

Yolanda Sfetso



*Forever*  
THOR'S

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## *Forever* THOR'S

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Dear Reader,

Thor is one of my favourite mythological gods, so when a story featuring him struck me one day, I couldn't wait to write it.

This is it – a little tale of romance and the coming Ragnarok. Of a woman who was struck by lightning more than once and finally figures out why. The strangest thing was that while I was working on this story, almost every afternoon a thunderstorm struck. It was a little eerie.

Forever Thor's has been accepted for publication three times, by three different publishers. But for some reason, it never made it to the publishing stage. So, after its hazardous road to publication, I decided that the best thing for it was to be offered up for free to my readers.

I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it. And if a thunderstorm hits while you're reading it... let just say that it'll be really freaky.

Cheers,  
*Yolanda Sfetsos*

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## Chapter One

Hanna Andersen glanced discreetly at the other guests. Each was hidden behind some sort of mask, to enhance the mystery of this party. *It is a masked party, after all*, she thought with a nervous chuckle.

No one seemed to notice her. Hardly anyone ever did.

She ignored her thoughts and turned to look at the men who stood around her. They were all dressed in pristine suits of every color, and the women were wrapped in long, fitting gowns that insinuated their best assets. They intermingled, laughed and flirted, mixing with each other. None, except for her, stood to the side like a lonely freak.

Hanna hoped her simple red dress highlighted her body too. The thin straps, tight bodice and low-cut front made her feel good. Her golden locks hung loose against her almost bare back, soft and silky, swaying with her every move. She felt a sexiness tonight that she rarely indulged in. She was mostly an introvert, prone to daydreams. But tonight, she was living a dream. Somebody else's dream, but she was still willing to push the barriers of her comfort zone.

She released an excited breath, enjoying the soft violin music accompanying the serene atmosphere. The mystery made her gut tighten at the possibilities of what remaining anonymous could help her accomplish tonight.

Even the silky red mask with the black lace around the edges made her feel like a princess at a ball. This was the sort of thing she'd waited for all of her life. Most of Hanna's life had been riddled with confusion and health problems. So one night without knowing another soul in this large place made her feel special.

Ah, *special*. In her own way, she was special for all the wrong reasons. No one had ever swept her off her feet. Although, as she twirled around the lavish hall, she realized that maybe tonight that would change. Maybe on this beautiful night, excitement would finally pay her a visit. She hoped it came in the form of a tall, gorgeous blond man with bulging muscles. The type of man she'd seen a hundred times in her dreams.

The phantom lover Hanna was convinced she already knew, but never existed beyond her wildest imaginings.

A giddy laugh escaped between her champagne-moistened lips. She let the buzz of anticipation, thick in the air sweep her up in the fantasy. It felt good to be so carefree, without the need to worry about the effect she could have on the appliances around her, or the people – since she played havoc with both.

The undeniable sense of someone's watchful gaze raced along the exposed skin of her arms. A shiver ran down her spine and goose bumps spread along her body. Her shoulders stiffened at the crazy sensations. The gaze was intense but not uncomfortable.

Without the need for further suspense, she turned her face slightly and met the bright blue eyes of a tall blond man from across the room.

He stood beside the food tables lining the side of the large room, with both arms crossed over his broad chest. A white mask covered most of his face, melded onto his perfect facial bone structure. The bottom half was covered by a short blond beard tinged with red.

She shuddered with excitement as her gaze swept over the bulging muscles of his biceps and forearms. His shoulders were wide, waist narrow. He looked as if he spent hours at the gym every single day. The sleeveless pale blue shirt fit against his skin so snug she wondered if it was made out of lycra. The pants were a darker shade of blue, but she could still see the ripple of hard muscle etched deeply on his thighs. A thick belt wrapped tight around his waist with a large buckle in the middle. From this distance she couldn't make out the design but it was etched into the bronze and looked suspiciously like a rune.

It took all of her will power to keep her gaze from wandering lower. Hanna felt a rush of heat ignite deep inside her, as dizziness swept through her head.

The man was gorgeous – perfect, exactly what she'd hoped to encounter tonight. The

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thought scared her a little. Was anything about this place real? Even the way the invitation had arrived seemed bizarre. Yet now, Hanna was grateful she'd received someone else's invitation in the mail and decided to attend anyway. After all, the address was hers. Just because the name wasn't, didn't actually matter in the grand scheme of things. Besides, no one had stopped her when she'd flashed it at the door.

The whirl of thoughts caused her vision to blur for a few seconds. When awareness returned, the blond man was right in front of her. The scent of nature clung to him, with the slight tinge of burnt plastic. She couldn't place the smell, but it seemed familiar for some reason. It could be that he was a smoker, though Hanna doubted someone who looked so fit would have such a habit.

Either way, that would not keep her away from this man.

Tonight she was prepared to throw caution to the wind and was determined to have some real fun. Forget about everything that made her real life so mundane and boring... no matter what that fantasy entailed.

"Hi," Hanna said after she cleared her throat. She had to crane her neck back a little to meet his eyes, which made her realize just how tall this man was. She'd always been the tallest girl in class, and was wearing stiletto heels to add height to this long dress.

"Hello, I couldn't help but notice you." His voice was very masculine, with an edge of hoarseness to it.

"I couldn't help but notice you, either." Hanna offered him a smile as she took another sip of her champagne. *Yeah, if in doubt, take a little sip of false confidence from the surety of alcohol.* She wasn't much of a drinker, so the effect wouldn't take long to manifest.

"What is your name?" He asked the question as if he were afraid to hear the answer. As if he was searching for someone in particular and hoped it was her.

She wondered if she was reading him right, or if the alcohol haze had already affected her. She decided to just answer him. "My name's Hanna, what's yours?"

"Hanna Andersen?" He still sounded hopeful, but firm. His crystal blue eyes were wide beneath the white mask and seemed to pierce into her soul.

"Yeah, how did you know?"

"For a second I wasn't sure if it was you, but I felt the connection instantly. Did you?"

She shook her head and tried to clear her thoughts. *The connection?* Sure, she'd felt a connection stir inside her gut because the guy had a body to die for. What girl wouldn't feel a connection toward him? "Sure, I felt something..."

"Then we must leave." His voice was no longer edged with uncertainty as he wrapped a large hand around her wrist. He made an attempt to lead her forward.

Hanna pressed her heels down against the shiny floor and tried to pull her wrist from his grip. She wasn't going anywhere with anyone just yet. "Whoa, hold on a second. Go? I just got here. I haven't even had a chance to dance yet."

"I'm sorry, Hanna, but right now the fate of the world rests in our hands. Dancing isn't going to postpone *Ragnarok* for another thousand years!" The intensity in his voice was so thick it drew out an accent that laced his English.

She rolled her eyes. "I came here to have a good time, not to save the world." That was usually the way, wasn't it? The one hot guy she meets, capable of making all her fantasies come true and actually takes notice of her, turns out to be a loony.

