

Island of the Warrior Women (Man to Heroine TG)

By FoxFaceStories

A Commission for Leonthar

Malcolm Caras is a kind but twiggy nerd who accidentally discovers that his college girl study mate Lydia is secretly the superheroine Amazonia. He is astonished by this, but even more so when she offers to let him come to the island of warrior women she hails from, in order that she may become truly worthy of her armour. Malcolm is eager, but soon discovers upon arriving that he must become a woman also, and learn to train. Awkward at first, Malcolm may soon come to enjoy her new form, especially as she unlocks her new powers.

Island of the Warrior Women

Part One: Lydia

It was an ordinary study day when Malcolm discovered that Lydia was a superhero. He'd been friends with the kind college girl for a year now, as the two had bonded over their shared love of Greek mythology which they were both studying, as well as the humanities subjects in general. Malcolm was a bit of a twiggy nerd of a man; he had bright carrot-red hair that puffed up in all the wrong ways, and a smattering of freckles that were far too much for his tall face. Despite the twiggy, he wasn't exactly tall. Twiggy but not lanky, to put it precisely, so his prospects for finding a relationship on campus weren't exactly great for the twenty year old. He'd managed a few dates, but was rarely lucky. In truth, dealing with women was an area of nervousness for him, and he had little time to get out of his comfort zone due to his devotion to his studies.

As such, it was a good thing that one day Lydia Doukas had sat down next to him one day in the lecture theatre, seemingly on a whim. She was a plain-looking Mediterranean girl with olive skin and curly dark hair, though a bit taller than Malcolm was. She smiled at him, set down to taking notes, and he sat there in fierce anxiety, wondering who she was and what she wanted with him. Of course, there was nothing nefarious at all, as she'd explained when they left the lecture theatre together.

"You just seemed so intense, like you're the only one that truly cares about Ancient Greece and its mythology, apart from me, of course. But I'm from there, so I get a pass. I figure why not sit next to the one person who could be a good study partner, right?"

Malcolm had been shocked. He'd never had a proper study partner before, and certainly not one of the opposite sex. He quickly agreed, and perhaps his over-eagerness

was a bit obvious, because in the next few coming days when they began their study sessions Lydia made it known with a few convenient anecdotes and asides that she was most certainly into women. The poor nerd was briefly disappointed, but the truth was he'd never felt like women and men could not be friends, despite his own lack of experience in that area. And Lydia's passion, her enthusiasm for learning, for diving right into the deep stuff and working hard for it, inspired him as well. She was fascinating in other ways too; athletic despite her ordinary frame, and accomplished in martial arts, as he found out when she easily took down a bully who was harassing a female student for her number against her will. She was also deeply passionate about involving herself in the community, inviting Malcolm to take part in soup kitchen volunteering with her, anti-poverty fundraising, and so on. It was enough to make Malcolm enthusiastic about such things as well, broadening his horizons beyond his love of learning for its own sake, and his own spare time book reading.

The only thing was, of course, how busy she was. Over the course of that first year of knowing her, Malcolm repeatedly found himself stood up, waiting outside a cinema by himself with two tickets in his hand, or alone at a coffee shop with two mugs at the table, or simply waiting in isolation in the booked study room of the college campus library, feeling like a fool. Always Lydia would profusely apologise upon arrival severely late, or even the next day. Her excuses were many, but over time they added up to paint a picture that in Malcolm's mind didn't always add up. Sometimes it was legitimate of course: when the city's local superheroine Amazonia was battling some nasty villain or wild beast like Oros or Darkhold, there was often damage and mayhem. More than once Lydia had been caught in the fray, even injured, though thankfully she usually healed well. It disturbed Malcolm how often she ended up in the path of that beautiful Greek goddess of a hero; Amazonia was a statuesque titan of a woman in bronze and dark green armour. Her battle skirt revealed her muscular thighs, while her armoured bust left room to reveal part of her, well, *bust*, her shoulders bare. She went into battle with a magical spear that would always return to her hand, and her physical prowess was far beyond that of any human. She was amazing, and Malcolm himself was a huge fan of her, this being one of his other hobbies.

But still, it worried him that Lydia was often in the path of the woman's battles against evil, and moreover that she seemed so dismissive of her.

"She's good, but not *that* good," she said one day after apologising for being late due to another downtown rumble. "If she'd really tried, she could have had that Darkhold in containment with fewer moves and less destruction. It's like she just can't control her powers fully!"

"Ah, give her a break," Malcolm said, noticing the bruises on his friend's shoulder. "She's doing her best. She's a damn hero! I wish I had powers like that."

She chuckled. "You'd use them better than her, Malcolm. I fear she takes shortcuts. Maybe she should go back to training and figure out that magic armour of hers. I swear it malfunctions more than it works."

"Well, she *could* work on her left hook a bit, I suppose."

Lydia's eyes went wide. "What do you mean?"

Malcolm shrugged. "I like to watch the footage of her fighting, I guess. You know I'm a superhero nerd. I've just noticed she telegraphs with her left arm."

"Curious," she said, saying nothing more. She sat on that for a moment before speaking. "Anything else you notice?"

"Well, I don't know how the magic works, but she doesn't always use the spear in the best environment. It's clearly her favoured weapon and her most powerful, but I think her enemies know that, especially the Tigress. They keep luring her into tighter situations with less ability to move, which limits her options. She needs to work on her swordplay, I suppose. Also, I think she forgets she can always fling her tiara."

"Huh?"

"She used to do it more often. Maybe she's gotten rusty. But when she had to disarm Darkhold the other day it would have been a real unexpected move and got the hostage out of his summoned shadow tendrils."

"Wow. Holy shit, you're right. Thanks Malcolm. You're brilliant."

Malcolm had no real response to that; why was he being thanked? It was, in some ways, the first clue that his brain would remember even if his conscious mind didn't, because in the following weeks he noticed an incredible uptick in Amazonia's performance. She battle Titan in Main Street, managing to not telegraph her left hook, and when she became wedged into a tight space she actually brought out her sword, using her own flung tiara as a distraction as she broke off segments of his armour with it. It was incredible to see.

"Do you know her? Amazonia?" he asked her later on.

Lydia bit her lip. She wasn't the best liar, which was why her excuses were so frantic and vague. This one, he could see through.

"You *do* know her," he exclaimed. "It all makes sense now! You're her confidante!"

"Okay, okay, I admit it! I know her."

"Do you know her secret identity?"

She chuckled. "Yes. And no, I'm not telling you. Let's just say it's safe with me."

Malcolm was amazed. It turned out she knew Amazonia, and occasionally helped out with her equipment, or something. It was all very vague, but apparently the superheroine herself was greatly pleased by how much Malcolm's own advice had aided him, because one night as he was walking back to his apartment she was suddenly there before him. He

was in a foul mood, having been stood up by Lydia again. He knew now that it was for a good reason, but it still hurt.

But now, suddenly, there was Amazonia. She was easily six feet in height, perhaps a little more. Her hair was longer than Lydia's, trailing down her back, albeit pulled into a combat ponytail. Her features were beautiful, her lips full and her eyes dark. She was strong, her muscles noticeable but still keeping to a feminine frame. And despite her armour - or perhaps because of its design - he couldn't help but notice that she had a rather lovely pair of breasts. Her thighs were revealed in the gap between her green battle skirt and her combat sandals, the latter of which had wrappings that went up her calves with forward grieves.

"A-Amazonia," he said, looking up at her from his short 5'5 statue.

She chuckled. "That's me, alright. And you must be Malcolm? Malcolm Caras?"

"Uh . . . yeah. That's me."

"Hmm, good last name. Very Greek, did you know?"

"Y-yeah. Never thought much of it."

"Perhaps you should," she said, voice booming a little, or perhaps it was just his imagination. She stepped closer, her skirt swishing a little, the strength in her arms clear. She kneeled down before him, and it took a great strength not to admire her body. "I just wanted to thank you for your advice. Lydia says you're quite the genius, and I agree. You've helped me more than you know."

"Wow," he said, scratching the back of his head. "I didn't realise - thanks! I'm a huge fan of yours."

"Well, count me a fan of yours too, Malcolm. Perhaps I'll see you again, but in the meantime, don't be too annoyed with Lydia. She's trying her best."

"Of course."

"All the best, Malcolm. I'll see you back in study."

She took off, leaping out of sight. Not long after, Lydia appeared from behind.

"Who was that?" she asked. "You were talking to someone?"

But Malcolm could barely respond to her. Amazonia had said 'I'll see you back in study.' A slip of the tongue, but one that led to an earth-shattering epiphany. It was the exact thing that Lydia always said, usually when they said goodbye to one another. The cadence had been the same and everything. And it was followed by another revelation: despite apparently being a helper to Amazonia, Malcolm had *never seen evidence of them in the same place, at the same time.*

"It was no one," Malcolm said, seeing his Greek friend in a new light. She had the same accent too, even if her voice was lighter.

"Are you sure? I would have thought you were excited, judging from your tone."

“Nah, it was just someone who I don’t really know,” he said.

The strange disappointment in her face was only further evidence. It all led to that fateful study day later that week. As way of apology for being so busy, Lydia had invited him to her apartment so they could study there, and she could serve him up some classic Greek food. It was indeed delicious, but there was that gap between them once again.

“I don’t see you as much lately,” he finally said, pulling his head up from his textbook.

“We don’t have to talk about this right now,” Lydia said, keeping her head down. “You know I’m busy with Amazonia.”

“I know . . . b-but I think I’d like to talk about it. We’re still friends right, Lydia?”

She gave him a shocked look. “Mal, we’re *best* friends. I meant it. It’s just life is so busy and chaotic lately-”

“But you’d tell me if you were keeping secrets, right?”

She paused. “I mean, some secrets I can keep. That’s what secrets are.”

Malcolm nodded. “Yeah, that’s fair enough.”

He decided she was right. The idea that ordinary Lydia was Amazonia was insane anyway, all based on one stupid comment by the heroine. She probably knew that was what Lydia always said, and was just making a fun reference to it. Yes, that made sense. Far more than her secretly being the heroine herself. They continued to study, and after a time, Malcolm decided it was time to leave. He thanked his friend for setting time aside for him, then headed out. The news was blaring on the TV as he left the apartment about some major disturbance in town; some kind of major accident with a truck hanging over the highway. A job for Amazonia, no doubt.

He was only a block away when he realised he’d left his textbook. Malcolm cursed himself and turned around. He entered without knocking, knowing he was only there to quickly grab what he’d dropped.

“Hey Lydia, sorry about barging in but I forgot my-”

He paused at the sight before him. Lydia was standing in the room in warrior’s sandals, braces upon her forearms, a tiara upon her head, in the act of affixing a bronze and green armour to her body. She looked at him with panic.

“It isn’t what it looks like!” she exclaimed.

But then there was a flash of light, and her body rapidly transformed right before him. She grew in height. She grew in curves. Her plain face became strong and beautiful, her figure defined and muscular. She radiated power and grace and brilliance.

