



## Chapter Four

Selene led Hercules back to Omphale's throne room. The door was closed, and two men stood sentry, spears in hand. "The Queen hears a

dispute,” one of them said. “You will have to wait.” He and the other sentry looked at the smooth, painted face of Hercules and smirked.

Hercules flexed his bulging arms and glared. The sentries looked away, intimidated. Hercules grinned. Dress or no dress, there was no man in all The Mediterranean he could not best, and it made him feel confident to know he could still intimidate these scrawny fools with a glance.

“We shall return,” Selene said. “Come, Hera. Let’s meet the other girls.”

Hercules followed, glancing back over his shoulder as he departed. Neither of the men would meet his gaze. Selene led Hercules to a large tent, where Omphale’s girls spent much of their days, weaving cloth, weaving baskets, knitting, sewing. Hercules once more camped it up, adopting an exaggerated female gait, swinging his arms around as he entered, wrists limp. “Hello, girls!” He shouted in a mockingly feminine tone. The women all tittered, even as they drank in Hercules’ fine, manly form. He turned. “How does my back look?” More laughter.

Showing proper female modesty, the women were all gazing in wonder at Hercules through the corners of their eyes, trying to pretend they were looking elsewhere, but he knew well they enjoyed the sight of his hard, angular body, and feeling the heat of their desire he once more felt confirmed in his sense of self: I am Hercules! He doubted very much, as he in turn enjoyed the sight of rounded thighs and firm breasts, these girls would be able to heed Omphale’s orders and resist the urge to lay with him. There were many women here from all over the Mediterranean, and even a pale, red-haired girl from the barbarian lands to the north. Hercules mentally undressed her and felt himself looking forward to a year spent “among the girls.”

“Come along, Hera,” Selene said, “time for you to do your chores.” She led him toward a row of looms, where women wove, their slender hands dancing along the lines of thread. Little girls knelt next to them, holding spindles and unspooling the thread, feeding it to the weavers.

“Oh! I can’t wait!” Hercules announced, clutching his hands under his chin. “I get to weave something pretty!”

“You will not be weaving,” Selene said. “Azada,” she said. “Please teach this girl how to work the spool.”

Hercules felt his confidence wilt. Spool girl? It was clear to him this was a job meant for children, and one that placed him lower in status among these women.

Azada, a pretty Persian girl of maybe 12 years, grinned and giggled. “Kneel,” she said, her giggles turning to laughter as she patted the soft pillow next to her.

Hercules sat cross-legged.

“Um, you must kneel,” Azada said in careful tones as if speaking to a small child. “There is a proper way to do everything.”

Hercules glanced at Selene, his look saying, do you really mean for me to take orders from a little girl? Selene smiled and raised an eyebrow.

Hercules shifted into a kneeling position, slouching over as Azada handed him the spool.

“Back straight, Azada said. “Posture is so important!” She was repeating her own training from the time she came to Omphale’s court. Azada was a spirited, mischievous girl, and she was clearly amused as she bossed around this big, clunky and to her eyes, old man. Hercules sat up, only to immediately receive another command as Azada wagged a finger.

“Shoulders back!”

Hercules put his shoulders back and now felt himself kneeling in what was clearly a female manner. “Excellent!” Azada said. “Good girl. Now, you must unspool the string at the pace of the weaver...”

“Be a good *little* girl,” Selene said, “and show me that you can handle the spool” --the women all snickered-- “maybe you can advance to



assistant weaver one day.”

Hercules plastered a smile on his face, no longer feeling quite the bold manly man. “I’ll do my best!” He said in his mocking, feminine tones. Selene went off to check on the other workers, leaving Hercules to learn his

new craft. It was not difficult, and he soon found himself bored to the brink of insanity, spooling out thread while Azada knelt next to him and chattered on, her young mind skipping from this to that and then to the other.

Apollo's chariot crept across the sky. Is he flying extra slow today? Hercules wondered. How can time pass so slowly? He ached for his former life, the thrill of a fight, but that was not to be. One year, he reminded himself. One year.

"Hahahahahaha!"

The booming laughter broke Hercules out of his distracted musings and he looked up to see Omphale swaggering into the tent, the skin of the Nemean Lion over her shoulders, his club slung over her shoulder. Behind her was her usual retinue of beautiful women as well as a group of men carrying easels and brushes.

"You look so cute!" She gushed as she strode up to Hercules and stood above him, legs spread. "You're a perfect little spool girl!"

"I am glad someone finds this amusing," Hercules said, voice venomous with sarcasm.

Omphale's mouth dropped open, and she brought the club off her shoulder and gently bopped Hercules on the nose. "That tone is not acceptable for a girl of your station," she decreed. "Sarcasm is for royalty!" Then, she reached down with her free hand, grabbed a single strand of Hercules' hair and yanked it free.

"Ow!" Hercules tensed and almost grabbed the queen's wrist. His every instinct told him not to accept this act of disrespect. He never had, and he never... he thought about his sentence. The way things had transpired, he did not wish to do anything that would justify extending his sentence. He clenched his jaw and restrained himself.

“Azada, show this impudent young girl how to respond to her queen! Azada, you’re a perfect little spool girl!”

