hi guys.

PERS (NAR.)
Apollo bounds up to us. He's still doing his best to play at unhappiness in front of me, but he reeks of content. Every second I spend with him and Hera I can sense it leaking from his glands like drool.

Apollo
I'll be escorting you back to Persephone's.

PERS (NAR.)
Says Apollo.

CHAR
Where's Artemis?

PERS (NAR.)
Char asks, already relieved not to be alone with me.
For a moment, I regret agreeing to let Hera use my house for this part of the plan.

Apollo
She's speaking with the detective. Don't worry, I've been assured we have more than enough coverage.

PERS (NAR.)
Apollo smiles reassuringly as Char turns white. Idiot.
I told Apollo to not betray that he knows about Char's ... predicament. Whatever. Maybe Char will spend an extra few minutes worried Apollo knows.
We exit to the car. Char visibly restrains himself from sprinting to the coverage of the sedan. I have to give Apollo credit. He didn't blink at still running around with Char despite The Void.
We spend the ride in silence and I enjoy being around people who want to avoid pissing me off at any cost.
Dion would have found this... actually kind of typical.
We enter my home and Hera is already waiting for us, pouring tea. She hands me the first cup. It's funny how not miniature that cup looks in her hand compared to well... you get it.

Even though I've lived here for 22 years and Dion was only here for a few months, everything reminds me of him. It would seem more unfair if it wasn't so fucking sad.

HERA

How were the tests?

PERS (NAR.)

In Hera's presence, Char seems to breath his first true sigh of relief. No need for that.

PERS

Char, we need your help contacting The Void.

PERS (NAR.)

I say before he can respond to Hera.

HERA

That... that is true.

PERS (NAR.)

She says in the sudden silence. You know since we've teamed up, Hera has been incredibly accommodating.
It's a lot less fun.

CHAR

Hera, I can explain-

PERS

We have work to do.

HERA

Persephone is right. We can talk about it later.

PERS (NAR.)

See what I mean? Apollo clears his throat like someone went two minutes without directly addressing him.

Apollo

We've assembled some information on our own, we just need you to corroborate some things.

PERS

Yes. Corroborate.

PERS (NAR.)

And I smile at him. Because "I'm using big words because I'm insecure" Apollo really is my favorite Apollo.

CHAR

I really don't know anything. I only met with them a handful of times. Hera, they have-

PERS

Well that's a handful more than anyone else here.

PERS (NAR.)

Hera hands him a tea cup before softly saying-

HERA

We just have a couple of questions. Who did you meet?

CHAR

It would be just one person, but one or two more would show up towards the end. I never saw any faces or anything. Someone would escort me away.

PERS (NAR.)

Rhea and Eros' tabloid antics kept everyone so busy, no one wondered where Char was running off at night.

HERA

Great. That's helpful.

PERS (NAR.)

Hera microwaves a smile for him. I perch on a chair by Apollo, who bites at his nail nervously.

PERS

She's good at this stuff.

Apollo

She knows it's easier to get what you want when you're kind.

PERS (NAR.)

He says pointedly. I turn to him, eyebrows raised. I may have a new favorite version of Apollo.

Apollo
Please don't look at me like that.

Pers
Like what?

Apollo
Like you're playing with your food.

Hera
Guys?

Pers (Nar.)
Hera asks us before proceeding with Char. I hop from my seat and begin to circle them.

Hera
Where have you met them in the last month?

Char
Uh... okay... The last month. There was the radio tower building.

Hera
Okay. Radio tower.

Pers (Nar.)
Uhm, what about that drawing of the spool around the sharp thing?

Apollo
That was a knitting thing.

Pers (Nar.)
Apollo says, incorrectly. I grab the book off a small stack on the couch beside Hera, flip until I find Rhea's drawing.

Pers
This could totally be a radio tower.

Hera
Look at the name of the play, Krapp's Last Tape. That's uhm... kind of radio? Tapes were involved with radio.

PERS, what's the date on that?

PERS (NAR.)

Rhea, our little detective scribbled something in the top right corner.

PERS

March 8th.

CHAR

That's when I met them! At 3 am.

PERS (NAR.)

I look at the page, at Rhea's frantic pen scratchings.

PERS

She underlined the line "3 spool"

HERA

Great.

PERS (NAR.)

Hera responds. This is a good thing. We were up all night looking through these plays. It seems like Rhea spent the last few months collecting graffiti around the city and matching it up with Beckett quotations- it's too bad she didn't do locations as well and save us a bunch of time. Of all the late night's Rhea had, I never pictured her spending it with these paperbacks.

CHAR

Next I met them at that water tower that looks like a witches hat-

PERS

You mean The Witch's Hat Water Tower?

PERS (NAR.)

Minneapolis has like 10 landmarks, but working with Char might make it feel like 50.

HERA

Okay great- witches... So that's...

APOLLO

Come and Go.

PERS (NAR.)

Hera nods at him, flips open a book on her lap.

HERA

Was that on... March 17th?

CHAR

Yes.

HERA

And was it also at 3? Because Rhea underlined this line here.