He sighed, hand still warm around her wrist. "Hanna, you asked me what my name was. It's Thor, son of Odin, God of Thunder, and you and I need to leave this party right now. I need to get you to my chariot, so I can explain everything before Loki catches wind of you and tries to trick you again."

Did the guy say Thor? Hanna's heart beat inside her chest so rapidly she felt lightheaded. The glass slipped between her clammy fingers and crashed into a thousand tiny pieces. She pointed her chin downward long enough to watch the glass shatter near her red stiletto shoes,

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and then disappear into a multitude of tiny lights before fading to nothing. She swayed right into the arms of the muscled blond who seemed to be playing games with her.

“Loki will be here any minute. We must get out of here before he sees you,” he said.

“Loki, Thor... these are all names from Norse mythology, right?”

“I was the one who sent you the invitation, but it won't take long for Loki to find out.”

“Find out?” Her voice sounded distant to her own ears, almost foreign. Hanna hadn't realized she'd drunk so much.

The man who'd introduced himself as Thor tightened his grip on her. “Yes, before he gets to your beautiful hair.”

The fingers of his other hand were suddenly in her hair. Long fingers smoothed the length down against her back, and she temporarily shut her eyes enjoying his touch.

“I need to sit down,” she whispered.

“Yes, I can help you with that.” His large arms swept her off her high heels and lifted her into an embrace.

Her eyes snapped open.

Lightning suddenly flashed around them, and she gasped in horror. Hanna waited on baited breath for the thunder to follow. She hated storms, hated lightning and thunder because it had hurt her so badly in the past. Her mother always told her angels would watch over humans whenever storms struck, promised that one would never hurt her... but it had. She'd been young when it happened the first time and could only remember fragments. The second time, Hanna had been a teenager.

The memory never left her.

It was when the dreams of the blond man had started.

She looked up into the eyes of the man who now held her tight against his hard chest. He stared down at her as if they were the only two people left in the world. The softness in his eyes had replaced the confusion and demands he temporarily placed on her. She suddenly realized that she knew those eyes, had seen them many times during her life.

“What's your real name?” she asked closing her eyes.

“My real name is Thor, son of Odin,” he repeated in a hushed voice, “the God of Thunder.”

A gust of wind swept up around them and cooled her face. With him being so close, her temperature escalated to a fevered heat. She'd never felt this so quickly upon meeting anyone before.

The echo of his answer stirred inside her. Quick flashes of her bedroom raced through her mind. She owned a copy of almost every comic book that had ever featured the Marvel superhero version of the Norse god. Hanna kept them inside clear plastic sleeves to protect *The Mighty Thor* from dust. The posters of Thor, with his hammer poised in the air ready to strike, lined her walls. The superhero hounded her dreams since the second time she'd been struck by lightning. It was the reason Hanna wore a small silver charm around her neck, one that resembled his legendary hammer, *Mjolnir*.

Was this really *the* Mighty Thor? She had to be dreaming again.

Lightning struck a second time and thunder followed so close behind, the hair on her arms stood up from the energy it roused around them. It was similar to the way her skin itched whenever she sat behind the computer for too long, or tried to use a cell phone.

A crack of pain at the base of her skull roused a whimper from her.

“I'm so sorry.” The words were followed by his warm lips pressing softly against hers.

Hanna didn't have a chance to respond before he pulled away. She mourned the sweetness of the mere touch instantly, lifted her fingers to her lips.

He wasn't looking at her anymore. His gaze was focused to the side but she couldn't see what he was staring at.

She shifted from his tight hold around her.

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He gave her enough room to stand up beside him.

Hanna's legs felt a little weak, but not enough to keep her from taking a step forward. Her eyes widened, and she gasped as she wrapped both hands around the metal edge of the chariot that had magically appeared beneath them.

"Where are we?" Her whisper was engulfed by the wind whipping around them. She pushed the strands of hair flying into her eyes behind her ear. Hanna was grateful the mask was able to keep most of it under control, like a headband.

"We are in the night sky." Thor stepped up behind her, his breath warm on her left shoulder. One of his hands parted her long hair to the side and caressed the tattoo she'd had since she'd turned eighteen. "Sif..."

"What?" She shivered at the touch, eyes still focused ahead of her. The chariot moved across the dark sky. And although she wanted to lean over to ensure this was actually the sky, she didn't want to break physical contact with him. Having his hand on her felt so right, she longed for more.

"This symbol you have inscribed on your skin."

"The tattoo is the rune symbol for *inguz*."

"I know, it also represents Sif," Thor added.

*Sif*... where had she heard that name before? Right now, with everything that was happening, and Hanna literally floating on air, she couldn't remember a single thing. This dream felt so real she discreetly pinched the skin of her forearm.

*Damn, that hurt!*

Could she really be fully awake inside a large chariot, with the hottest guy she'd ever met? A man who insisted his name was Thor and seemed oddly familiar.

"I don't recognize the name Sif."

A sigh stirred her hair again as he removed his hand from her shoulder. "Then you don't remember a single thing, do you?"

Hanna closed her eyes to the cool night air and noticed that the further they moved, the colder the air got. She wrapped her arms around herself. This dress wasn't going to keep her warm if they were going to stay up here long. And *why* were they here? Was this his way of showing off? Well, she was impressed. Maybe if she told him, they could get back to the party and enjoy the dance she'd been itching for. She hadn't danced with a guy since her prom. Even then, her date had abandoned her halfway through the night to chase after someone else, someone who'd guarantee him a good time afterward.

She turned around slowly, almost within touching distance of Thor. Hanna lifted her face slightly to look up at his. So close she could see that both his longish blond hair and beard held a tinge of red in them. He was right about one thing – he had the looks of a Norse God.

Lightning struck again and she shuddered.

"Why are you so scared of lightning?" The concerned look in his eyes was too much for her to take.

The scrutiny made her squirm and she looked away. "It's a long and boring story."

He grabbed her chin and moved her face upward, softly. "If we are to stop *Ragnarok* together, then we must be open with each other. Willing to share everything, just as we once did before I lost you."

The breath felt like it was sucked out of her, and Hanna struggled for a few seconds to catch a steady breath. It happened every now and then, if she got too excited. Anxiety was just another side effect to her many health issues.

The way he spoke to her, as if they'd known each other for years was eerie. Yet, so familiar. It felt as if a certain memory kept teasing her brain, one that continually slipped away from consciousness before she could grasp it.

"This is very impressive. If you'd like to head back, I'd really appreciate it." It was worth a shot, though she doubted he'd comply.

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Thor shook his head. A few strands fell over his white mask and his eyes darkened a fraction. “No, don’t you understand? We cannot go back there now... not until we stop *Ragnarok*—”

“*Ragnarok*? Okay, that’s like the end of the world or something, isn’t it?” She’d surfed enough Norse mythology websites to know what he meant, even if she preferred the comic books.