She was Amazonia.

“Um, it’s really not what it looks like?” she said, half questioning.

“Oh my God, I was right. You really *are* Amazonia?”

“Don’t tell anyone, please!” she cried, her normally commanding voice sounding quite desperate, almost girlish.

“I would never!” he replied. “I - I can barely believe this! Holy shit! You’re a superheroine, Lydia.”

“I was going to tell you one day, I swear. I just . . . please don’t be angry.”

“Angry? Angry!? Are you kidding me, this is incredible! And it makes total sense; all the injuries, your story about being her friend not adding up, the advice I gave you going straight into effect for her.”

“I know, I know! I suck at lying. I’m - wait, you’re not angry? Thank you Malcolm! I really - by Hera, the truck! Sorry, I’ve got to go. People need me! We’ll discuss this when I get back, okay? Can you stay here?”

Malcolm could easily. He watching his friend bound from the house, and remained sitting in the living room, watching the television, taking in her exploits.

“Holy shit,” he said again to himself. “I’m best friends with a superhero. *The* superhero.”

And he could be the one to help her, he realised.

In the months that followed, that’s exactly what Malcolm did. He was friends with Lydia, but also the ‘guy behind the computer’ for Amazonia when she transformed. He learned a great deal from her as she opened up to him, explaining the source of her powers and her origins in general, and it allowed him to understand the full weight of the challenge she was facing. Lydia hailed from a magically hidden island named Hyrene, nestled in the Mediterranean and obscured from all mortal view. It was, if she was to be believed (which Malcolm did), an island populated entirely by women, all of them trained warriors with peak physical strength and magical abilities. Said magical abilities were partly innate to the island, but the true magnification and ascension of their powers (super strength, reflexes, occasionally even things like flight or talking to animals or breathing underwater, it depended on the person) was a result of their armour.

Each warrioress of Hyrene had their armour tailor-made for them. They wore armour of many colours, but most featured the classic battle-skirt and light-cuirass look, light armour that left their shoulders or one shoulder bare to and their arms free. Most wore bracers for archery, defence, and even for protective spells and talismans, but otherwise their arms and legs would be free to maximise their movement and lightness, key weapons in their training arsenal.

“It’s just so amazing to even imagine!” Malcolm declared.

“It’s more amazing than even that,” she replied, taking her suit off after another adventure and reverting back to her more normal self. “Trust me, Hyrene is the most beautiful land there is. Everything is vibrant there.”

“Then why did you leave? You said you’ve only been here a few years.”

She shrugged. “I wanted to see more of the world. I wanted to help. A few of my sisters do so. Many of them are known as heroines to the outside world, others serve in secret.”

“Do you plan to go back?”

Lydia sighed, placing her mythical armour aside. She sat down on her bed, as they were back in her apartment, and sighed heavily. “I’ll have to. Soon, actually. I should have gone back months ago. I’m not in tune with my armour. We are meant to bond with it, so that our true forms - like Amazonia - becomes the form we carry for life. Instead, I become this meek little girl again, lacking in confidence until I put the armour on. I don’t even have all my abilities. The great mothers warned that I was leaving too early. I haven’t completed my training.”

Malcolm paused, realising the significance of her words. “You’ll be gone quite a while, won’t you?”

She nodded sadly. “I’m sorry. It’s another thing I should have told you earlier. I need to unlock the powers of my armour and fully change.”

“I could come with you!” he declared, suddenly excited. “I’d love to see Hyrene.”

She chuckled. “You’re pronouncing it wrong. It’s High-reen. Not hire-een.”

“Well, regardless, I’d love to see it.”

But Lydia just shook her hair, letting her dark curls settle over her shoulders. “You can’t. I’m sorry. The island doesn’t allow any man, and only someone with Greek ancestry can . . . wait. You have Greek ancestry, right?”

Malcolm raised an eyebrow, not sure where this was going. “Yeah, I do. I mean, I don’t have your accent and I’m pale as hell and I can’t say I’m connected to the culture other than my studies, but-”

“But you are descended, and you can prove it, and you’re studying mythology. It might be enough to warrant a visit. It might be . . . and if not, there’s the other thing.”

“What other thing?”

But Lydia just waved her hand. “No point talking about that, I don’t think it’ll come up. It’s a long-forgotten tradition. There’s a way of . . . changing someone to suit the island.”

“Like a visa?”

Lydia laughed. “Something like that. I mean, it would be risky. Not ‘death’ risky, but you could be deported straight back, and never allowed to return. But if you’re willing-”

Malcolm stood suddenly, practically leaping to his feet. "I am," he declared. "Please, I want to see it. Besides, we're partners, right?"

"More than that, we're friends."

He hugged her, and she hugged him back. Malcolm could barely contain his excitement, but a small part of him - one that had been growing larger in recent days - couldn't help but feel the pain of that designation; 'friend.' It wasn't Lydia's fault. She liked women, which made even more sense given her background. But he had never felt such a connection with someone, and combined with his fascination with Amazonia and her gorgeous form, a part of him was being beaten down by the pain of unrequited longing.

He locked it away in a mental compartment, and tried to focus on his excitement.

He was going to the island of warrior women.

Part Two: The Old Tradition

Hyrene was indeed incredible, even from a distance. Malcolm marvelled at the beauty of the sight. Emerging from the storm of the grey seas, the ocean suddenly turned a gorgeous aqua blue, the immense verdant paradise suddenly appearing from thin air in the distance as if it had always been there.

"Oh my God," Malcolm said, staring at the fertile lands and stretching mountains, at the several cities and harbours that dotted it, all in a mix of modern and ancient styling. "I've never seen anything else like it."

"There *isn't* anything else like it," Lydia declared proudly. "No hurry up and help me with the sail, seawoman!"

"Seaman," he corrected, helping her with the sail of the Hyrenese vessel.

She laughed as the waters calmed, and they began to enter the bay of the city she identified as Tripios. "Not here, my friend! Here, we are all women. Men included, of which you will be the first in a long, long while."

It had been a matter of curiosity for Malcolm, how the women repopulated on the island. Lydia had been coy on the subject, alluding that some left to fall pregnant before returning, and that the island itself would ensure the child would be born female. But there was still the other 'old tradition' that she said was secret, and did not share with outsiders. He wondered how many secret traditions they had, but was simply grateful to be along. Lydia had her armour with her but had not donned it; it was customary to return to the island as one's 'true' self, and so they journeyed together, two plain-looking figures arriving in the gorgeous ancient Greek-looking bay. It made Malcolm wonder if Argos had looked like this,

though more modern technology (albeit with a sort of steampunk, magitech bent) was clearly present. Women waited along the shores, welcoming Lydia back. Most of them were very tall, and all were fit, with some being very well-muscled. Several wore guards' uniforms, which were lighter than Lydia's Amazonia outfit. They retained short battle-skirts, but theirs were more copper and tan-coloured, with proper gauntlets and light helms from which their proud hair was neatly styled to flow from. Several had impressive warrior braids, others bore stylish, weaving tattoos along their upper arms.

"Magnificent," Malcolm breathed, looking at them. Each was beautiful in their own way, and surprisingly diverse. Most had a Greek-Mediterranean look to them, olive-skinned and with curled, dark hair, but others had clear African heritage, others were paler and with blonder hair, and so on. But one thing they had in common was becoming manifestly clear as Lydia took his hand and pulled him up onto the dock: no one here was happy to see him.

"Lydia Doukas, it is a joy to see you," one woman said, a powerful figure with flame-red hair and mid-tone olive skin. She had impressive muscles, and her warrior's outfit had a section to show off her muscled midriff. "A joy to see you, and a horror to see you have broken one of our most sacred laws."

Lydia paused, suddenly looking most nervous. Clearly, the confidence of Amazonia was not with her when she was her mostly de-powered self. "Calliope, I swear I break no law. This man's name is Malcolm Caras, he is Greek descended, and has helped me in my journeys and my battles. I claim him as a worthy aid, one who may visit Hyrene under my protection and vow of responsibility."

"Um, hi," Malcolm said, extending a hand.

To his surprise, Calliope took it, testing it. Her strength was extraordinary, and borderline painful before she released it. "I trust my sister's word, Malcolm Caras, but she has a misunderstanding of the law. Greek ancestry alone will not permit this, as that is reserved purely for women, Lydia."

Malcolm looked to Lydia. Her face went a lot more red, her error realised.

"Oh, um . . . shit."

Calliope scoffed. "He will have to return immediately, but given what he has already seen, his mind must be scoured of all knowledge of-"

"No!" Malcolm called out, feeling a surge of determination. "Please! I'll do anything to stay! Don't make me forget! Anything you require, any tradition or act, I'm willing to go through with it if it means I can see your island and your people. Please, this is a dream come true for me. I don't want to lose it and forget it all."

Lydia looked at him, and even she appeared astonished. Calliope considered Malcolm's words for a silent while, the other women of Hyrene waiting for her to speak.

“Very well,” she said. “I will consult with the mothers. Lydia, take him to the Temple of Reawakening. Tell him nothing, do you hear me? We will see if his soul is pure, and he is right for the island.”

Lydia gasped, but quickly caught herself. “Y-yes,” she said to her taller, muscular sister, who very clearly had adapted to her armour and become her true self in a way that the smaller would-be superheroine had not. “I will take him right away. Malcolm, come with me.”

Malcolm walked with her, awkwardly shuffling through the crowd, uncertain of what was happening. He knew he could not ask what the Temple of Reawakening would do, but he was a little anxious nonetheless. He held onto Lydia’s hand tightly, and again that unrequited desire for her stirred. She had brought him this far despite knowing it would fall flat. Even if she would only ever be a friend, he would not fail her. He would have to be strong, have to step up and be a man.

Even on an island of far stronger women.

Malcolm waited inside the vast temple. It was like no temple he’d ever seen, with green vines growing around the interior and numerous sacred pools and waters that shone a bright turquoise aqua. The air was humid and wonderful even inside, but there was a sense of foreboding for Malcolm. He was terrified that his memory would of this magnificent place would be ripped from him, and that he wouldn’t even be allowed to remember the truth of his friend, nor allowed to see Lydia again. He couldn’t imagine a worse fate; she was his best friend. His truest friend. Even if she would never be something more, that meant something. It meant a lot.

“It’ll be okay,” she said, placing a hand briefly on his knee. He savoured the feeling, but recognised it as the platonic comforting gesture it truly was.

“Thanks, Lydia,” he said. He wanted to tell her more. To thank her for taking him here, even if he might not remember it. For letting him help her as Amazonia. For so much more.

But then the great chamber doors opened, and Calliope stepped forward with a number of her guard, each clad in their light armour that revealed much of their athletically beautiful forms. She gaze imperiously down the steps.

“The mothers will allow it,” she said. “He is to undertake the Ritual of Reawakening. Prepare the waters.”

