

Hercules lay spread eagle on the bed, bound at the wrists and ankles. Blind folded, he played his role: "Master! Please! I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I'm sorry!" Despite his agonized voice and expression, inside Hercules was buzzing with excitement, eager for Omphale to drip the hot wax onto his skin. Since becoming a woman, pleasure and pain were deeply intertwined, and he wasn't sure if he could even get off without being abused and humiliated.

The hot wax did not come, however. Instead, he heard Omphale sigh. She pulled his blindfold off. "I'm bored," she said.



The words stung and filled Hercules with fear. 'My queen," he said, eyes wide. "I am so sorry that I did not please you! Give me another opportunity and—"

"You did nothing wrong," Omphale said. She was dressed as a man, even down to a fake beard. Hercules thought she looked so handsome. When she put on male attire, her brooding masculinity emerged, and she drove him mad with lust. He was beginning to believe that the clothes people wore not only changed the way others saw them, but the way they saw themselves.

Omphale went to the window and gazed off into the distance. "These games of ours have lost their – vigor. The wine, so to speak, has turned to vinegar. I think—" she turned, and it was more like she was talking to herself than to him, but Hercules smiled and nodded. "I think it is because you no longer seem Hercules. I no longer feel the thrill of forcing a man to play the woman. She is a woman now, this little one. There is no more of the man in her, none of the manly arrogance and vanity. Therefore, what pleasure is there for me in making a girl do what she would choose to do? None."

Omphale abruptly walked out of the room. Hercules was still tied to the bed. He almost called to her, since she'd seemingly forgotten all about him, but he thought not. It wasn't his place. His queen had left him here, and so here he would remain. He bit his lip, consumed with anxiety. He lived to please Omphale. What purpose did he serve if he could not please his master?

He couldn't deny her words. Had he not worked tirelessly to earn the title of woman? Had he not learned to walk and talk, to dance and act like a woman at all times? Had not becoming a woman become his only goal in life? The defiant man he'd been when he'd first arrived here seemed like the memory of another than his own life. Far from defying Omphale, he thought always of how he could please her, as well as Selene. He spent almost all of his time in the company of women, and he delighted in their talk, their gossip and their dramas. Men were so boring! Well, boring as conversational partners, at least. They talked but never listened.

When it came to sex, men were, to put it in a word, fun. He would never forget the sweet, feminine bliss he'd experienced the first time a man

plunged his spear into the soft flesh between Hercules' legs. It had been heaven—pleasure and pain—the exact combination he'd come to crave and need and even worship.

How much had he changed? Where he once counted the days, eager for the day he would be free, Hercules could not even remember how much longer his sentence would run because he no longer considered it a punishment. When the end did come, he intended to beg Queen Omphale to let him remain a woman. He dreaded the thought of leaving this soft and beautiful body, losing his high, pretty voice, being once more one of those grunting, farting, selfish men.

The life of a man was no life for him. No. He was so much happier as a serving girl or had been until this new cloud had crossed his sun. He had never even considered that Omphale might lose interest in him.

What should he do? His mind was such a cluttered chest of nonsense. He found it so hard to make decisions anymore. He decided he would talk to Selene about it. She would tell him what to do. The thought calmed him a little. He closed his eyes and breathed, feeling the weight of his breasts rising and falling with each breath.

Two

After dinner, and the women had been all so obsessed with the news of the affair between Lord Jorell and his wife's sister it was all they talked about. Hercules eagerly joined in. He'd come to love gossiping with the girls. When things wound down and most of the other girls were heading back to their rooms, Hercules asked Selene if he could have a moment. He made his voice small, made himself small, making it clear he recognized her as his superior.

"Of course," Selene said with a smile. "Is this a matter that requires privacy?"

"Yes, if it is not too much to ask?"

"Of course not, little one," Selene said, taking his hand. "Come."

Hercules followed Selene out to a private spot outside the palace. "So, what is it?"