“The end of the cosmos as we know it,” Thor corrected.

“I don’t know how I’m supposed to help you with something so dramatic and important.” *And mythical*, she added to herself as a thought wormed its way into her mind. “Hold on, is this a role playing exercise to make the experience of the party that much more exciting? If that’s what it is, I’m willing to play along and have some fun, as long as you promise me something in return.”

His eyes shone. “What would you like me to promise?”

“I’d like you to promise me that after we finish all of this Norse myth stuff, you’ll dance with me,” Hanna said with a smile plastered on her lips. She’d come to this place with the intention to have a hot guy sweep her around the dance floor, and she’d be darned if she was going to leave without doing just that.

Thor sighed. “Okay, I promise you that we’ll dance, but first we must help you remember.”

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## Chapter Two

“Remember...?” The word slipped through Hanna’s lips. At least, she thought it had. Her soft crimson lipstick suddenly felt dry. Her head so heavy, the pain at the base of her skull had returned with a vengeance as her body collapsed.

Strong arms caught her before she reached the chariot’s floor. She tried to keep her eyes open long enough to gaze back into Thor’s, but she couldn’t hold on. She could still feel him but she was tumbling down a dark hole in the universe, all by herself.

She closed her eyes tight, tried to fight the pull of inertia that made her stomach turn. When the air returned to her lungs and her heart had steadied, she opened one eye slowly and then the other.

The sky overhead was an ugly tinge of dark grey, with the bruised edges of purple. The wrath of a thunderstorm raged above.

Hanna tried to lift herself up but her limbs refused to heed her instructions. Both her arms hung limp at her sides, neck ached with every small movement she made. She was sprawled out on her back, and judging by the wooden fence and the few scattered plants her mother tried to tend to, she realized she was back in her childhood backyard.

This was where she’d been the second time lightning struck her. She’d insisted on putting her bike in the shed before the few thick rain drops turned into hail. She’d loved that pink bike with the small white plastic basket between the handlebars. So much, she’d risked her life, even when her mother screamed for her to get back inside.

Where was her mother? When this happened, she’d run out through the backdoor and had fallen to her knees beside Hanna. She held her hand until an ambulance arrived after one of her brothers called for it. She’d survived, hadn’t even needed to stay in the hospital like she did the first time. The paramedics claimed she had to be special. Statistics were stacked against survival after being struck by lightning once, let alone twice, in one lifetime.

Hanna hadn’t felt lucky then, and she didn’t feel lucky now.

“Mom?” she called.

Her mother didn’t respond. Instead, she caught a glimpse of navy boots with tight blue pants tucked into them stop beside her. Was this happening now? Had this happened then?

The blond man fell to his knees and grabbed a hold of her, lovingly laying her head on his thigh. It didn’t help the pain that made her body twitch every few seconds, but Hanna found comfort in his nearness anyway.

“My name is Thor, God of Thunder,” the now familiar voice said to her.

“I know, we’ve already met, remember?” Her lips felt so dry, she ran her tongue over them but it didn’t make much of a difference. The back of her throat was coarse. She desperately needed a drink of water.

His blond brows knotted with confusion.

That’s when it struck her as odd that he wasn’t wearing the white mask. The bone structure of his face was just as she’d suspected – breathtaking. His nose was in perfect symmetry to the high cheekbones lightly covered with his reddish-blond beard. His lips were as full as she remembered when he’d lightly brushed hers.

Warmth ignited along her cheeks at the thought of such an innocent kiss. She wished her limbs would react, being temporarily paralyzed wasn’t any fun.

“I am so sorry about this,” he said in a hushed voice.

“Sorry about what?” It was her turn to be confused.

“I’m sorry the lightning bolt hit you. I had no intention of hurting an innocent mortal.” One of his big hands caressed her clammy hair away from her face.

“What?”

“I saw a *jotun* in the distance and threw *Mjolnir*, but he deflected the lightning bolt and it... hit you instead.”

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"You're the one who hit me with lightning? What about when I was a kid, was that you as well?"

"You have been struck by lightning more than once?" His hand patted her hair faster.

She wanted to nod but her head wouldn't obey the command. "Yes, this is the second time, or at least the memory of the second time."

He sighed, a heavy breath that swayed her light shirt. She noticed that his other hand was covered in what looked like a metal glove.

"Could this finally be you? I've searched high and low but never thought we'd see each other again. Not after so many years."

"I don't know what you mean." Her head hurt so much it felt like a physical throb that made it enlarge and deflate.

His eyes looked like a cloudless summer sky, not like the scene above them. She watched the dark clouds move faster, the purple bruises expanded. The drops of water were still thick, but now constant. The smell of wet concrete filled her nostrils.

"Please, help me get inside, I don't want it to get me again," she cried. The fear was thick inside her stomach, as she remembered the way the lightning bolt struck her. For a second she'd thought it was a fallen branch, until she smelled the smoky residue.

"Sif, don't you remember me?" Thor's blond hair was flat against his head, raindrops dripped from the ends.

"My name is Hanna. I think you've got the wrong girl."

"Is that the name they gave you?" Thor hugged her to his hard chest and kissed the top of her head. His heart beat fast against her face. "It's a pretty name, but you'll always be Sif to me."

"I'm not..." Her voice trailed off when he pressed his lips gently against hers.

He pulled back for a second and whispered against her lips. "I know you are right, we should keep this as hushed as we can. For now that I've found you, my beautiful wife, I refuse to forget where you are. I will never let Loki get his hands on you again, I promise. Now, live a happy life and I shall come back for you when *Ragnarok* is on the horizon. You are the key, my love. It is your destiny. And with you by my side, we can avoid it for another thousand years. I'll follow your soul. No matter what physical body it ends up in, I'll be able to find you now."

"Thor," Hanna whispered. Tears slid down her cooled cheeks, her fingers trailed along the underside of his jaw. His beard was smooth against her skin and there was something inside her that recognized him for who he really was. A split second of memories flashed through her mind. A former life she'd spent alongside Thor, until she was ripped away from him.

The love they'd shared was so intense she felt her heart overflow.

"Yes, it is me my beloved, Sif."

Thunder rumbled seconds after the latest lightning bolt struck, and he looked up at the sky.

"I need to get back up to the heavens and defeat the *jotun*. It is my duty," he said with a defeated sigh. "Please, don't ever forget me again."

"I won't." But she had.

Thor kissed her lips one more time.

When he pulled away, his hand was still on her cheek but they were back on the chariot. The chill in the air made her shiver and he held her tighter.

"But I did forget you..."

"It was not your fault. It is Loki's tricks that have done this to you, to me." His face was so close she could almost see his skin beneath the white mask. "But we've found each other again, and must do what needs to be done in order to postpone *Ragnarok*. Then we can be together forever."