The women moved immediately, taking various amphorae and spilling strange herbs, chemicals, and spices into the central sacred pool. Others began to offer prayer to

long-forgotten deities and members of the ancient Greek pantheon, all while Calliope walked up to Lydia and conversed with her in that same ancient tongue. Malcolm was confused, not knowing quite what to say or do, until a somewhat sober Lydia explained.

“You are to remove your clothing and don a white garment,” she said. “You must then bathe in the waters, and place your head under. The ritual will . . . make you worthy of being on the island.”

“You can’t tell me anything else?” he asked, agitation rising within him.

“I’m sorry, I can’t,” she said. “Trust me, I would if I could. You’ll just have to decide if you’re willing to go out on a limb, Malcolm. You don’t have to do this.”

He looked past her to the stalwart figure of Calliope, powerful and regal, just one of her mighty female tribe. There was so much to discover and see here, and so much he wanted to do to help Lydia become acclimated to her armour.

“I’ll do it,” he said. “I don’t know what it’ll do to me, but I accept. Is there a change room?”

Calliope cracked up laughing at that, and she switched to English. “Please, child, we are Greek!”

Lydia smirked as well. “You wanted to see it all, right?”

“Sure, I just didn’t expect you to see all of *me*.”

But still, with some red-cheeked embarrassment he removed his clothing, leaving his twiggy and rather unimpressive male form on display. Thankfully, apart from one accidental snort from a female guard, no one else laughed. Lydia was kind enough to look away, and moments later the white garment was placed around him, like a thin white robe made of the finest silk.

“Now step into the waters,” Calliope said, the flame-haired woman directing him to enter by the steps. “And when you are ready, place your head under and experience the ritual.”

Malcolm nodded, swallowed, and then took the step to the pool. He gave one last look of what he hoped was confidence to Lydia, and then he entered. The water bubbled with the strange chemicals, now making a rainbow of colour that shifted like some kind of oil painting. The water was warm, almost inviting, and his breathing calmed.

“I can do this,” he said to himself. “Whatever this is.”

He ducked his head under.

Aeons. Creation. The vortex of being. To be a being. A different being. Change. Colours and elements whirling about and cascading and reforming and rejoining to become something

new and beautiful and vibrant and different and wholly binary. Male and female. Masculine and feminine essence. Each are apart of the other, dancing their complex dance again and again and again but neither fully understanding the other even in their joining, destined to be one or the other. Except now there is reawakening, the power of the ritual flowing through your form. You feel the opening, the division of self, the giving over to the feminine. Your hair grows proud and long, your features soften. Your breasts stir from their genetic slumber and expand, taking a path not taken until this very moment. Your hips, so thin before, widen with joy, taking on dimensions that are only appropriate for this journey. The colours change, the oils and sacred waters continue their work, refashioning you as Pygmalion fashioned his Galatea. Useless hair falls away, hands and feet and arms and legs become works of art rather than mere bulk. Beauty becomes you, fuller in lip and softer in face, longer in eyelash, clearer in eye. Softness, yes. Weakness, no. You are finesse. You are grace. You are that which is not man, not destruction. You are creation and all its virtue, and your being is now changed. Between your thighs there is a parting, and in that parting is the potential for so much more.

Awaken now, your form remade.

Your name is Medea.

Medea, it is time to awaken.

Malcolm erupted from the surface, coughing up water, confusion sweeping over him. He had been underwater for a century, it seemed, and less than a second at the same time. His voice was high as he gasped, taking in lungfuls of air, and something else seemed wrong too, though he couldn't place it. Many things, in fact. He looked up at Lydia's face, wiping away the sacred waters, and saw that his best friend was shocked and in awe.

"Lydia, what's happened?" he asked, but something about his voice was still wrong. It sounded stronger, but also higher. Feminine, even. Female.

"Malcolm, I don't know how to tell you this, but . . ."

Malcolm looked down, and realised the truth of what had happened beneath the surface. The knowledge and experience that had swept over him all clicked into place when he saw two obvious female breasts hanging from his chest, his skin soft, his figure female, his hair darker and hanging like a curtain over his face.

"I'm - I'm a woman!?" he managed, lowering a hand to between his thighs only to stop himself as he felt a smooth mound.

"The ritual was a success," Calliope proclaimed. "Join us, our newest sister, and revel in your new female form!"

Malcolm/Medea had no idea what to say. The new woman looked down at himself - herself - and slowly raised her dainty hands up to hold her breasts. They were not large, but neither were they small. A little bigger than Lydia's own bust when she wasn't in Amazonia's form, in fact.

"Oh God," she said, "I'm a woman. And - do I have an accent?"

Calliope folded her arms, her expression almost . . . proud?

"Our sister Lydia was right, it seems your Greek heritage is true. You speak our tongue most well."

Malcolm realised what that meant. The new female examined the words that had just escaped her mouth. "I'm . . . I'm speaking ancient Greek!?"

The leader of the guard chuckled. "Worry not, young one, you haven't lost your foreign tongue, but it is not your favoured one so long as you are a sister on this island. Now come forth! We will dry you and clothe you, and you can become accustomed to your new body. I'm sure Lydia will be happy to show you about the island now that your form is appropriate to it. But be warned, you are now also bonded to this island: for your duration here, and as a woman, Hyrene is your home. Its magic will flow through you, and if Lydia is to complete her training, you too must undergo it, and learn what it is to be a champion of our goddesses. Do you understand?"

Malcolm really, truly didn't. She was still grappling with the fact that she was now, well, a *she*, not to mention that her name was now apparently Medea, and that her body had been literally resculpted into femininity by the power of *actual freaking goddesses*. She looked to Lydia, blushing as she emerged from the water, trying to ignore the slight jiggle of her breasts or the way her hips shifted a little in a more feminine repose. The absence between her legs was not one she was willing to grapple with just yet, so instead she placed a forearm around her breasts and her other hand over her newly minted Venus mound.

"She is a lamb," a guard remarked, causing the others to titter.

But Calliope waved them into silence, and Lydia was quick to wrap her in a towel.

"Come, Medea," she said, easily using Malcolm's new name. "We'll get you dressed and sorted, and I can explain everything before showing you the island."

"Yeah, I think . . . I think I definitely need an explanation," Malcolm/Medea said, still unused to her commanding yet female voice, or the twinge of Mediterranean accent that had crept into it. "Because I have no idea what's going on."

Malcolm was taken by Lydia into the port city of Tripios. Many other Amazonian women of Hyrene welcomed her, kissing her on the cheek or even chastely on the lips at her return.

Others were more standoffish, or perhaps it was just a shade of 'I told you so' kind of attitude, as they reminded Lydia several times that they had told her she wasn't ready, her mastery over her armour not yet complete.

"I am well aware now, sister," she said to a number of them. "It is why I am here, and our newest sister joining us temporarily. This is Medea."

Malcolm found it hard to look at their faces. For one, a majority of them were taller than her, strong-muscled yet limber, and all of them deeply beautiful. Only their younger members were more plain or ordinary, having yet to achieve their 'True Forms' when they mastered their own custom armours.

"It is good to be here," she said shyly, constantly adjusting the fabric of the loose white dress she'd been given. It flowed comfortably over her form, but it still gave an indication that she had breasts and a woman's form, and the freeing nature of it was feminine in of itself.

"Is she alright?" one woman asked, a dark-skinned lady whose name was Obelea.

Lydia gave a sympathetic look to her friend. "She is a sister now because of the Old Tradition. The Ritual of Reawakening."

There was a collective 'ahhh,' from the congregation, and this knowledge passed throughout the city eagerly, to the point where many came out to see the newest sister and even amuse themselves a little with questions to Malcolm about how she was enjoying her "superior female form."

"Um, I'm still getting used to it. Lower centre of gravity. Different voice. I feel, um, maybe a little weaker? No, that's not right . . ."

At this, Obelea just cackled, slapping her on the back and nearly knocking her over. "Oh, you'll be plenty stronger soon, once training starts! You've got a figure fine for the training uniform. Lydia will help you with the tight braids to keep that wild hair under control!"

All these comments only made Malcolm more uncertain - she'd not even really seen herself yet, and Lydia seemed to sense this. She took her friend by the hand and pulled her away from the interested crowd of warrior women, and into a small building that was, apparently, her own. It was not immense, but it had a gorgeous white stone exterior and its own colonnades, with a Greek-style garden opening in the centre for reflection and meditation.

"This is all yours?" Malcolm gasped, looking on in shock.

"Sort of," Lydia explained. "It is of my mother's line. She will be at the university, lecturing at the moment. She and her wife stay here, but I am welcome to return at any time. Property does not quite have the same meaning here though. I won't go deeply into it. For now, let's get you a room and a mirror, and some time to look over yourself."

Malcolm was deeply appreciative of this. The sun was near setting by this point, and she was tired from the craziness of the day and all she had experienced. She ascended the stairs, and Lydia let him use the room that overlooked part of Tripios, showing the sun-soaked city in much of its white-stoned glory, its red roofing immaculate, its greenery abundant. It truly was beautiful, its bays glimmering with life and bustling with activity. Female activity, of course; no men were in sight.

“Not even here,” she mused. She checked that the door was closed and went to the mirror, then with a sigh she removed her garment. It was, at least, surprisingly comfortable. She’d always wondered how dresses felt to wear.

“Woah,” Malcolm said, looking at herself. “I still look like me, at least, but a sort of Mediterranean me.”

This ‘Medea’ indeed appeared to be a sort of half-sister of Malcolm. Unlike his pale Caucasian self, she had light-olive skin, and her hair was darker too, with lush loose curls. Not as curly as Lydia’s hair, but certainly more than just waves. Her nose was slightly broader, her eyebrows certainly thicker and darker, and while her face was softer and jawline smoother there was undeniably a strength in her features also; this was not the face of some willowy supermodel. The rest of her frame was as expected: wider hips, thinner waist, smaller shoulders, and lack of body hair. Her breasts she estimated to be a B-cup, perhaps a small C-cup at best. They certainly looked pert, with light brown nipples. Her vagina was . . . well, a vagina. Malcolm couldn’t have claimed to have had many sexual experiences, but her new female plumbing looked capable enough. It was more strange simply to have it at all, she supposed. She turned, looking at her rear; it had certainly plumpened a little, rounding out. Her thighs were surprisingly thicker, with lean muscle evident. Her arms were thin but not rakish as they had been; there was a genuine sense of possibility there, of being able to develop a fit frame much like the other Amazons, once she was trained.

“I just can’t believe it,” she said, running her hands over her form. She cupped her breasts, and the sensation there was quite . . . sensitive. Her nipples stiffened a little.

“Mhmm,” she grunted, without meaning to. The feeling was quite lovely, and much more than she’d expected it to be in terms of its power. Curious, she checked that the door was locked, and then felt over herself again. This time she teased her larger nipples, savouring the sensation of pleasure it produced, like little electric pulses of bliss that shot down to her core. It caused a very alien feeling; her new tunnel began to lubricate itself, growing wet with arousal.