Hercules explained that Omphale had grown bored with him. "I'm simply vexed," he said as he finished. "Tell me what to do."

"Oh, poor Hera," Selene said, patting him on the cheek. "There's not much you can do. Omphale grows bored with everyone in time."

The words slashed at Hercules. "Nothing? But, I live only for her. Pleasing her is my only purpose."

Selene marveled as she listened to Hercules, seeing the fear and hurt in his big, pretty eyes, that this girl had even been a man, let alone a man like Hercules. Poor girl, she thought. "You must please her now by being what she chooses to make of you: a discarded toy that no longer holds interest. This is your fate, little girl, and if you truly do seek to please your master, you must please her even when it means no longer shining in her eyes, but merely being just another girl in her service."

Tears rolled down Hercules' cheeks as the truth of Selene's words sank in. Yes. Omphale had chosen, and he was being selfish if he did not accept his fate as ordained by his queen. "Thank you," Hercules sighed, taking Selene's hands. "I will be a forgotten thing."

Selene brushed his hair from his eyes. "Oh, come now," she said, taking pity on this forlorn female. "It won't be so bad. In only a few weeks, your sentence ends, and you will once more be a man, leaving all of this behind you."

Hercules looked at her, his vision blurred. He could taste the salt of his own tears. "I don't want to be a man."

His vulnerability, his emotionality, it was too much. Selene kissed him, and kissed him again, pushing him against the wall. She slipped her arm around his neck and untied his dress with one hand, the dress falling at Hercules' feet. His tearful eyes were hot with desire now, and he posed for her, letting her enjoy the sight of his soft little body while he dropped his eyes to the ground. A memory flash: when he'd first come to Omphale's court, he'd seen Selene and thought he would lay with her one day,

imagining himself pursuing her, claiming her, dominating her. How differently things had turned out.



Selene let her eyes rove over the former man's radiant flesh. She smiled and met his eyes. 'You are a goddess," she whispered.

The compliment sent chills through Hercules' body, and he squeezed his knees together, trying to hold back his desire. "How may I please you?" He whispered, voiced hoarse with need.

"I can think of a few things," Selene said, than she slapped Hercules across the face.

Hercules smiled. Stinging from the rejection he'd experienced from Omphale, he wanted to be wanted, needed, ravished. He needed someone to remind him he was a beautiful, desirable woman.

Selene was happy to oblige. She pushed him against the wall, and the fun began.



Part 2

After, Hercules returned to his quarters and prepared for bed. It was a warm night, humid, so he stripped off his clothes, intending to sleep nude. Then, he cleaned off his makeup and removed his jewelry, placing each item carefully in a padded box. Everything belonged to Omphale, and so he treated his objects with the utmost respect.

Finally, he stretched out on the divan, brushing out his silky hair, reflecting on his day. It had been fun with Selene, who had a kind of blazing intensity that almost scared him, but he was thinking back now not to their kisses and sighs, but something she'd said before they'd made love: "In only a few weeks, your sentence ends." Had a year passed so quickly? It seemed only yesterday he was a man, laughing at the whole thing, not having any idea how much he and his life were about to change.

He thought back now to that man, the one he remembered being. He was a boy, really, a big, lumpish boy, going from one place to the next, constantly getting in and out of trouble. He'd had no idea what it was like to be a part of anything, but had been like a silo, wandering in the world alone. Now, he was a part of the palace life, so connected to so many people.

The world couldn't see it, but in many ways, it was a better life. A fuller life. Or, it had been. The next few days, Hercules ached with loss, though he hid his sorrow from the world, as he was expected to do. Whenever he was with the other women, he was all smiles, and he performed his daily chorus with a bright, joyful zeal. Yet, occasionally he caught glimpses of Omphale walking here and there, or sitting in her garden, and each time he felt a cold, empty ache, and a deep sense of shame that he had, he felt, somehow failed her. Selene had told him that in time these feelings would pass, that he was just being a woman now, but he didn't know. Nothing had ever hurt like love.