"So you're telling me that I'm your wife... Sif?"

He nodded. "Yes, a mortal incarnation of her."

"I thought all Norse gods were mortal." The knowledge was slowly slipping back into her mind and she felt so much stronger for it. The nagging pieces of information, which constantly

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taunted her and only manifested in her dreams, finally melted away. The reason she was so obsessed with Thor, and why the obsession intensified during her teenage years. Why he haunted her dreams almost every night. It was all falling into place.

As insane and fictional as it sounded, the way he made her remember their past life together had felt so real. As real as any of the disappointments she'd encountered during her twenty-four years of life. As real as the sleek dress she wore and the mask wrapped around her face.

The mask.

She didn't need a mask any longer, not when they both knew who they really were.

Her crimson-tipped fingers lifted toward her mask but he stopped her with a shake of his head. His long fingers wrapped around her hand.

"I don't want to hide from you any longer."

"You must, for now," Thor whispered. "If you remove the mask now, Loki will know exactly where to find you."

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### Chapter Three

"If I remove this now, I'll return to the party?"

"Yes, but you'll return without me. You'll have the memory of everything I've reawakened inside your mind and of what we must do now, but will be unable to contact me." His blue eyes pleaded for her to understand the severity of the situation.

She nodded. "Okay, I won't remove it."

A small smile spread over his full lips. "Thank you."

"No, thank you for helping me remember. I always felt so different, but never understood why."

"So, you no longer have trouble believing I am Thor?"

Hanna shook her head. "I guess deep down inside I've always known it was you in my dreams. I was just too scared to admit it to myself. I mean, how crazy does this all sound?"

"My beautiful, Sif. Would it bother you if I called you Sif?" His hand was still wrapped around hers and he squeezed it lightly.

"I prefer Hanna, but if that's what you'd like to call me..."

"Hanna's fine," he said with a smile. Thor raised her hand to his lips and kissed her fingers. The soft look in his eyes was now edged with the undeniable hue of desire.

A smile teased her lips. She suddenly remembered the invitation addressed to Sif Andersen. Her heart dropped into her stomach. Was it possible that the invitation was always meant to come to her? Maybe it hadn't been a mistake like she'd initially suspected.

She had to know.

"Thor, you addressed the invitation to Sif Andersen intentionally, didn't you?"

He nodded. "I realized my mistake later. I should have used your new name, but I... the invitation was the only way to make contact with you before Loki did. It's only a matter of time before he gets to you to try and prevent your destiny."

"Why would he want to do that?"

Thor sighed. "Loki's complicated and his tricks have gotten him in trouble with many. The latest is with a *jotun*. Loki promised that he would eliminate the one thing able to stop the coming chaos."

"What's that?" she asked.

"You, and your destiny to stop it," Thor answered with a grim expression.

Hanna released a breath as her nerves stirred. "Tell me more about this destiny."

He took a step closer, his chest grazed the thin material of her bodice and she felt her body react instantly.

"I want you to know all that will be required of you but first, it's been so long since we've been together." Thor dropped her hand, lifted his heavily muscled arms to run his fingers over her bare shoulders. "Do you remember the passion that burnt between us, my gorgeous wife?"

It felt odd being referred to in that way without the memory of ever marrying him, but it was also so right. One of his hands wandered up to her temples, fingertips near her hairline.

Hanna shuddered at the flash of their naked bodies lying on a large bed. Their legs entwined and sweaty from their lovemaking caused her breath to catch, as if she were reliving the fragment.

When his hand slipped away, the image snapped out of her mind as quickly as it had arrived.

"Do you remember now?" he asked, never taking his eyes off her.

"I know the passion is burning inside me now," she whispered near his ear. He wasn't as tall as she'd first thought. "Make me remember all of it, Thor."

His mouth pushed down against hers instantly. One hand was still around her shoulder, the other wrapped around the length of her long hair. The softness he'd used to kiss her so far was suddenly gone. His mouth encouraged hers to open wider, so he could sweep his tongue inside.

A multitude of goose bumps rose along her skin, and this time it wasn't because of the

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obvious drop in temperature around them. Hanna's nipples were already hard, her legs weak as she longed for them to share each other as deeply as the memories teased.

He pulled away from their kiss long enough to tug the sleeveless shirt over his head. He dumped it on the floor and her hands were all over the deeply edged grooves of his abdominal muscles within seconds. It excited her, to feel the rock hard surface of his torso. It also seemed to excite him because she felt his erection press between them.

He covered her mouth with his again. One hand ran down the length of the low zipper at the back of her dress, the other pulled the thin material down along the small of her back and hips until it pooled at her feet.

He lifted her into his arms.

Hanna wrapped her long legs around him and held onto the tops of his shoulders. The way his body felt beneath her hands was amazing. She'd only had a handful of lovers in her life, and none had excited her as much as him. Was their soul connection so deep that he affected her arousal this much?

Thor put her down for a second as he pulled his boots and pants off with eager speed. He stood almost naked in front of her, only the heavy-looking belt left on his body.

Hanna looked at the symbol etched on his belt and confirmed it was a rune. *Thurisaz*, the rune associated with the god Thor.

She reached out to remove it, but he stopped her with a firm shake of his head.

"Most of my power is contained in here. To take it off now only makes me vulnerable to what awaits us around the corner." He took her hand in his and led her toward the back of the chariot. A cushioned seat, which looked more like an armchair awaited them.

"Okay," she said with a nod.

He sat down on the chair, his erection begging for her attention. Before she could move, he wrapped his hands around her panties and tore them off. The garter belt remained to hold her thigh-high stockings in place. Hanna made an attempt to remove the high heels, but he stopped her.

"No, keep them on." He pulled her closer. His palm spread over her pubic hair. He rubbed a slow teasing circle between her legs, eyes still on hers.

Hanna bit down on her bottom lip to keep from crying out.

Her eyes shut for a second. She could see herself pressed up against the side of the chariot, eyes focused on the two huge goats that pulled it across the sky. Thor's glistening chest was pressed against her back, as he spread her legs and entered her from behind.

Each thrust pushed him further inside, and her closer to the edge of pleasure.

She snapped her eyes open from the vision still taunting her.

Thor wrapped his strong arms around her waist. With a sudden force she hadn't expected, he hungrily clamped his mouth over one of her breasts and sucked. He shifted to the other as one of his hands continued to tease between her legs without delving inside.

Hanna craved more intimacy between them, and curved her spine to help him take more of her breast into his mouth. He obliged by licking and sucking in a sequence that pushed a moan out between her lips.

He nibbled on her nipple and dipped a finger in between her legs. She spread them eagerly for him while Thor teased her clitoris to submission.

She was so close to orgasm, she could taste it.

But he stopped.

"I want you now," he said with a hungry demand she didn't want to deny. Thor wrapped his hands around her hips and forcibly lifted her onto his erection.