“Ahhhh,” she moaned, not quite believing what she was doing, but needing release. The day had been stressful, strange, and all kinds of weird. And besides, what man hadn’t wondered what female pleasure was like? What it would be like to have breasts and a womanhood, and be able to touch them whenever you wanted?

"F-feels s-so different," she gasped, stepping back and sitting on the bed. She continued to tease her body, cupping her breasts and slowly circling her fingers around the edges of her vagina, touching its folds and making her new clitoris throb. It was a foreign set of feelings, but not unwelcome ones. No, not unwelcome at all.

"Mhmmm, Lydia," she moaned softly, barely above a whisper. Her mind took her to that place, to her unrequited object of lust. She had long accepted just being Lydia's friend, they were incompatible, after all. But when the arousal was up, Malcolm had guiltily imagined Lydia wanting him back, and now that *she was Medea*, that fantasy seemed so much more acceptable. She imagined the glorious woman straddling her in her Amazonia form, stripping the armour from her body to free her bountiful breasts. She imagined being *dominated* by that woman, whose strength and courage could be boundless, and yet knowing deep down what a passionate nerd and lover of history she could be.

"Yesssss," she groaned, slipping two fingers into her wet passage, the sensations growing. "T-take me, Lydia. M-make me yours. Make me a w-woman."

The fantasy was too much. She managed to tease and grope her breasts and rub her womanhood for only twenty more seconds before the mental image of Lydia riding her in her Amazonia form finally sent her body into overdrive. The climax approached, and for just a moment it had the semblance of a male orgasm; the build was familiar, perhaps even slower. But then, when it hit, her body lost all control, her figure seizing up and shuddering, as wave after wave of blissful ecstasy rocked her. Her various erogenous zones lit up, and the length of the series of climaxes that followed were longer and, after time, even more powerful, than her male ones when she'd been Malcolm.

"Oh God," she breathed, laying back in the post-coital joy. "Oh God. No, *Goddesses*, I suppose. That was a lot. That was a lot." She paused for a moment, feeling her breasts rising and falling on her chest in time with her breathing. "Maybe this will actually be pretty cool," she said to herself. She held up her fingers, much more dainty than before, though not weak. "I get to train as an Amazon warrior. I get to see and study a mythological society that turned out to be real. I get to see and maybe even use magic. And . . . I get to experience *that*."

She bit her lip. There was another reason too. She got to train with Lydia. Somehow that meant more than the rest put together.

Perhaps she could identify as Medea after all.

Part Three: Warrior Woman Training

The next day Medea was woken early by Lydia . . . *far* too early.

“Mhm up,” she muttered, pushing her dark curls out from her face. “Wuss sleepin.”

“Well, it’s high time you got up, my lovely new female friend, because Hyrene warriors need to be up at sunrise! C’mon, we can’t keep Helena waiting!”

“Helena?”

Lydia threw the white dress over Medea, laughing. “Our trainer, silly. And she can be a real hard ass. You wanted to experience the island with me and help me become a better hero? Now’s your chance, big boy!”

“Hardly feel like a boy anymore. I still can’t believe you didn’t tell me.”

Lydia smirked. “Well, you didn’t *sound* like you weren’t enjoying it last night.”

At *that*, Medea was now fully awake, rising out of bed, cheeks flushed with embarrassment. “Um, how much did you hear?”

Lydia brushed her hair back. “Just a long, loud moan at the end. Oh, don’t be so embarrassed. If I ever took on the Binary Ritual, you’d be betting on me having a fun tug just to see what it was like. Besides, female pleasure is celebrated here. You’re not going to see people masturbating on the street, but there are places where exercise of bodily enjoyment is not just encouraged, but expected. God, you have no idea how freeing it is to be back here. I don’t want to stay forever, I love the outside world and being Amazonia too much, but your society is far too restrictive at times.”

Medea had no idea what to say, so instead she just started dressing.

“Well, I can tell it will take time for you to get used to that. But hey, you’re one of us now. A sister of Hyrene. That’s pretty special. And today you’ll get to train with me.”

“I’ll probably be hopeless,” Medea said, trying to adjust her hair. Lydia had to help her, putting it in a loose ponytail for her. To Medea’s surprise, Lydia kissed her on the cheek lightly. It was just a chaste kiss, of course.

“Nonsense,” she said. “As Malcolm, you were invaluable in helping me improve as a hero. Now, I can help you back, and you can help me become fully attuned to my armour. We’re in this together, remember?”

She stretched out a hand, and Medea recognised the gesture. Almost by instinct, she grasped Lydia by the forearm, locking it in a grip as Lydia did the same to her own forearm.

“Deal,” she said, smiling.

“You know,” Lydia said. “The new you has a really bright smile. It’s cute as hell, and it suits you.”

That set Medea blushing all over again, and her new olive tone wasn't quite dark enough to hide it either.

The Stadia was the area where the warriors trained, and it was constructed like one of the vast training centres of the ancient Romans, albeit with wider domed spaces and integration of more natural features such as vines, passing rivers, and so on to provide geographical variation. Clearly, the Hyrenes had developed their own style over the centuries, and as Medea learned, they had more than enough time to think about it; Hyrene women apparently lived for *centuries*, their aging process only really kicking in in their last eighty or so years of life. It explained why most women looked to be in their mid-thirties at the latest, still in their prime of health.

"Don't worry, I'm only a few secret years old than you," Lydia joked as they entered the Stadia, both dressed in white, but Lydia lugging her armour along. "I'm twenty eight to your twenty one."

"Okay, wow. Well, you've aged gracefully."

She cracked up at that, until someone shouted.

"YOU ARE LATE! SILENCE AND FALL IN!"

Lydia immediately snapped to attention, throwing off a salute from her chest. Medea tried the same, though it came later and wasn't as convincing. In the building were rows of would-be warrior women, some in their early teens, some children, most a bit younger than Medea. They were all at attention to a grey-haired warrioress with dark olive skin and impressive muscles at the front. Despite her older age, and the scars upon her left cheek and over her right eye, she was astonishingly beautiful in her fearsomeness. She wore the full armour of a Hyrene magical warrioress, the colour of her battle-skirt a rich blue to accommodate the royal purple of her armour. Figureheads of lionesses were engraved upon the gold - actual gold - of her thin pauldrons. She was one of the few warriors who were covered up around the shoulders, though her arms and legs were still bare, and very clearly muscled.

"You must be Helena," Medea said. "It's wonderful to meet you, I'm -"

"I SAID SILENCE!" she called, and Lydia almost slapped her forehead before stopping herself. A number of the young warriors chuckled to themselves.

"S-sorry," Medea said.

The woman named Helena strode forward, and Medea realised she had to be easily 6'5 in height; a veritable mountain of a woman. She had her spear in one hand, and a sword in its sheath. Several throwing daggers were on her other hip, along with what looked to be a

coiled whip. Her armour glowed softly, as did her eyes. This woman radiated magical power, and it was then that Medea realised that whatever strength Lydia had through her armour when she was Amazonia, it paled in comparison to this woman. Medea gulped.

“So you are the *male* who has *dared* to enter *my* Stadia and desire to be trained in our *female warrior’s ways*,” she said, practically spitting each word. Her voice was magically enhanced, booming throughout the vast room. Everyone was looking in Medea’s direction, their breaths held. Lydia went to say something, but Helena immediately raised a hand, silencing her.

“Look me in the eyes, young *man*,” she said venomously, “and tell me why I shouldn’t summon my full furious power and fling

you to the farthest corner of the island, your cloth hooked to the end of my thrown spear?”

Malcolm would have been timid. Malcolm would have been shy. But something in Medea felt a little different in that moment, and she was realising it for the first time. Just like Lydia grew in confidence when she became Amazonia, simply becoming a sister of Hyrene - however recently - had seemingly endowed Medea with new confidence. She looked up, and managed to hold Helena’s vicious gaze, if only just.

“Right now, I am *no man*,” she said, strength returning to her voice. “I have been determined to be a sister of Hyrene while I am here. That should be enough.”

“Oh, enough, is it? You say this to I, who is in her five hundredth year of training raw recruits? What makes you worthy of being trained?”

Medea managed to narrow her eyes, even as her heart pounded in her womanly chest. “Maybe the training will be the thing to tell us,” she said.

Helene held the stare for a longer while yet. Then, achingly slow, she pulled her face back and folded her arms. “Well-answered, sister,” she proclaimed. “Indeed, the training will be the crucible that separates a warriorress from the rest. Get your gear, and we will see if you are worthy.”

Medea exhaled what felt like a lifetime of breath as Helena turned and left her immediate presence. Lydia mouthed to her, ‘well done!’, her expression showing her to be deeply impressed. It was enough to make Medea beam.

“Wait, get dressed?” she whispered to her friend. “Get dressed into what?”

Lydia smirked. “Oh, trust me, you’re going to love it. I bet you’re going to look very pretty in your first set of armour.”

“By the Underworld, Medea, you look good in that!”

Medea grinned sheepishly, unsure just how right her friend was.

“It feels . . . tight.”

Lydia just rolled her eyes. “That’s because you’ve done the straps too tight. Just because it’s armour, doesn’t mean it shouldn’t breathe. Even training armour should feel flexible and attuned to your body. Would you like me to help?”

Medea nodded. “And I feel like my hair is everywhere.”

“I’ll put it in braids, like mine.”

Medea was thankful. The changing space was entirely open to all women, though segregated by age category. The others had all gotten into the armour quickly, and Lydia had gone to see Helena briefly to discuss the status of her training and where to begin - “from the beginning, runaway child” was what she’d apparently been brusquely told. During that time, Medea had struggled with her armour. It was a short, very form fitting piece, and there must have been magic in it, because it seemed to glow briefly as she put it on, so that its dimensions fit her own. It was a sort of bronze-golden brown material, hard but not inflexible, and was quite revealing, with just a short unarmoured skirt to go over her undergarments, with the longer part of said skirt falling over right hip. She had Greek-style cothurni sandals that laced up her calves, with small metal plating to protect her shins and bones. Otherwise, her olive legs were completely on display. Likewise this was the case for her shoulders, as the material cut off just above her bosom, encasing it in a set of armoured cups that gave a clear impression of her chest’s dimensions. A single leather strap was round over her left shoulder to keep the outfit further fixed in place, and bronze braces were upon her wrists, going halfway up to her elbow. She looked like one of them, albeit plainer, less tall, and certainly less confident. But more confident than she had been as Malcolm, at least.

“I actually don’t think I look that bad,” Medea admitted, rubbing her arm.

“Are you kidding me?” Lydia said. “You look fantastic. Your hair is amazing! I’m a bit jealous you’re bustier than me, though.”

“I wouldn’t have thought it would matter on an island of women.”

“Oh, trust me. It matters more. It’s why I want to reach my true form. I feel so much tougher, buffer, and bustier during those times. But for now, let’s get you looking warrior ready, and elegant besides.”