“Thank you so much, your highness!” Azada sang back, her voice bright and sweet, and then she bowed her head.

“Hera? Your turn. And use the proper tone. Azada has just shown you.”

Hercules took a deep breath, calming himself. He had no choice.

“Thank you so much, your highness,” he sang, doing his best to imitate the girlish honey of Azada’s voice. Then, after just the briefest hesitation, he bowed his head.

Omphale laughed, and the women, following the lead of the queen, laughed as well. Hercules felt Omphale pat him on the head. “Good girl,” she said. “Set up your easels and begin.”

Easels? Hercules looked up to see the men setting up their easels while their servants arrayed tables with paints and brushes.

“What is the meaning...” Hercules started to bellow, but Omphale shot him a look. He did not wish to be humiliated in front of all these people again, and swallowing his pride, he adopted once more the sing-song cadence of a girl child. “My queen!” He said. “I am so curious as to why these artists are here!?”

Omphale grinned. “To immortalize this moment, of course, you silly goose. There will be paintings, sculptures, vases all celebrating Hercules’ life as a girl in the court of the great Omphale. I am gifting them to all the kingdoms in Helena! A thousand, thousand years from now, your story will still be sung!”

Hercules closed his eyes. “Wonderful,” he lied, disgusted. He’d thought that none would see him like this outside the court, that once it was over it

would soon be forgotten. He felt sick to his stomach thinking images of him as a spool girl would be spread throughout the world.

“You’ll be the most famous girl in the world!” Azada said.

“Yes, she will,” Omphale said. “And, Hera, let me just say, you smell so pretty! Just like a girl should. Ta ta!” With that she swaggered out of the room.

Sometime later, it felt like days to Hercules, Selene called a break for lunch. Hercules struggled to his feet. The hours of kneeling had left his legs dead, cramping. He shook them out and walked over to the long tables where the women had gathered, but as he started to sit, Selene snapped. “And just what do you think you’re doing?”

“Sitting?” Hercules said. “For lunch?”

“You will eat with the other *little girls*,” Selene said, gesturing toward the corner where the girls had gathered. “If you want to be treated as a woman, Hera, you will have to earn it.”

Head bowed in shame, a starving Hercules shuffled over to the circle of little girls, who were all giggling, covering their smiles, eyes dancing with amusement. “Come, Hera!” Azada said. “I will teach you how to eat like a proper girl!”

Hercules sat, and as all the little girls giggled, Azada instructed him to take small portions, dainty bites. Once the novelty of the hulking man eating like a girl wore off, the girls turned their attention away from Hercules and began to chat, talking about all sorts of girlish nonsense. Hercules once more found himself bored to the point of insanity. He glanced over at the women, feeling deeply ashamed of his status. It came as a shock and surprise, but he found himself wanting to earn the right to sit with them, to sit with the adults. He found himself wanting to be treated like a woman.







## Chapter Five

Hercules stared up at Cygnus, at his rival's outstretched hand. He knew everyone was watching. He knew Cygnus was watching, and he did not

feel like playing the girl. “I can get up on my own,” he said, his soft voice so slight in contrast to Cygnus’ booming bass.



Hercules reached up, meaning to push Cygnus’ hand away, and by the time he realized his error, it was too late. Cygnus seized Hercules’ slender forearm and lifted him to his feet, then pulled Hercules in, wrapping his arms around Hercules’ slender body, for a mighty bear hug, lifting Hercules right off the ground.

“Stop,” Hercules whispered, his voice weak as he felt his soft body crushed against

Cygnus’ hard muscle. He pressed his hands against Cygnus’ chest, pushing, kicking, squirming, trying to free himself. Cygnus, one arm locked

firmly around Hercules' slender waist, reached down with the other and cupped an ass cheek, giving it a squeeze, sending a shock of female arousal to slash at Hercules' addled brain.

"Adorable," Omphale said, enjoying the sight of Hercules so literally pressed into the role of a woman. "They make such a lovely couple."

"You feel good," Cygnus said, giving Hercules' ass another squeeze. "Smell good, too."

"Please, stop," Hercules whispered.

Cygnus set Hercules down, as if the little man were nothing but a doll. "I am only having some fun with an old friend!" Cygnus declared. Then, turning to Omphale, he said, "may I be so bold as to request some private time with my little Hera? We have so much to talk about."

Hercules glanced at Omphale, his pretty eyes full of fear, and he begged her with that look to say no.

"Let me consider," Omphale said, wanting to draw out the drama. "HmMMM." She looked up at the ceiling, tapping her finger on her chin. "HmMMMn. What could possibly happen when a big, virile man like Cygnus finds himself along with a beautiful girl like Hera? HmMMM." The crowd laughed.

Hercules, desperate, shook his head, "no."

"Yes! Yes! Yes!" Omphale said. "Hera has been such a good girl. I feel she deserves a reward. Go! Go, you two! And, have fun!"

"Come!" Cygnus said, taking Hercules by the hand and dragging him from the chamber.

Hercules' heart raced as he raced to keep up with Cygnus' long strides. No, no, no... He can't possibly mean to—Hercules couldn't even finish the

thought. If Cygnus did have—ideas—Hercules was ready to give him the fight of his life!

## Alternate Shots