She was amazed at the strength he possessed, but couldn't linger on it now that he was wedged inside her. Hanna propped her knees on either side of his thighs and started slow motions that set her skin on fire.

The cold around them could hardly touch her anymore.

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Hanna was so wet every glide inside filled her with further satisfaction.

Thor kissed the underside of her chin, licked and bit it as if he was marking his territory. She didn't care. The slow motions were now frenzied as she lowered herself against his cock while feeling the tickle of her clitoris.

The belt she'd thought would get in the way only added to the excitement by rubbing against her lower abdomen.

He taunted her by massaging her breasts as he licked them. Everything he did to her body had a deep effect on her. So deep, it didn't take long for the orgasm to temporarily blind her while white dots danced in front of her eyes.

She couldn't move, but he took over the task to lift and lower her body over his still hard cock. When he rocked beneath her and his head fell back, his eyes opened wide and were filled with lightning bolts. His scream echoed around them as he came.

It was eerie, almost scary to watch the way his blue eyes were engulfed with darkness and bolts, but she wasn't scared of him. This was her soul mate. The one she hadn't even realized was closer than she could've ever imagined.

His arms wrapped tight around her as their hearts beat against each other in a rhythmic dance she hoped they would always enjoy.

"I've missed you, my love," Thor whispered in her ear.

"I've missed out on you all of my life."

"After you fulfill your destiny, we can be together again."

Hanna kissed his lips lightly. Visions of one climax after another with this god filled her mind. Her body shook with pleasure at every new memory that stabbed her mind. She could make love to this man for all time.

She wasn't looking forward to any malice that awaited them after this show of affection.

Yet, if that's what it took to spend the rest of her life with Thor, then all she could say was:  
*bring it on!*

# Yolanda Sfetsos

## Chapter Four

“Are you hungry?” The air around them was so chilly his words misted in front of him.

She surprised herself by nodding in response. Hanna’s stomach rumbled as lethargy spread throughout her body. She was in a wonderful daze, with an arm draped over his hard chest.

He’d pulled out some sort of animal fur blanket from out of nowhere, and they were both lying together on what he’d told her was his throne on the chariot. There were a bunch of hidden features he said he’d show her one day. According to Thor, both of them could live on this chariot for years at a time and still enjoy a comfortable life.

As she stretched her long legs out against the extended throne they’d made love on, Hanna didn’t doubt him.

“Then I think it’s time for me to get something for us to eat,” Thor said as he made a move to leave the warmth he’d settled around her.

“I’m famished. I just don’t want you to leave my side at the moment. You’re so warm.” She pushed his chest down with her arm and offered him a lazy but content smile.

He patted her hair down. “Whatever my wife wants, I shall oblige. But just know that *Tanngrisni* and *Tanngnost* are available to eat whenever you’re ready.”

“Who, or what, are they?”

“The goats that pull the chariot,” Thor answered.

She pushed back so she could look at his face. “The goats that... no, we can’t eat them. How will we get anywhere otherwise?”

He laughed and his belly rumbled beneath her. “Do not worry about that, my dear Hanna. The goats have served as my meal many times, but I can restore them to their original form easily enough.”

Hanna opened her mouth to reply but didn’t bother. There were so many things she still didn’t know or understand about the mythology of the Norse gods. For the first time, she wished she’d concentrated more on the mythology than the comics.

A sharp sound filled the dark sky around them and the chariot shuddered. Something had hit the side.

Thor rushed out of their comfortable embrace to peer over the side. When he turned back to her, his grim expression made her realize their temporary happy reunion was drawing to an end.

He bent over, picked up his pants and pushed one foot after the other into them. He slid them over his hips and settled the waistband beneath his large belt. Next he slipped both feet into his knee-high boots and pulled the shirt over his head. The mask didn’t move an inch, almost as if it was now permanently connected to his face.

“Hurry, Sif, you must get dressed too.” He looked around, picked up her dress and handed it to her.

“What’s happening?” She sat up as she grabbed the silky material from him. The thought of getting out of this comfortable bed to slip back into her evening gown didn’t seem like a comforting idea. She was going to freeze in the backless, spaghetti-strapped dress.

“We are approaching the frost *jotun*,” he said.

“The what?”

He looked thoughtful before replying. “The frost giants.”

“Is that why it’s so cold out here?”

Thor nodded and turned around. He headed toward the front of the chariot and called out to the goats in a language she couldn’t understand. To her he said, “Yes and no. The end has already started. The winter chill is the first sign of what’s to come. *Fimbulvetr* is upon us, and one winter will follow another, and another. Summer will be no more and the Midgard Serpent beneath the sea will awaken.”

The look in his eyes roused a shiver down her spine.

## Forever THOR'S

“That is *my* ultimate destiny. The one I am trying to postpone for as long as I can.” His voice was sad, the way his eyes watered even sadder.

Her heart ached inside her chest as she kept the animal fur wrapped tight around her. “This is where my destiny comes in too, isn’t it?”

Thor nodded.

“What just happened?”

“To the chariot?”

“Yes.”

“We were hit by a boulder. One of the giants has spotted us and will no doubt do anything it can to stop us from reaching the core of *Yggdrasil*.”

She hated not knowing all of these names, so Hanna let the animal fur drop and stepped into her dress instead. He was beside her instantly, his long arms stretched around her to raise the zipper.

He held her tight. “Do not worry yourself about all of these names and places, my love. You will not be faced with a battle, just a sacrifice.”

“A sacrifice?” Her heart dropped as fear raced inside her.

“Let’s not talk about it at the moment.” Thor kissed the top of her head.

Another boulder smacked against the chariot, and this time it almost sent it into a tailspin. Snow splashed inside the chariot.

“We must get past them before they realize you are on board.” He headed toward the front of the chariot again, yelling to the goats. “Please, go and sit on the throne until we have gotten past this. I want you to be safe.”

“Isn’t there anything I can do?”

“No.”

“But what about my destiny?”

He looked over his shoulder at her, face stern. “It will descend upon us sooner than you think. But until then, please make sure you are out of their reach at all times.”

Hanna nodded, stunned.

It took her a few moments and several deep breaths to get her legs to move toward the back of the chariot. She felt lightheaded again, anxiety ready to peak.

She wrapped her arms around herself and rubbed her cold skin in an attempt to warm up; debating whether to turn to grab the animal fur she’d discarded. She decided to keep moving and when she approached the throne, which had magically transformed back into just that, Hanna noticed what looked like a coat sitting on top. It wasn’t the type of thing she’d usually wear – back home she wouldn’t be caught wearing animal fur of any kind – but everything was different here. So surreal, and maybe an animal hadn’t even died in order for this to be made.

Her hands shook a little as she reached for it. The softness caressed her fingertips as Hanna lifted the fur and noticed it was more like a cape than a coat. There were no sleeves, but she tied a small drawstring around her neck to keep it wrapped tight against her almost bare skin.