What followed was surprisingly intimate, as Lydia fixed the straps of the outfit and proceeded to check over every inch of her. Under that scrutiny, Medea tried not to look too far into it, but with Lydia’s hands on her skin and new outfit, it was difficult not to hold her breath at times. Even more was this the case as Lydia tended to her long hair. It fell to the bottom of her shoulder blades, and had a surprising spring and weight to it. Medea had no idea quite what to do with it, but Lydia patiently pulled it into tight, interlinking braids so that it

kept together, interwoven and artfully so, hanging down out of the way. When Medea looked at herself she actually dropped her jaw for a moment.

“Wow. I actually look, you know, like one of you.”

“You are one of us,” Lydia said, kissing her on the cheek. She then grabbed Medea’s hand. “Now come on. It’s just the first day of training. Nothing magical yet. But if we’re starting from scratch, I’m glad I’ve got you beside me. You can make me look good.”

Medea actually stuck out her tongue at that, and the two women laughed.

Over the next two weeks, training was rigorous. Medea was not used to physical activity . . . of any kind, really. As Malcolm, she’d been a thin-limbed nerd, and while she was now a member of the so-called ‘fairer sex’, at least she had a greater athletic capacity, or perhaps it was simply the environment and company of the island of Hyrene that excited her, and the opportunity to not only spend more time with her best friend without any delays or disappearances or excuses, but to actively participate in the great feats Lydia aspired to.

Every day, the wake up was at sunset, barring each fifth day when there was time for rest, relaxation, and exploration. While those times were precious to Medea, allowing her to visit the markets, see more of Tripios, and to relax in the warm natural springs further up the mountainside with Lydia, it was truly the days of training that dominated her mind and indeed her heart. The schedule was brutal. Each day contained the following regimen:

Morning sprint and muscle workout.

Combat training with spear and shield, followed by a break, followed by swords and shield, followed by another brief break.

Group combat training, involving simple and advanced phalanx tactics.

Discus throwing, pole vaulting, and other Olympic-style events of an individual’s choice, to build up dexterity and strength.

Break time, during which warrior’s manuals and philosophies of righteous cause were to be studied.

An afternoon triathlon competitive event (Medea was often, sadly, last). This involved complexities that changed daily, such as running across a series of pits where only wooden poles could be stepped upon, requiring agile footwork.

Sometimes Helena would switch it up, of course. There were days where they had to fast, to test their warrior’s resolve, or to march up the nearest mountain side while carrying a heavy load, all the time singing along with her merry tune (something she apparently

delighted in). And occasionally Helena herself led them to the hot springs, made them all strip down and wade into the waters, and focus on meditating as their broken bodies healed after a rough day.

“Most important is this,” she said most seriously. “A Hyrene warrior does not kill when she can incapacitate, does not incapacitate when she can wound, does not wound when she can extend a hand of peace first. Never forget this. Never.”

And with that, she looked at Lydia somewhat meaningfully. Medea’s friend shrank into the water somewhat, and Medea knew why: Amazonia was a great heroine, but she was certainly a ‘fists first’ kind of superhero, one who had put down many a villain but was not entirely proficient in dealing with them diplomatically. Medea moved closer to her, wincing at the bruises she’d sustained that day, but feeling increasingly comfortable in her female body, even naked around others.

“Hey,” she said, touching Lydia’s arm as various conversations continued. “Are you okay?”

“Yeah . . . not really. I’m just thinking maybe that’s why the armour never attuned to me. Perhaps I’m not good at living up to Hyrene values. I left because I wanted to see more of the outside world, but I think I took too much of it with me. I love being Amazonia, but maybe I need to stay here and learn more. I don’t know . . .”

“We’ve only been here two weeks, Lydia. I’m sure you’ll get to attune to your armour.”

At that, Lydia snorted. “Only two weeks, huh? And look how much you’ve changed! You’ve got definition in those arms! You can throw a discus! I think you’re getting the hang of your part in the phalanx. Also, you’re still making noises at night when you think I can’t hear you.”

Medea bit her lip. She puffed up her chest again, letting her breasts rise above the warm waters. Lydia’s gaze dropped for just a moment to view them, but Medea was no longer embarrassed of her female form. In fact, lately she’d been rather proud of it (and certainly still experimenting with it).

“Well, you were the one who told me that pleasure isn’t taboo on the island, right? So I’m trying to leave my prudish old self behind me.”

“Spoken like a true Hyrene woman!” declared a gruff voice. It was Helena, who shifted through the water closer to them. “Never deny yourself enjoying your form, young one, even as you perfect it. You still have a long way to go, but we shall see if you are worthy of maintaining a warrior’s body in time.”

“I will be,” Medea declared. “And so will Lydia. She’ll earn her armour and be the strongest of all. I know she’s already the bravest.”

Lydia made a squeaking noise, as if she wanted Medea to hush. The former male herself didn't quite know what she was saying, or why, just that a sudden urge to say it had come over her.

"Is that truly so?" Helena said, placing her hands on her strong hips.

"It is," Medea said, standing herself to face her harsh taskmaster. Lydia was trying to stop her, to say something, but Medea was determined.

"Then I suppose you shall *both* prove it in the Great Olympia."

"We will," Medea declared.

Helena smirked, then waded back to the other side of the spring to talk to other recruits, leaving Lydia to smack Medea on the arm.

"What were you thinking? Do you even know what the Great Olympia entails?"

Medea paused. "Um, no. Is it hard?"

"Very hard! The paired winners receive a great blessing from the mothers, but we have no chance of winning! Why would you embarrass me that way?"

Medea grimaced, touched her own arm awkwardly. "Sorry, Lydia. I don't know what came over me. It's this body . . . something about it makes me so much more *confident*."

"But why make that statement about me?"

The answer came easily: "Because it's true. I believe in you. I know you can do this."

"Please, I was making mistakes all the time as Amazonia."

"And you always corrected them."

"With *your* help, Medea."

Medea grinned, and for once she was the one to place her hand on her friend's naked shoulder. "Then it's a good thing you've got it now, right?"

Lydia tried to stay angry, but Medea could see that it was faltering, giving way to a full smile. "Fine!" she declared. "Fine, we'll make a try of it. It's going to be hard, but if you believe in me that much, then I suppose I've got to believe in myself. This whole armour thing just has me second-guessing myself. I suppose this is the best way to tackle it; head on and together, right?"

"As best friends," Medea filled in.

But Lydia paused, regarding her. "Yeah," she said after a moment, touching her friend's shoulder. "As best friends."

There was something nicely intimate about it that Medea couldn't quite place.

Part Four: Armoured Up

Another couple of weeks of training followed, and Medea considered it a good thing she'd deferred her subjects for the following year, as this required *all* of her attention. She was becoming increasingly used to her female body, to its strength and dexterity, its limberness and finesse, its agility and flexibility. She was also continuing to enjoy the pleasure of it too when she was alone, sometimes even using her spare time to go to the hot springs and simply touch her body, imagining Lydia in her Amazonia form. That desire hadn't gone away, and had even inflamed now that they were training together, sweating in their tight bronze training uniforms, sometimes having to help each other vault over barricades or wrestle against an opposite pair. Helena was clearly impressed with their dedication, noting that after Medea's declaration they were training even *after* the day was done.

"Perhaps you will have a chance to be in the top twenty," she marked. "In the Tripios division, that is."

But from her old, sly smirk, Medea could tell she was secretly encouraging them. Lydia thought so, at least, because she would always push Medea further afterwards, their muscles aching as the two women climbed mountains, marked their own personal triathlons, and tested one another with training spear and sword (Lydia would always win those ones, she had been trained for years, after all).

"I still can't believe how far you've come in just a month," Lydia noted after a hard, long day. They were sitting in the forum of Tripios, many women moving among them. Calliope waved in their direction, and they waved back as the stalwart guard continued. They were eating some rich baked desserts as a reward for their hard regimen, sprawled back on a public seat that overlooked the beautiful fountains and statues of the great heroines of Hylene. Lydia had her head resting on Medea's shoulder, and the latter didn't quite know how to take that.

"I can barely believe it either," Medea said. "This place is astonishing. I've spent my whole life fascinating with larger than life people, with heroes and myths, and now I'm in a place that is a foundation of them. It beggars belief. I fell asleep processing it all last night, reading another one of the books from Penelope of Agrii."

"One of our most accomplished authors," Lydia noted, holding onto Medea's arm now, still resting her head against her. "I loved her *Notes on Exploration* when I was a child. But I wasn't talking about your nerdy interests, you wonderful nerd."

"You're a nerd too."

"Well, sure, but you've got me beat there. No, I was talking about you as Medea. You've come into your own as a woman."

"How do you mean?"

Lydia looked up, regarding her as if she were looking at a fool. “What do you think I mean? Medea, you’re wearing a Hyrene warrior’s training outfit and pulling it off spectacularly! You’re doing your own hair now. You’re training every day, learning our ways, following our traditions. Even Calliope says it’s like you’re becoming more Hyrene than the Founder herself! And you’re more confident than ever. When I first met you, you were so shy, and I don’t think Malcolm ever stopped being that. Brilliant, but never certain of himself. He never would have bolstered me up like Medea did at the hot springs.”

Medea flushed with the compliments, especially as Lydia rested her head again. “I guess I have come into my own, here, haven’t I?”

“And then some. It’s a good thing too, because tomorrow, there’s a big surprise.”

“Oh? What is it?”

“It’s a surprise, silly.”

And then Lydia did something that apparently wasn’t *the* surprise, but would be hard to top in that department anyway. She kissed Medea chastely on the cheek, paused, and then kissed her on the lips. And that kiss wasn’t very chaste at all. It felt *wonderful*. It felt *right*. Medea was too astonished in that moment to kiss back.

“Lydia,” she said, as the woman parted. “What was that for?”

The Hyrene woman swallowed, clearly not expecting to have done that herself. “Um . . . it’s a Hyrene tradition. A kiss before what comes next.”

“I hadn’t heard of th-”

“It’s an old tradition. Most don’t know about it. Look, I’ve got to go see my mother, since she’s in town for a bit. I’ll see you tomorrow morning.”

She wandered off, and Medea was left reeling and confused. She gazed at the departing woman, appreciating the swagger of her hips and the strength in her walk, and the way her tight outfit and tighter braids gave her the image of a true Amazonian, even without her ‘True Form.’

Suffice to say, she had to work out her aroused frustrations on herself later that night.

“By the Goddesses,” Medea said, adopting the local flavour of exclamation. “You’re kidding. I’m getting assigned armour today?”

They were in the Grand Armoury, where the Hyrene goddesses had apparently infused their magical essence into the forge and metal and nearby mines of the place so that each armour could be enchanted to bring about the true Amazon. It was here that Lydia had received her armour, and now where Medea would get her own too; something she had never expected in her wildest years.