CHAR

Yeah. It was

HERA

Okay, what about on...

PERS

She grabs another play.

HERA

What about on March 26th? Somewhere to do with... A bell?

CHAR

That's the one I skipped. Because, you know... Iris.

APOLLO

Right.

PERS (NAR.)

Apollo breathes.

HERA

Okay, that's fine. But maybe you can help us figure out where they might be meeting tonight?

PERS (NAR.)

Hera shows him Rhea's most recent drawing, of the men on crucifixes scribbled in Waiting for Godot. The date next to the drawing is today's. She scribbled in "2 am".

HERA

Rhea wrote "Saint" next to it... but there are two Cathedrals that start with that here-

CHAR

I never had to solve any riddles. They just... contacted me.

PERS

Obviously they knew they couldn't throw any riddles at you.

PERS (NAR.)

Hera looks at me like she wants to say something, but bites her tongue. There are two cathedral's left. One has been converted into a library, mostly digital. The other is empty. Hera pushes air out of her cheeks, looks to Apollo.

HERA

We have to split up.

Apollo

No. We could be wrong. It could be at anything.

PERS (NAR.)

He says firmly.

HERA

We have to try.

PERS (NAR.)

Hera is standing now.

HERA

They could find some bullshit reason for taking me in any day. Did you see Persephone's latest post?

PERS

What? I didn't write anything.

HERA

Someone wrote one as you, because apparently there was a strange Fourth of July when I snapped at Iris in public and made her cry.

CHAR

That wasn't you that was...

PERS (NAR.)

Char stops himself. My cheeks burn. That was me. I made her cry. We were at a gala. Char, Rhea, and Eros were all wasted, loudly going on at a corner table. I was keeping the seat next to me empty for this newly appeared guard.

Iris dropped into it and couldn't take the hint... I don't remember exactly what I said. Just something harsh. Something about me not being lonely like she was. She didn't just burst into tears. She just... walked away. And then she..It was hot. I didn't realize how I was sounding.

PERS

The sooner we find out what Black is hiding the sooner we can figure out what happened to Iris.

HERA

And someone wants it to be me. They're getting ready to turn people against me. Look how they overreacted to my... altercation with Persephone.

PERS (NAR.)

Hera says quietly. Apollo approaches her.

Apollo

You don't think they might use this as proof there is something wrong with you? Look, I want Rhea back too-

PERS (NAR.)

Lie, I think.

Apollo

But... this plan seems like too much risk for possibly no pay off. You think they're going to just give you Black's big secret and then as a bonus tell you if they've seen your sister?

HERA

If they wanted to work with Char, I'm sure they know that you or I can get even closer to Black. We have more mobility!

Apollo

I can't lose you.

PERS (NAR.)

Apollo says, more commanding than romantic. But instead of responding, Hera walks over to him, places her hand on the base of his neck and pulls his face close to hers. She speaks so softly, neither Char nor myself can hear them. It's a bizarrely intimate moment.

When we were younger they were never more than a few fingertips away from one another.

But since their supposed rekindling I haven't seen Hera or Apollo go within six feet of each other. She must really want this. Char looks away from them, but the second his eyes settle on me, he snaps his head towards the floor.

SOUND: DOORBELL

PERS

That'll be Artemis... Alright ladies and gents, what's the plan?

HERA

I'll go to Saint Mary's, Apollo will go to St. Mark's.

CHAR

What about us?

PERS (NAR.)

Squeaks Char.

PERS

All you have to do is keep your mouth shut and maybe you won't get anyone else killed.

PERS (NAR.)

Char leaves. Apollo and Hera step to the door, greeting Aretmis. I walk slowly up the stairs. Lie down on my bed, close my eyes, breathing in the scent of my pillows... I listen hard enough to imagine a single heavy set of footsteps on the stairs. I keep him there on the ascent, because I know unlike last week, they'll be no knock on my door.

SCENE 3

RHEA (NAR.)

I've spent a lot of time being angry. It's like a skill, how to craft the perfect insult and then serve it at the most inappropriate moment. How to point something out to someone that's jusssst true enough to wreck their day. I know how to be angry... but this... I don't know how to be this. Every hair on my head tingles with rage. Clark is tip toeing around me. I was surprised I had to convince him at all to go back, he was so desperate just the other day to return to... what? What is there for him back there? Whatever. I'm not worried about his ulterior motives. God, it feels good to stretch my legs. That was a long six hours with Clark in my lap. I'm glad he isn't being too weird about last night. I couldn't bare to have a conversation about something so... unimportant. Not that his feelings are unimportant. I don't want him to feel weird or... think that I...

don't find him attractive or something. Ugh, god, empathy is overrated. I shoot him a glance our of the corner of my eye. He's wringing his hands nervously in the dim light. Our footsteps echo off the walls around us. We're following Rebekah- who I'm fairly surprised is our guide. I mean, why would someone so valuable just like throw herself out into this?

RHEA

Are you okay?

CLARK

Of course. This is just another day for me.

RHEA

You can't say I didn't make your life more interesting.