If she’d known she’d be heading toward the arctic, or wherever the geographical version of this place was, she would’ve chosen a dressy pants suit.

Hanna almost lost her footing when something else smacked the chariot.

She glanced over her shoulder and saw Thor looking at her. A small smile curved his lips before he turned his attention back to the front of the chariot. They seemed to be racing much faster than before. Even their surroundings now seemed to zoom past them.

Hanna fell onto the throne and comforting warmth swept through her. She felt at ease, her breath steady again. No trace of anxiety remained. It felt as if nothing could hurt her now that she was sitting here.

With both hands hidden beneath the fur of her cape, and nothing else left to do, she tried to focus on what was going on around them.

The sky was so black she could feel the density press down on her shoulders. She shivered

## Yolanda Sfetsos

at the thought. Thunder rumbled around them without a flash of lightning before it. She thought that strange, but imagined things worked differently here.

Out of nowhere a large head appeared in the distance and her entire body shook with fear. The features were elongated and not quite human. The large hands that reached forward looked rough and dirty.

Thor lifted his right arm, his gloved hand shone as rain started around them. In his hand appeared a huge hammer that looked more like a block than anything else. He pulled his arm back and his muscles quivered with the movement, before he pushed it forward and threw the hammer.

Lightning struck.

The wind picked up around them. For a second Hanna thought she was going to fly off, but the safety of the throne kept her cocooned.

The giant's head cracked in two when the hammer smacked him in the face. He fell from the sky.

She looked over the side in time to watch the motionless body of the giant spiral downward without any resistance. She returned her gaze back to Thor in time to see him catch the hammer in his hand as it returned to him like a boomerang.

He turned and made his way toward her. His hair was wet, flattened out on either side of his face. It reminded her of the first time she'd seen him, as a teenager.

Her stomach twisted at the way his eyes sparkled when they met hers, and Hanna missed a breath. Everything about this man, this god, was intoxicating and she couldn't get enough of him. Deep inside her heart, in the deepest recesses of her soul, she knew she belonged by his side.

And no matter what the sacrifice was, she'd be willing to do it. Hanna would do anything to get the opportunity to return to a life she hadn't even known she'd been ripped away from.

"Are you hurt?" he yelled over the still raging wind.

"No." It was the truth, just as uncanny as the fact that not a single drop of water hit her.

"I will have to keep the strong winds going to deter any more attacks from the giants. Most of them are on their way to other places, ready to scorch the earth, or freeze it at will. Whatever destruction takes their fancy."

"Are we out of time?"

Thor shook his head and raindrops splashed around him. "No, but the wheels are turning as we race toward the World Tree. We still have enough time to stop this before the first vital step is taken."

Hanna wasn't sure what he meant by the World Tree, or even what the first vital step could be. She didn't understand why they were racing towards it either, especially when it involved her. How exactly did she fit into this scenario?

A single ray of sunshine broke through the dark clouds.

She turned her face to gaze at its beauty and felt her heart warm. An indescribable sensation washed through her as she gazed at the rainbow that formed amongst all the darkness. It was almost like a positive sign to confirm it would all work out in the end.

"Hanna," Thor called as his left hand reached for her face.

He didn't get a chance to touch her because suddenly, the large chariot shook like an earthquake struck beneath it. It started to roll onto its side.

Hanna reached for him and kept her other hand pinned to the throne, but it didn't make a difference. The chariot was upside down before she had a chance to do anything.

Her body slipped from it and she was airborne.

The chariot spun around again and she watched as Thor extended a large hand over the side. Almost throwing himself over in an attempt to catch her.

The attempt did nothing to grasp her back to his side.

Instead of struggling further, Hanna closed her eyes. She wrapped her hands around the fur

## *Forever* **THOR'S**

cape that had miraculously stayed around her, and relaxed.  
She threw caution to the wind and surrendered to the fall.  
*Maybe falling into this beautiful swirl of colors is my sacrifice.*

# Yolanda Sfetsos

## Chapter Five

The warmth of the sun pulled Hanna out of the all-consuming, yet comfortable darkness. Her head was fuzzy as she opened her eyes. That familiar throb at the base of her skull had returned. She wondered where all the color had gone, and how long she'd been unconscious.

She blinked a few times to focus her eyes on her new surroundings. The sun was high in the cloudless sky, yet the color was an unfamiliar gold. Almost as if the rays of the sun shone so close, this high up, that the sky itself was a different hue.

When the thought struck, everything that led her here flashed inside her brain.

His name slipped out between her lips. "Thor..."

Where was he? He was the God of Thunder, the same man who'd come to claim her amongst the mortals in the fairytale setting of a masked ball. His reddish-blond hair and beard were still images she could conjure up inside her mind. Just as clearly as the lovemaking they'd experienced on his magical chariot.

Hanna sighed, pressed her back to the earth below and stared above in hopes of finding him there. But he didn't hover above, inside his chariot. Not even the goats he had offered to serve as meals were there.

No, she was all alone.

She'd fallen away from him and they'd lost each other again.

"Nothing is lost yet," a female voice said to her left.

Hanna's heart sped up as she rushed to sit upright. The fur cape was still around her shoulders. She undid the cord and let it slip behind her. It was too warm here. The silky red dress would be enough, just as her bare feet would be safe enough to walk with. Somehow, during the fall she'd lost her stilettos.

She used both hands to push upright against the thick grass below her. Hanna looked around for the voice, ignoring the pain in her head.

All she found was a squirrel lost amongst the long, thick branches of the huge tree in front of her. She'd never seen anything like this back on earth. Yet, at the same time, there was something oddly recognizable about this tree. Hanna assumed she must've come into contact with it under her original guise of Sif.

The squirrel stared down at her from the tangled branches. She tilted her head back and noticed a large bird also sat in the tree, but it flew away when it spotted her. Four deer appeared around the large trunk of the tree. Each bit away at the leaves they could reach, without paying any attention to her.

"Is that you talking to me, squirrel?"

"No, it is me."

Hanna swiveled around quickly to find a tall woman just a few feet away. Her long honey-blond hair fell over one shoulder, in a long braid. She wore a simple white dress that covered her arms and reached all the way to her ankles. A strange aura of white emanated off her pale skin. She held a golden apple near her stomach, both hands clasped around it.

"Uh, hi, what am I doing here?"

A small smile spread along her pink lips. "This is the place where you will face your destiny, Hanna."

She sighed. "You called me Hanna, not Sif."

The woman nodded. "Yes, this isn't Sif's trial or destiny. Although you are both different incarnations of the same, this new vehicle you call Hanna is where the destiny of both of you lies."

"And Thor?" Her hand instantly rose to the small silver charm she'd purchased because it reminded her of Thor's hammer in the comic books.