The chief armourer and blacksmith, an astonishingly gorgeous woman named Vespi, smirked as she removed her gloves and goggles. She was stained in sweat from the heat of the work, and her hair was shorter than most Amazons, with tight braids interlacing her dark locks together. She was strong, but surprisingly lithe, and like many others she was quite full in the chest, a fact that both Lydia and Medea were appreciating, since her armour fell low on her bust due to the heat of the place leaving her not wanting to overdress.

“Ha! I always love revealing this part. No, Medea, you won’t be getting your armour *assigned*. You’re going to get one *made*. Tailored just for you, with *your* input.”

“What!? Really!?”

Lydia beamed, clearly over the moon about this revelation for her friend.

“Absolutely!” Vespi said, excited as if this were the first time she had ever been given this opportunity. “You’re a Hyrene warrior woman now, which means you’re one of us, as far as I’m concerned. I leave the stuffy politics about the rest to the mothers and the judginess to cranky Helena. For me, so long as the magic fits your essence and accepts you, then you’re one of us. Would you like to get started?”

Medea looked to Lydia, then to Vespi, then down at her own female form.

“Absolutely,” she said.

“And I want mine remade a little too,” Lydia said. “To better suit me.”

Vespi nodded. “That can be done too. Let’s get going then. It’s going to be long, rewarding work. If all goes well, you’ll be living your True Forms in no time.”

The next few days were more exciting than any other for Medea *and* Lydia. While the nature of discovery was fascinating for the former and the return to her home a welcoming if nervous one for Lydia, the prospect of attaining magical abilities and strength through their respective armours made the pair of them, frankly, *geek out*.

“A Greek greek out,” Lydia noted at night, causing the pair to giggle. They’d even bought some wine to share as they swapped ideas for how their armour could look, what colours would work best, what weapons they would prefer to wield with it, and what abilities they hoped to master that the armour could bring magically to the fore. Medea was fascinated by the concept of flight, but apparently that was exceedingly rare. Faster speed and great leaping was possible though, as was the chance to call down lightning, or cause shockwaves by linking one’s bracelets, or even to talk to animals.

“Oh man, I dibs that last one!” Medea said.

“I can totally seeing you being the nerd who wants to talk to animals. They don’t have anything interesting to say, trust me.”

“Spoken like someone who can’t talk to animals.”

“Well, I *could* leap over tall buildings as Amazonia.”

“Yeah, it was super hot.”

Lydia paused, raising an eyebrow. “You thought it was attractive?”

The wine was going to Medea’s head. “Of course! I mean, c’mon. You’re already really pretty, but as Amazonia you become this buff, tough, absolutely drop-dead gorgeous superhero, and yeah, it was attractive as hell.”

Lydia grinned. “So wait, you think I’m cute?”

“I mean, yeah. Duh.”

“I’m talking about when I’m not Amazonia.”

Medea knew she shouldn’t be yapping on, but the wine was still in her head, making her tongue loose. “Lydia, I was working up the courage to ask you out until I found out you were into girls. I have the biggest crush on you, seriously.”

“Wait, had or have?”

But Medea was already feeling the stupor of the drink. “Thisssss stuff is ssstrong,” she said, giggling. “I hope my super power is not having hangovers!”

“Medea, what were you saying about me?”

But she was already giggling, and Lydia just sighed and let the conversation move on. Medea fell asleep shortly after. The last thing she could recall was a hazy memory of someone kissing her cheek lightly, brushing her arm, and then placing a blanket over her.

The next day, Lydia remained even closer to Medea as the two of them worked with Vespi to begin fashioning their armour. While neither were expert armourers or even basic blacksmiths, it was a crucial part of the process that they helped design their look in concert with Vespi, and aid her in crafting the moulds, heating and pouring the molten metal, and the final preparations that led to the finished product. Medea couldn’t be more excited. She’d chosen her colours and her design, and worked with Vespi to bring them to reality. Red and blue would be her colours, with bands of gold to bring it together. Lydia had chosen to retain her green, but had decided upon silver metallic bands instead of her bronze ones, and a lighter blue that she said fit her renewed optimism better.

Several other warrioresses around their age were around them also. Amaris and Naveri were among the more competitive, having adopted extra training to match the determined Lydia/Medea pairing. Amaris had surprisingly pale skin and blonde hair, and was diminutive for a Hyrene woman. Naveri had very dark skin, gorgeous black braids, and was by contrast deeply tall. The pair were also very, very much an actual pairing. Medea had never seen such an obviously lesbian couple; the pair were constantly touching one another, resting against each other when tired, kissing with any excuse - often with great passion - and otherwise showing an obvious admiration and attraction to one another. It was,

strangely, inspiring to see. The idea of too much PDA was not present in Hyrene, and to see love celebrated in all its forms so openly made Medea almost wistful. She occasionally glanced to Lydia, and Lydia back to her, and it seemed there was a tension in the air as a result . . . especially when their rivals began to goad them playfully.

“Good luck winning the Great Olympia when you couldn’t even attune your first armour,” Amaris said. “And with a newbie Hyrene to boot! If she even is one.”

“Hey!” Lydia exclaimed. “She’s twice the Hyrene you are - literally too, shortie.”

Amaris balled her fists, but Naveri clutched her protectively. “Don’t get yourself worked up, Amaris,” she said, smirking. “We’ll just have to see how they go at the Olympia. If you two haven’t worked it out yet, we’re aiming to win.”

“We got that,” Medea said, but she extended a hand. “May the best woman win.”

Naveri raised an eyebrow. “And are you? A woman, I mean?”

“I look it, don’t I?”

She folded her arms. “I just mean, do you plan to go back to being a man in the world of man, or is this permanent? Only one choice will decide if you truly intend to be a Hyrene sister.”

Medea hadn’t thought of it like that, but it was true. She didn’t plan to stay like this, did she? Lydia had fallen silent, and looked deeply uncomfortable, as if waiting for Medea to speak.

“I haven’t decided yet,” she said, which seemed noncommittal. “But if I do win, it’ll be as a Hyrene sister, not a man.”

Naveri seemed to respect the answer, because she took Medea’s hand and shook it. Amaris made silly little whines about it, but Naveri was a good sport.

“Then let the best women win,” she said. “And remember, no matter what happens on the day, the night is one of passion!”

Medea took a moment to process this. “Oh, Lydia and I aren’t . . . she’s into girls.”

“Yes, moron,” Amaris said, “we *all* are, mostly. And you just said you’re a girl. We just assumed you two were obviously a couple, especially with how she looks at you.”

They moved away to continue working on their armour, but Medea could only awkwardly laugh off the miscommunication.

“Sorry about that,” she said to Lydia.

“There’s nothing to be sorry about,” her friend said, even more thoughtful than usual. “Nothing at all.”

But then Vespi returned, and it was time to continue their armour; ahead of their rival pairing. But Medea had begun to think on Lydia’s actions, and was remembering part of their conversation the other night. Pieces were coming together, but she quickly tore them apart.

It was just wishful thinking.

Their armour was ready. The process had been gruelling, particularly as training had resumed. At times they had burned their hands, or had to heave the ancient parts of the forge, or restart a forging process due to even the most miniscule fracture or mistake. But finally, the suits were ready. Vespi herself had overseen their display, and the two women walked into the room wearing their training outfits, their feminine figures proud and excited. Medea could barely believe it; she'd gone from being a man, to a training warrior, to now having the chance to don her own magical armour. The prospect made her nervous; if there was no True Form to attain, then it would make clear she was not a Hyrene. And deep down, a large part of herself wanted to be. Maybe not forever, even if she *did* love her female form, the swell of her breasts, the pleasure of womanhood, the maintenance of her pretty hair, and so on. But the notion of missing out on becoming a *true* empowered heroine like Lydia had achieved for a time . . . that would be crushing. Lydia took her hand, and Medea held it, finding strength in it.

“Here girls,” Vespi said, drawing them into a display room full of magnificent armours. “Here, are your armours.”

She pulled back a white covering that hid the display intended for them, and Medea and Lydia both *gasp*ed.

The armour - both armours - were perfect. Lydia's looked similar to her old one, but refined and perfected. Its green colouring was more lush and vibrant, its metallic finish emphasised by the engraved lines that ran vertically towards its belt. The silver bands gave it a brighter, more heroic feel, and they met where her cleavage would be to form a simple image of a lioness's head. Her leg armour was more sophisticated also, with metallic green grieves that connected to silver knee guards, her boots also more heavily armoured. Her braces now extended with a hand cover, one that left her fingers bare but provided further protection. Her tiara now had an emerald gem in its centre, and likewise was now silver. Her battleskirt was relatively unchanged, but was longer at the back, giving it a regal appearance. Lydia had actual tears in her eyes at this.

“It's perfect,” she said.

“Mine too,” Medea said, voice filled with awe. “It's like a complement to your own.”

“A matched pair,” Lydia said, her voice approving.

It was most certainly the case indeed; Medea's armour had, intentionally or subconsciously, ended up looking similar-yet-distinct from Lydia's armour, the kind of armour a partner would wear. It had a red finish along the metallic torso piece, with a gold band that showed an eagle's head instead of a lionesses' where her cleavage would be. It was a little

more expansive around the chest, perhaps because Medea's bust was a bit bigger, and it left her shoulders bare without any strap or covering. It had a sheath on the back for a bow, the weapon Medea currently favoured, as well as space on the hip for a sword. The battle skirt was a dark navy blue, shorter than Lydia's, exposing more of her thighs, though she had very similar armour for her knees and lower legs and feet. The gold bands for her bracers, as well as across her waist, gave it a similarly regal feeling to Lydia's. Both even had capes of their respective colours for more formal events.

"I love the tiara," she said, reaching out to touch the golden band upon the mannequin's head. It had now jewel, but instead a simple engraving of an eagle, its beak forming an inverted triangle that descending to nearly between where her eyebrows would be.

"Vespi," Lydia said. "I've never seen work such as this."

"You said that when we made your last armour, but even then I felt it was not quite right, somehow. I believe this will be the one for you, sister. And if our other sister truly can become a Hyrene, the armour will know. When you are ready, you can try them out."

Medea stepped forward, but Lydia grabbed her hand.

"Not that way, cutie. We've got a mountain to climb first."

Medea hadn't realised the tradition that *all* young warrioresses of Hyrene went through. One didn't simply try on the armour - it would naturally fit if the magic and essence of the wearer were one, after all - but instead 'earned' it by taking it to the top of the Oros Mountain further inland. It was a bigger trek than either woman was used to; Lydia had only made the journey once.

"I did it alone then too," she said, wheezing as they ascended. "I'm much more glad to have you by my side, Medea."

"True sisters, huh?"

She nodded, expression unreadable. "I suppose so. I just hope I can attune to my armour fully this time. I want to take on my True Form."

"I want that too, for you. And, well, for me. If I can."

Lydia caressed her cheek softly as they stopped for a moment before a steeper incline. "You will, Medea. I believe in you."

Again, that intimacy. And again, the self-doubt from Medea as to whether to act upon it. The kiss had been so real, but then Lydia had walked away . . .