CLARK

I'll remember to thank you for that when they're torturing me.

REBEKAH

Please keep it down Clark.

RHEA (NAR.)

Rebekah hisses at him. You know, her act of only being rude to Clark was funny at first but now it's just annoying. Like, get a new joke.

RHEA

How much longer?

REBEKAH

Only a few more yards.

RHEA (NAR.)

She pushes forwards through the musty air in the tunnel. I tuck the drive into my bra, catch Clark's eye-

RHEA

Do you want to put it in yours?

RHEA (NAR.)

I whisper.

He shakes his head. The closer we get to our destination, the more nervous he seems.

RHEA

Whatever happens, I'm going to be with you.

CLARK

You can't possibly promise that.

RHEA

I can promise to try.

RHEA (NAR.)

He turns to say something else to me- but he is interrupted by the awful scraping sound of a metal door being pushed open. Rebekah steps through into what looks like a window of black. I salute Clark and then follow her.

But there's nothing on the other side. Just darkness and silence. I don't even see-

RHEA

Rebek-

SOUND: RHEA BEING MUFFLED

RHEA (NAR.)

My mouth is covered by a thick, cold hand.

ORSINO

Don't make this harder than it has to be.

RHEA

And reflexively I kick and flail at the sound of Detective Orsino Blue's voice, but he has my arms pinned. My brain struggles instead of my body. Where is Clark? Where is Rebekah? What is- Oomfph. Orsino roughly pushes me to the ground, uses his knee and full weight to press me to the ground. My cheek presses to a cold, marble floor, and my eyes slowly adjust to the dark.

ORSINO

Huh. I was under the impression you liked it rougher than that.

RHEA (NAR.)

With that I flip over and kick my right leg out hard enough to trip him, sending him to the floor. I scramble to my feet and run back in the direction of the door- but I can't fucking find it. I run my hands over the wall and finally make out it's hinges when-

SOUND: SMACK.

RHEA (NAR.)

A body slams me into the rusty steel. Twists one of my arms behind my back.

ORSINO

(LOW LAUGH)

That's more like it... Am I hurting you?

RHEA (NAR.)

Unfortunately, he is. But I won't give him the satisfaction of saying so. He pushes me harder against the wall, and lifts my arm higher and farther back. I stay silent.

ORSINO

All you have to do is ask me nicely to stop.

RHEA

What was that? It's hard to hear over your heavy breathing.

RHEA (NAR.)

He pushes my arm at an angle that would have me screaming if my face wasn't being crushed sideways against the door.

REBEKAH

Hey!

RHEA

I hear Rebekah's voice a split second before the pressure is suddenly relieved. I spin to see Rebekah, gun drawn, a few feet behind me.

RHEA

Come on!

RHEA (NAR.)

I call as I run for the opposite end of the room. I hear her footsteps running behind me.

RHEA

Clark?

RHEA (NAR.)

I call as I near a large, wooden door. I'm just laying my hand on the handle when I hear a gun cock behind me.

REBEKAH

I can't let you do that Rhea.

RHEA (NAR.)

I turn slowly to see Rebekah's pistol pointed right at me.

RHEA

What's going on?

RHEA (NAR.)

I ask as Orsino approaches us, dragging an unconscious Clark.

RHEA

Clark!

RHEA (NAR.)

I rush for him, but am intercepted by Rebekah.

REBEKAH

Shh, shh. It's just a little chloroform. Here-

RHEA (NAR.)

And she takes a step towards me with a rag.

RHEA

Back the fuck up.

RHEA (NAR.)

She drops it on the ground.

REBEKAH

I just wanted you to know it wasn't anything serious.

RHEA

What the hell is going on?

ORSINO

Rebekah and I have a common interest... Do you have the drive?

RHEA (NAR.)

Rebekah takes a step towards me, smiles. Sticks her hand out.

REBEKAH

Come on, you've got a common interest too.

RHEA

Oh, now we're working together? After you attacked me? And did... whatever to Clark?

REBEKAH

You can give it to us, or we'll have to take it off you.

RHEA

I reach into my bra and throw her the drive. She catches it.

REBEKAH

Thank you.

RHEA (NAR.)

Rebekah saunters over to Orsino, slips the drive in his pocket.

REBEKAH

Now you can lock her up.

RHEA

What?!

RHEA (NAR.)

Orsino twirls a pair of handcuffs.

REBEKAH

Oh, Rhea. You can't expect us to just... let you walk around?

RHEA

But I didn't kill Iris!

REBEKAH

Oh, sweetheart, Iris' death is in the past. We're all about protecting the future here. We can't have you running around, I mean, you could have died out there.

RHEA

Starting to wish I did.

REBEKAH

Besides, the life you led before was... incredibly irresponsible. My regime can't have you running around.

RHEA (NAR.)

And I'm so stunned by what I'm hearing I barely struggle as Orsino clicks the cuffs, too tightly, around my wrists. I just stare into the cavernous space around me. Trying to figure out how the fuck I got me and Clark into this mess. Then somewhere in the corner- I see a tall hooded figure fade into the darkness.

END OF EPISODE