"He will be waiting for you," she said with a smile.

Her heart settled down a little at the thought. If this woman could so easily assure her he'd

## Forever THOR'S

be waiting, then surely this trial wouldn't be so hard to face. She would do whatever it took to be with him again. She loved him in a way she'd never thought possible.

"Okay, what do I have to do?" It was pointless to ask where she was, or what these animals represented. Hanna just wanted to get this over and done with.

The still nameless woman smiled again. "Are you so eager to get back to your husband that you would risk rushing this?"

"I just want to make things right. If I can stop this end of the world thing, I want to do it right away," she answered truthfully. Sure, going back to Thor was motivation enough but after what she'd witnessed with the horrid giant, she was willing to do whatever her part involved.

"This is the World Tree, we know it as *Yggdrasil*." The woman swept one of her small hands toward it. "Very soon it will be consumed from the inside out." The squirrel was still there, watching silently, though it seemed to understand what they were discussing. The deer were oblivious to everything but the leaves. "I am Idun, custodian of the apples that maintain the eternal youthfulness of the gods."

Hanna didn't know what to say, so she just nodded.

"You have come to me because the fate of the world rests in one simple decision that needs to be made by *you*."

Her stomach fluttered as her nerves clenched. She wasn't good at making decisions. It was usually the reason why she stayed in a dead-end job for too long. Or why she continually said yes to friends who didn't deserve her friendship. Decisions were better ignored, or left for as long as possible.

She'd even wrestled with whether to attend the masked party or not, because she'd thought it wasn't addressed to her. Now this woman claimed a decision would either make or break this situation. Maybe she would've been better off going up against one of those giants.

"What decision is that?" Hanna took a deep breath of the sweet scent around them. The warmth wrapped her in a comfortable cocoon.

Idun took a step forward, her dress swayed around her ankles. "You must decide whether or not to take a bite out of this apple. Work out which will be the right, or wrong thing to do."

"What do you mean?"

She took another step forward. This time the apple extended out in front of her, an invitation to accept or deny the simple offer. "Your decision to take a bite, or not to take a bite, will either advance the already started *Ragnarok*, or bring it to an abrupt end. If it ends, everything will return to how it was. The world untouched for now."

"Are you kidding? Is this some kind of a joke?" Thoughts of another tree of life, and another woman who'd faced a similar decision circled around inside her mind. Eve's decision to take a bite from an apple plucked from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil had caused the downfall of the paradise she'd shared with Adam.

What would happen if Hanna decided to take a bite from *this* apple?

Idun shook her head, making her hair sway softly. "No, this is not a joke, Hanna. You either accept the apple and whatever the choice leads to. Or reject it, and accept that instead."

Her head buzzed, stomach ached not only from the nerves but the fact that the perfect, golden shiny apple stirred her hunger. She'd already ignored hunger for too long... how would an empty stomach affect her ability to think straight?

"Can I have a clue?"

"The only clue I can give you is that you need to decide right now. Time is on the verge of running out. If you take too long, your decision won't matter either way." Idun was a mask of seriousness. Her smooth face set in a frown that didn't make her look any less beautiful.

The severity of the situation made Hanna remember *her* mask. She lifted a hand to her face and wasn't surprised it was still attached.

"Are you sure that's all you can tell me?"

Idun nodded.

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Hanna took a deep breath and let it out very slowly. The sun suddenly felt too hot against her skin. Perspiration made the silky material of her dress cling to her skin.

Everything that had happened in her young life had happened so she could get here. The lightning, the Thor obsession, the meaningless hours she'd wasted away, and the decision to attend a party she hadn't even known was always intended for her. All her life had led to this one place, because of the woman she'd been in another lifetime. She could feel the strength of Sif buried somewhere deep inside.

Hanna closed her eyes and tried to connect to that strength. If this woman had once been married to Thor for so long, she'd had to have been strong-willed. The majestic god she had the pleasure of calling her husband wouldn't choose anything less.

Her eyes snapped open, and she knew she could do this.

She just had to trust her gut instinct, for the first time in her life. Hanna had experienced many gut instincts before, but turned her back on all of them.

Without another thought, she reached for the apple and wrapped her fingers around it.

Idun dropped both hands and took a step back. She nodded once and clasped her hands together in front of her.

Hanna looked at the golden orb with a shiny sparkle of red, inside her hand. It felt so smooth and warm. Her mouth watered. She knew what she had to do. The red dress, shoes, and mask – none of it could be a coincidence. It was all a sign.

She raised the apple to her mouth, lips pressed against the soft texture. The sweet whiff of it made her stomach rumble again. Hanna closed her eyes. She ignored the *original sin* sermon they'd all been taught in school and took a bite out of the apple.

She chewed it slowly. It was the sweetest thing she'd ever tasted, as it slid down her throat and into her stomach. The apple slid out of her hand and rolled on the grass before it was snapped up by the squirrel.

On hands and knees Hanna tried to understand what was going on. Her stomach felt full, as if one bite was all she'd needed to satisfy her hunger. But her head throbbed with pain so intense it felt as if her skull was going to crack in two.

She collapsed onto her back, eyes focused upward.

Idun's face looked down at her and she looked like an angel.

"What's going on?" Hanna whispered. "I don't understand."

"You made your decision and will now suffer the consequences," Idun answered with a soft smile.

*Suffer the consequences* echoed inside her mind. A comment like that didn't make it sound as if this had been the right choice at all.

Idun kneeled down beside her. She took one of her hands, reminding her of what her mother had done back when lightning struck her. She'd never left her side.

Tears slipped from her eyes.

"Don't be sad, Hanna. You have made the right choice." Idun patted her hand with hers, making her warmer. "Can't you feel it? Everything is now being reversed. *Ragnarok* is no longer in motion. *Yggdrasil* is not in danger of being devoured."

"Then why does everything hurt?" Even getting the words out made the aches and pains intensify.

Idun's light blue eyes clouded over. "Unfortunately, your selfless act, although it has saved everything else, will be your demise. I'm sorry, Hanna, but you are dying."

"No, Thor... I need Thor."

"She doesn't have to die," a male voice said. From out of nowhere, the face of a dark-haired man with blue eyes peered down at her. He wore a black suit that clung to his lithe body.

"Loki, how did you get in here?" Idun asked with a frown.

The deer disappeared behind the tree.

"You know I have my ways." His smile looked more like a sneer and his eyes darkened as

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he focused on Idun.

"This doesn't have anything to do with you," Idun continued, "get away from her. She's just made a selfless sacrifice. Let her go with dignity."

"Yes, she has. Don't you think a person such as her deserves the opportunity to be given a second chance?" Loki lifted an eyebrow in question. "We go back a long way, Idun. I saved you from that *jotun* –"

Her cheeks darkened to pink as she squeezed Hanna's hand. Idun sighed. "You saved me then because you were the reason I was taken! It's the same with Hanna. If you hadn't stolen Sif away from Thor, none of this would've ever depended on her. Your selfish tricks will be the world's demise one day."