Much like Omphale, Hera had gotten distracted and lost interest in Hercules for a time. There was always so much happening on Mount Olympus, and the politics and drama were endless, especially with her infernal stepchildren, Artemis and Apollo. They were such brats.

It was with some sense of surprise and alarm when she decided to look in on Hercules for her to realize his sentence was nearly at an end. Yes, it was sweet to see what had become of him, the soft, wilting little thing, pining for love and longing to remain a serving girl, but she had planned a much more cruel fate for him, a fate not only he deserved, but one that would put Zeus in his place. Hera planned, as we have learned earlier in the story, for Hercules to be with child, to become a mother. It would be the ultimate defeat for both him and his father, who'd been cheating more than ever, showing no concern at all for Hera. Well, he would know shame when his own son had a baby suckling at his teat.

Hera chuckled as she thought about her plan. Hercules would never know the role she played in his demise, and, what's more, she intended to become good friends with him and help him along his journey into motherhood. How sweet it would be to befriend her stepson now—or, rather, stepdaughter. More, she'd even thought of the perfect man to plant his seed in Hercules. "I am such a cruel bitch," she thought with a smile.

There would be no skulking about this time. Omphale was holding court, sitting on her throne hearing petitions from her subjects, when a ray of golden light poured down into the center of the room. Then, a mighty thunderclap shook the room, shaking dust down from the ceiling, and a host of daemons emerged from clouds of roiling smoke, singing the praises of Hera, who now appeared in a blinding flash of light, regal, powerful, radiant.

Hercules, who knelt along the periphery with Selene, lest Omphale need a drink or to be fanned, dropped his eyes. As much as he'd come to accept himself as a woman, he still felt ashamed at the idea his stepmother would see him like this. Some part of him hoped against reason he would be able to somehow just live his life in obscurity, unnoticed by the Gods. Well, he would just cower here and hope to go unnoticed. Surely, Hera wasn't here for him. He was just a serving girl.

"I am here to speak with Hercules!" Hera shouted, her voice echoing about the room. "Where is my son?"

Hercules started to scoot away, to run and hide, but Selene grabbed his wrist. "No."

"Goddess," Omphale said, kneeling. "I am honored and—"

"Yes, yes. I know. I asked to see my son."

"Hercules!" Omphale called. "Come."

Hera watched as Selene took Hercules by the hand and led the bashful little thing forward. His eyes were downcast, and he was blushing. So sweet. She really had made a beautiful girl of him, she noted, taking in his radiant skin, his hourglass figure. "I asked for my son," Hera said. "Why do you bring me this lovely young woman?"

"Great Hera, most exalted among all the goddesses, I was forced by circumstance and on the advice of a random witch who dropped by the palace, to, um, well, how shall I say this?" Omphale cursed. If Hera took offense, her wrath would be unthinkable. She decided to just get it out. "I gave your son a potion that turned him into a woman. She—that girl—is your son."

Hera feigned shock and looked at Hercules. "Girl," she said. "Is this true? Are you Mighty Hercules?"

"I was—I am," Hercules answered, his soft, pretty voice barely above a whisper. His training took over, and he knelt at Hera's feet.

Hera's face darkened with anger. "How dare you disgrace my son and my family like this," she said.

Hercules put a hand to his heart. He'd thought Hera might laugh at him, but she was defending him. She seemed so strong and protective. Maybe he'd been wrong about her?

"Goddess, forgive me I—" Omphale started to say, terrified of what Hera might do to her.

"I will deal with you later," Hera said. "Right now, I have a task for my—daughter. Come," she said, holding out her hand.

"Yes, um, mother," Hercules answered, placing his soft little hand in that of Hera.

"You make a lovely girl," she said.

Hercules blushed. "Thank you, mother."