“Let’s climb this mountain,” she said. She was determined to prove herself not just in the eyes of the Hyrene women, but in Lydia’s eyes most of all. She had her armour. She was going to wear it.

Both women drank from their waterskins upon reaching the top. It had been a two-day hike, and others were descending. To their chagrin, two powerful, busty, armoured Amazonian women passed them, and it was obvious from their contrasting skin colours and height difference, as well as the familiar facial features, that these were Amaris and Naveri.

“Ah, a little late, are we?” Amaris teased.

Naveri punched her lover on the arm lightly, and there was a ripple of electric energy there. Her eyes glowed slightly blue for a brief moment.

“Don’t listen to her, sisters. I look forward to a worthy challenge at the Great Olympia. *If you can attune to your armour. Best of luck.*”

There was a playful teasing in her voice, a challenge uttered. And so when Medea and Lydia reached the top they wanted only a brief break before putting on their armour. First though, they surveyed the sweep of the mountains, gazing over Tripios far below, and the ocean in every direction around the great island, along with its sister cities and smaller islands further off the coast.

“Beautiful, isn’t it?” Lydia breathed, gazing at it all.

Medea’s eyes were firmly fixed on her. Despite becoming female, her attraction to Lydia had not wavered. “Yes,” she said, not thinking of the view at all, “beautiful indeed.”

“Okay, let’s get this armour on.”

“Just like that.”

“With a humble prayer to the Goddesses, of course. Say them with me.”

They spoke the words together, beseeching the pantheon of Hyrene to aid them. And then, like that, they stripped down and began to apply their armour. Medea was amazed at how well it began to fit her, and there was a sense of rightness to it; a pulsing of energy that seemed to speak of a greater power. Lydia fitted hers as well, and as was the case when she became Amazonia, the armour was designed to fit her current, plainer self, only to swell and grow and reshape itself once she fully transformed.

But no spark occurred. It was fascinating. Medea could feel the thrum of power in her armour, the desire for it to unlock itself, but there was a barrier of some kind. An uncertainty that wasn’t being paid off. It was making it impossible for her to unlock the true nature of her armour, and she sensed it wasn’t just because she wasn’t meant to be a Hyrene woman;

Lydia was having the same problem. The other woman paced back and forth, utterly frantic, running her fingers through her hair and muttering almost half-mad to herself.

“It doesn’t make sense. By the Goddesses, it doesn’t make sense! I could at least change most of the way before! I could unlock powers! Sure, I hadn’t completed everything, and maybe I wasn’t disciplined enough, but I’ve learned those things since! Why isn’t it working now!? Why aren’t you fucking working!?”

Tears formed in her eyes, especially as she looked to Medea, and the new woman could sense the shame in her friend.

“I don’t understand, Medea! Why isn’t it working!?”

And then Medea knew. She couldn’t quite say how, except perhaps that Helena and Vespi both had acknowledged the importance of accepting every part of yourself, every truth, if you were to take on your True Form. The armour required honesty, it required forthrightness.

And it required action, also.

Medea took a deep breath, her breasts swelling against the interior of her armour rather comfortably, her cleavage obvious. She was a woman now. She accepted that. She *liked* that. Hell, she *loved* that. And there was something else she loved too. Someone.

She strode forward, grabbed Lydia by the hand and practically *yanked* her best friend into her arms. Then she wiped her tears from her cheeks.

“Lydia, what are you doing?”

“What you started the other night,” she said. “And what I should have reciprocated straight away.”

She kissed the other woman, placing her hands upon her cheeks to hold her wonderful face there. Lydia was shocked for a moment, then gave in, kissing back. The two held one another, finally embracing their feelings for one another now that they were in the right forms.

Well, almost the right forms. As they kissed, the thrum of power released, and both of them could feel the sensation of their armours unlocking, the full might of their magic being unleashed. It flooded through their bodies, but still they continued to hold one another, their kiss passionate and unrelenting.

And then, even as they continued to make out, their bodies began to change and grow, and their armour with them.

Part Five: Power & Ritual & Love

The changes happened quickly, and they were *magnificent*. Medea was not focused purely on her own, but on that of Lydia's as well. The two women had their arms encircled around one another, and as their bodies bloomed so did the strength with which they held each other. Muscles rippled along their arms, their thighs and calves were further strengthened. Their limbs extended slowly but surely, implacable in their advance even as the rest of them filled out. Medea was in the unusual position of feeling her shoulders expand where once they had retracted, but they did not take on a male aspect, simply an Amazonian one. A Hyrene warrior's shape, in fact. Her hair grew longer, taking on a brightness and lushness that was borderline ethereal. Her jawline strengthened while still retaining its feminine softness, and her midriff became trim and fit, abs developing there. To her own surprise, she was actually *delighted* to find her bust expanding, and the same was true for Lydia, who pulled back from their kiss to briefly gaze at how her green armour with its silver upper band began to warp and stretch to accommodate her swelling bosom. Medea had never imagined becoming a woman when she'd been Malcolm, but now that she was one, it excited her to feel her approximately C-cup breasts surge forth, becoming full and weighty and large - very large, in fact. But her armour kept pace, holding them securely even as they became what she estimated to be E-cups or even F-cups - certainly very large by any woman's standards. Thankfully, the rest of her had become strong and impressive in frame, so that while she was obviously very busty now, her chest only complimented her figure.

"This is incredible," she marvelled, gazing down at her bust.

"Very much so," Lydia said, looking at her chest and pressing her own against it. "I told you you were hot."

"We both are. Goddess, Lydia, I've always thought you were. But now-"

"Shhh! Keep kissing me! We're almost to the end."

Medea needed no further permission. She pressed her now-fuller lips against Lydia's, and the two women made love, running their hands over each other, feeling the thrum of magical power through their respective armour. Their limbs and spines creaked a little as they grew in size, and Lydia in particular was taller and bolder, even more so than she'd ever been as Amazonia. She had to be 6'2 or 6'3 in height, possible. Medea herself was easily 6'0 or 6'1. The magic finally concluded, at least the transformative aspect, and there was a burst of pleasure as the attunement locked in; the former male could sense it, and no doubt Lydia could as well. But still, they kissed a while longer, only separated when both sensed it was time to do so.

"Medea, that was incredible!" Lydia said, her voice booming with power.

"I know! We changed!"

“No, not that, though that was incredible. You - you kissed me.”

Medea scratched the back of her head. Goddesses, she felt strong. Powerful. Like a true superheroine. She now looked the part too; killer athletic bod, big bust, perfect skin showing along her thighs and shoulders and cleavage, and magic rippling through her form.

“I - I wanted to. I needed to. Lydia, I know I was a man. I know I might even be one again. But while I’m Medea, I feel as if-”

Lydia pulled her in for a kiss this time, and the two moaned.

“I know,” she said upon parting, running her fingers through Media’s hair. “I know. I was nervous about admitting it myself. There were so many times . . . and it turned out to be the key to finally taking this step. And now look at us; our armour runs true! Goddesses, I feel so much more powerful and confident than I was as Amazonia. I had no idea how unready I was back then!”

Medea squeezed her fists, flexed her powerful feminine biceps. If she was anything like Lydia, she looked fit and muscular but still deeply beautiful, her femininity enhanced instead of reduced.

“I’ve never felt anything like this before. It’s incredible.”

Lydia chuckled, and took Medea’s hand. “Well, let me be your teacher, my lovely one. Let’s try this armour out to its fullest. I know just the place I want to take you in it, too - on the other side of the island.”

“But that’s ages away!”

Lydia grinned, and Medea was stunned by her beauty again. “Oh, and do you think that will be a problem now? Watch and follow.”

And with that, she *leapt* far into the distance.

Medea laughed and followed her.

The two women *bounded* across the hills and mountains of Hyrene, their speed augmented greatly by their connection to their armour. Medea couldn’t help but laugh gleefully. She felt like a cheetah across the plains, running faster than any mortal human could ever hope to achieve. When she leapt, she was like a powerful predator, or a great bird. She could not fly, but she glided through the air thanks to her momentum, feeling the wind rush past her. Her reflexes had improved to an almost ridiculous extent: she flipped over large boulders, clambered up the side of mountains with expert precision. More than that, she was beginning to quickly understand that she had specific powers beyond her superstrength and speed: her sword carved through rock like butter, splitting apart the earth with a shattering blast that cleaved it in twain. Lydia used her bracers for something similar, causing a

shockwave blast to spread wide a number of tree branches for her to leap between, before allowing them to close.

"Hey, we live there!" called a high, reedy voice. It took Medea a moment to realise who - or *what* - was talking: a deer that was running beside them.

"Oh my Goddesses," she said, laughing again. "You're a deer! I'm talking to a deer!"

"Obviously! Now can you please cause less destruction, please!"

"Oh, um, sure! Sorry!"

"Good!" the deer exclaimed, before speeding off and away. Medea turned to Lydia, barely able to contain her grin.

"Lydia! I can talk to animals!"

"Goddesses, *of course you can*. You're such a wonderful nerd!"

"But a powerful one! Watch this!"

She sped forth, loving the feeling of her powerful bare thighs against the material of her battle skirt, the way her large breasts bounced subtly in her armoured bust, though thankfully were secured enough not to threaten a wardrobe malfunction. Her hair, currently loose instead of in its tight braid, flowed against her bare shoulders, making her feel all the more like a free spirit. Lydia appeared the same, her beauty enhanced beyond all measure, her mid-tone olive skin shining with her power. The light reflected off the polished metal of their armour, making them appear like two actual goddesses, which was exactly as they seemed to be in that moment. They leapt over a great chasm, knowing they could easily make the distance, and the two of them rolled into the meadows on the other side, laughing and laughing as they tumbled against one another.

Lydia landed on top of Medea, her more muscular form a contrast to Medea's more voluptuous one. She smiled, fascination in her eyes, and her gaze fell further down to Medea's incredibly impressive bust.

"Nice," she said.

"I think I rather like them," Medea said, grinning. "Which is funny, because I never expected to have boobs at all!"

"Well, you've got them, as they say in your world, in spades now."

Medea giggled, setting them wobbling just a little, though the armour contained them very well. She was pinned down by Lydia, but their strength was almost equal now, their connection to their armours fully established. Another connection was in the act of blooming, however. The two were panting, breathing heavily from their immense exercise. They had truly crossed the island's length with ease, but now the act of doing so was coming over them, and the full weight of their passionate kiss as well.

"You know, we never did finish what we started when we began to transform," Lydia said, brushing her dark curls behind one ear.

Medea bit her lip. Her nervousness still bubbled within her. She had loved Lydia for so long, never imagining it was going to become an actual relationship.

But she *had* kissed her. She could do this.

Lydia reached out and began undoing the straps on Medea's armour. The former male did the same in return, and the two kissed and felt one another in between this sensuous act. Lydia reached her hand beneath Medea's skirt, her fingers teasing at her short briefs beneath, pulling them down. Next, she ran her fingers over her underwear, and the sensitivity it produced made Medea moan in pleasure.