"No matter what I do, or have done, *Ragnarok* is a danger we must all live with every single day of our lives. So don't lecture me, Idun. I know the way of our people as well as you do. As for my own nature, I can't be held accountable for my bad deeds, even if no one ever focuses on my good ones. I do a lot of good things too," Loki answered as he turned his attention to Hanna.

She tried to remember what Thor had told her about him but things were starting to get fuzzy.

"You only do good deeds because you try to fix up what you have ruined, Loki." Idun's grip tightened on Hanna's hand. "Now go, let her die in peace."

"No." Loki fell to his knees beside her. "She doesn't have to die. I can offer her salvation."

"No."

"Tell me, what's on offer?" Hanna said cutting Idun off. Blood gurgled inside her throat and she coughed. She could feel her insides disintegrate into liquid. Everything inside her was slowly dying. She didn't have long, and all she wanted was to see Thor again. To feel his touch and forever make love to him in the skies he ruled.

One of Loki's thin hands ran through her hair. "If you agree to give me your golden locks, I shall restore your life. So you can be with Thor once again."

"Why... would you do that?" Hanna met his eyes.

Loki shrugged his narrow shoulders. "That's just the type of god I am. So, what do you say to the offer?"

"Loki, you know her golden hair is what Thor loves the most! The symbolism—"

"Don't you believe he truly loves the woman beneath the hair, Idun? Or do you believe Thor to be so shallow?"

The custodian sighed. "The decision is yours, Hanna."

Thor wouldn't care if her hair was short, would he? How could that be their relationship breaker? Hanna just couldn't believe the man she'd spent all that time with on his chariot could be so vain. He would love her no matter what. Besides, even though she loved having her hair long and had always kept it that length, Hanna wouldn't be stubborn and deny herself the chance of life because of it.

It would eventually grow back.

"Okay," Hanna whispered.

"You are willing to give me the hair in exchange for your life?" Loki's eyes widened.

She nodded as a line of blood slid between her lips.

"Then you shall live again."

The last thing she felt was Loki's hand on her forehead. His palm was unnaturally cold as it moved to her scalp. The sharp pull of her hair as it was ripped away from her head, forced Hanna into darkness. She passed out from the shock and pain, but dreamt of her new life with Thor.

The sacrifice seemed a small price to pay.

Chapter Six

“Thor,” Hanna whispered his name softly.

He paused, his shoulders lifted as he turned around to face her. The beam of a smile that spread across his lips was like an eternal sunshine. It made her heart overflow with love again. She knew they were destined to be together. Although she’d first sacrificed her life and then her hair for it, she knew it had been the right decision.

The only decision.

One thing she hadn’t known was that her hair – Sif’s hair – held a magical power Loki had been after for many years. The goddess of eternal youth, Idun, even suspected he’d set the whole thing up years ago so that he could eventually claim his prize. It looked as if Loki was a calculating trickster willing to compromise everyone and everything, in order to get what he wanted.

Still, she didn’t want to dwell on it at the moment. Hanna just wanted to let Thor know she was still alive.

“Is this real?” he asked looking her up and down as if she was a ghost.

She sighed. “Yes, I’m alive.”

“But you had to sacrifice your life to end *Ragnarok*.”

She closed the distance between them and placed a finger against his full lips to make him stop. She didn’t want to dwell on the fact that he might have known her life was on the line all along. Hanna loved him too much to doubt him, and decided it was best not to have this one question answered.

Thor’s smile widened as his blue eyes cleared.

“I had to make a deal with Loki to keep my life.”

His smile disappeared.

“Aren’t you happy I’m alive?”

“Of course I am, but Loki’s not to be trusted. He’s a trickster and only cares about himself,” Thor answered. He reached out for her and lifted her high into his arms. He spun her around several times.

When he lowered her to her feet, the thin hood she’d placed over her hair slid from her head.

His eyes widened as much as his mouth.

“Thor, I gave him my hair in order to live.”

He turned away, headed back toward the front of the chariot. His broad shoulders drooped as he leaned over the side, staring out at the endless sky all around them.

“Was he right when he said you only loved me for my hair? Please tell me he was wrong.” Hanna felt the sob rise inside her throat. After everything they’d been through together, what she’d endured to return to him intact, this couldn’t be the result. “Thor!”

He spun around and ran both his hands through his hair to push it away from his face. “Of course that’s not the reason why I love you, Hanna. I’ve loved you for years, and not just because of your beautiful hair.”

Thor closed the distance between them. His right hand touched the back of her head, fingers teasing the short strands so close to her scalp. It wasn’t the most attractive haircut in the world, but she’d had long hair all her life and knew it wouldn’t take long to grow back.

She said, “It’s all right. It’ll grow back soon enough.”

He shook his head. “No, Hanna, it’ll stay this way forever... but after the sacrifice you made for the cosmos and to return to me, I can only be happy to have you beside me again. It’s been too long, Sif.”

“Oh, Thor.” Her anger towards Loki left a tight ball of rage inside her stomach, but nothing would ruin this reunion with her husband.

“Hanna... Sif, I have waited so long to have you back.”

## *Forever* THOR'S

Images of their many naked embraces swept through her mind when his fingertips touched her temples. She shuddered at the thought. Moisture stirred between her legs, with every new vision until a dull throb pulsed, begging to be satisfied.

Hanna looked up into his face and noticed for the first time that his mask was gone. She touched his bristly face. "It's gone."

"Yes, it is. Yours can go too."

"Really?" She reached up instantly.

"No, let me." Thor undid the cord attached to the back of her head and pulled the silk mask off her face.

She felt released from a bondage she hadn't even been aware had descended on her. Hanna took a deep breath and enjoyed the soft wind on her face.

He dropped his hand over the side of the chariot and let the mask fly away.

"Now, you and I have something important to do."

"Yes, we do," she said heading for his lips.

He shook his head. "No, we need to dance. I promised you we'd dance, and I always keep my promises."

"Let's hope you do, because there are a few *other* things I would love you to promise me right now." A chuckle escaped her. "Or, more precisely, things I'd like you to do to me."

"Do they involve us being naked?"

Hanna winked at him. A surge of confidence she'd never possessed urged her on. "They sure do. They also involve us going away on this lovely chariot for a long time. I want to relearn every contour of this very impressive body of yours." She ran a fingertip over his bulging bicep and it flexed beneath her touch. His erection pressed between them when they both moved to music that wasn't there.

"Your wish is my command!" Thor spun her around, his hands pressed tight against her spine as he lifted her dress.

Hanna's anticipation mounted and when Thor slid inside her, she moaned and stared at the lightning up ahead. She would always be *forever Thor's*, and knew that he would protect her from all storms.

## Yolanda Sfetsos



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