"Ohhhhhh, that f-feels good!"

"That's another thing, my dear one. Our armour makes *that* feel even better too."

Medea bit her lip, trying not to be too loud as Lydia's fingers began to trace over her womanhood proper, rubbing her folds softly and making her tunnel grow wet with desire.

"I can - ahhhh - believe it!"

"I expect you to return the favour, of course."

Medea rose to the occasion - though certainly not in any *male* sense - by helping pry off Lydia's upper armour. Her own came away too, leaving them in their under-shifts, and those didn't take long to remove in their growing passion. Their breasts were fully freed, and for a moment they simply took in each other's enhanced bodies; bountiful and busty and *powerful* and *womanly*. And then they were upon one another, all words forgotten as instead they began to make love fully. Their full breasts pressed against one another, nipples rubbing sensitively, producing the kind of bliss that Medea could only have imagined; her nightly self-pleasures before were nothing compared to this! She ran her fingers through Lydia's hair, across her skin, feeling her muscled back. Then she placed her fingers to her warm, feminine slit, returning the favour as Lydia had asked, all while the other woman continued to pleasure Medea. Her fingers slipped into her entrance, rubbing her most sensitive parts, and it made Medea groan in immense pleasure.

"Mhmmm! Ohhhhh, y-yes! Yesssss, right th-there! Right there!"

"Ahhhh, you've f-found a good spot t-too! Mhmmmm! Let's cum t-together! Let's - ahhh!!!"

They were both so close, but in their excitement their thrashing movements were causing small pits in the earth. Lydia had clearly forgotten what it was like to have super strength, and the goddesses knew that Medea had never experienced it before. But neither cared in that moment; the pleasure and connection was too much.

"Ohhh! Oh! OH! MMHNNNGHHH!!!"

She came, and as she shouted to the air a veritable hurricane leapt from her mouth; clearly a powerful gale breath was part of her new powerset, and it certainly expressed the depth of the bliss she was caught in the throes of. Lydia's own climax hit, and her body

shuddered in response to the ecstasy. She moaned into Medea's mouth, a stormy electricity surrounding her; clearly another part of her power. Medea groaned, feeling the energy course harmlessly through her, energising her own multiple orgasms.

The two finally collapsed, clutching one another, perfectly comfortable.

"We have to do that after every training session from now on," Lydia said.

Medea snorted. "I've wanted to do that with you forever."

"Different as a girl though, isn't it?"

Medea nodded, still caught in the post-coital sensations. "Even better."

"Told you. You're a true warrior of Hyrene now, Medea."

Medea grinned. She wouldn't have it any other way.

The Great Olympia was nearly upon them. They trained every day, trying to match the strength and speed of Amaris and Naveri, and becoming accustomed to their own powers. Medea spent some spare time talking to animals, testing her hurricane breath, but like all Hyrene women it was clear that her strength and speed were the greater parts of her powerset, and the same was true of Lydia, though her storm surge was new to her, and most exciting. And just as they had promised, they made passionate love on the meadows and in the baths and wherever they felt like after every training session. When they weren't making vigorous love, they were honing their abilities together, talking about their shared passions, and becoming much more social among the other Hyrene population, many of whom celebrated not just their connection to their armour, but also their love. For Hyrene women, there was nothing more wonderful than the union of two lovers, especially those who had accomplished something great together. Even Calliope raised a glass to them, and Helena offered a gruff congratulations. Lydia's mother was present, which allowed Medea to finally meet her.

"Well, I didn't expect a former male from man's world to become my daughter's paramour, but if you're worthy of the armour, that makes you worthy of our society, and therefore worthy of my daughter."

It was a more heartfelt and sincere interaction than Medea could have hoped for, and it left her feeling more at home and comfortable in the halls and streets and markets of Tripios than she'd ever been elsewhere. That comfort translated to her own training: she and Lydia were even more in-synch than before when it came to their combat and exercises and general manoeuvres, no doubt from their desire to impress each other further. They laughed themselves silly, overjoyed to share this wondrous power (and frankly, to look so fine doing it. Lydia in particular was proud of her tall stature and larger bust, while Medea was happy to

be playfully smug about the fact that her own bosom was bigger, not that Lydia minded; she got to play with them and grope them, and often at that).

But one day Lydia opted for something different. It was, in fact, the day just before the Great Olympia was set to begin.

“Where are we going?” Medea asked as Lydia led her to a strange cave along the southern coast.

“You’ll see.”

“Will it help with our training?”

“It will help us let off some steam.”

Medea stopped, then smirked. “Oh, *that* kind of training, huh?”

“You once told me that now you’re a woman, you feel like you’ve come to love womanly pleasure, right?”

“Yeah, something like that. To be honest, the idea of going back to being a man sometimes doesn’t feel right.”

Lydia motioned for her to enter a private chamber, whereupon she closed the door. It was a lush room, with glowing lanterns, a warm fire, and plush carpeting. It had a very sensual feel about it, and evidently this was a deliberate touch, given what Lydia was indicating. Medea took her lover’s hand and kissed her on the neck.

“I could certainly enjoy this space.”

But Lydia gently pushed her back, smiling. “Oh, you will, but not quite for what you think. You see, you once also asked me how Hyrene women repopulate, or what happens if one of them wants a more . . . masculine experience. Well, I thought I’d show you. Are you interested?”

Medea wasn’t certain what was meant, but she trust Lydia, so she nodded. “I’d like to know, at least.”

Lydia withdrew, and placed her hand on a small statue in the corner. Interestingly, it was the only representation of male figure that Medea had seen in her entire time upon the island. As Lydia touched it, the statue lit up with a bright green fire.

“I call upon the Ritual of the Binary.” Lydia said. “That I may please my lover, fitting inside her, bringing her to her full.”

The statue glowed, and Lydia groaned in a low tone. She shuddered, lowered one hand to her battle skirt and raising it. To Medea’s astonishment, she could see something growing there, between her girlfriend’s gorgeous thighs. It extended, pressing against her briefs, and it was only when Lydia lowered her shaking hands to unleash it that Medea realised exactly what she was looking at.

It was a penis.

An erect, hard, and very large penis.

“What on Earth, Lydia?”

Lydia grunted, pleased as the transformation occurred. “Don’t worry, it’s only temporary. But I figured I’d show you one of our lesser known traditions *and* have a little fun along the way. What do you say, lover, care to try something new?”

Malcolm would have been horrified, but Medea was not Malcolm. She looked to the large, throbbing cock, unbelieving that the sensation of desire that was growing within her. What would it even feel like? She had no idea, but . . . it was Lydia. She wanted to try.

“So long as you take the lead,” she responded.

Lydia did just that. She took Medea passionately, kissing and nuzzling her, removing her clothing and her own until the two were naked once again, this time on the deeply comfortable rug. Lydia’s manhood was massive, rubbing sensually against Medea’s toned stomach as they made out. It was alien and wrong, but it made Medea all the more curious and aroused anyway. Unlike previous sessions of sex, she spread her legs almost instinctively, this time to receive the hard cock that had lowered to rub and tease at her sensitive folds.

“Are you ready?” Lydia asked, licking her lover’s neck.

“P-please! Do it! I want you in m-me!”

“Happy to oblige. Don’t worry, I haven’t engaged the virility and fertility parts of the rite. This is purely carnal.”

She entered her lover, and Medea went rigid. It was like nothing she’d experienced before. She was being entered. Penetrated. *Filled*. She grunted in only a brief pain that gave way to a new and exciting ecstasy. Soon, once Lydia began to slowly thrust in and out, rubbing against the nerves of Medea’s inner walls, the new woman began to buck in time to these thrusts, enhancing her own pleasure further. Their rhythm only matched more perfectly as they continued, Lydia fucking Medea with wild abandon, her large breasts bouncing wonderfully as she did so. Medea was helpless to this affection, her warrior mind allowing itself to become more joyfully submissive.

“I’m s-so close!” she cried. “I want you to c-cum inside m-me!”

“I bet you never thought you’d say that when you were a man,” Lydia taunted, but then she thrust again, and with this great plunge she sent both of them spiralling into inescapable bliss. Lydia’s temporary manhood throbbed within Medea’s passage, and then ejaculated its seed deep within her. Medea clutched her lover, breasts against breasts, wailing in ecstasy at this release, and Lydia grunted harshly, taking on the role of the man for just a few moments further. As the pleasure faded, her cock withdrew, melding back into her body before transitioning back to her usual womanhood.

“Was that a fun little change of pace?” she asked Medea, stroking her hair.

Medea nodded, struggling to summon words in the aftermath. "It was. I love you so much."

She realised what she'd said even as the words left her mouth, but Lydia did not look shocked or even too surprised at this. In fact, her expression was one of pure relief. She kissed Medea long and hard, her tongue dancing in the former male's mouth.

"I love you too, Medea," she said, as she withdrew.

It was the best thing the new Hyrene woman had ever been told.

Part Six: Trial and Decision

The warrioresses filed into the great theatre, a complex even larger than the Colosseum of Rome and far more splendid. Thousands and thousands of Hyrene women in their gorgeous dresses, stolas, and garments cheered loudly as the numerous fighters and heroines of the island assembled in their ranks. All were connected to their armour, all were beautiful and tall and powerful, but each were different in their own way, even the glow of their powers distinct. Medea was nervous, but she held Lydia's hand proudly, and figures cheered from the sidelines; friends she'd made who'd been curious about her, and now were rallying behind her. She mouthed them a thanks, but fell silent as Calliope began to speak, her voice magically enhanced.

"Welcome to the Great Olympia! A race and track and physical competitive event to test your skills. You must circuit the entire island and pass each challenge. To finish with your partner is enough to qualify you as a Hyrene warrior in full, but the pair that comes first will be granted a mighty boon of their asking from the Great Mothers."

She gestured up to a box, where elderly yet still beautiful women, the leaders of the island, formed a semi-circular council overseeing the event.

"Be true to yourselves and your partners, women of Hyrene," Calliope called. "And no matter your origin, know that on this day, you will fully be one of us!"

She glanced meaningfully into the crowd of armoured women, and Medea got the distinct sense that her words were an encouragement to her particularly. Lydia rubbed her shoulder, and finally the confidence set in. The kind of confidence that only her True Form could grant her, the one that - if she decided to not to change back - would be hers for life. She looked down at her beauty, at her full chest and brilliant armour, at her tough yet soft thighs, at the tight braid that swayed upon her shoulder blades, at her olive tone. And then she gazed at Lydia, this woman she was finally compatible with, and who had finally found her path after secretly lacking belief in herself.

Medea knew then and there that she'd already made her decision. She was staying as a Hyrene woman, even if she did go back to America. Wherever Lydia went, she would go.

"Head up in the clouds, Medea?" Amaris said, the rival pair standing just beside them.

"Absolutely," she said, dreamily. "It's where I plan to be."

Naveria chuckled. "Now *that's* a determined statement. I have no doubt you and Lydia will finish well, sister. But first? That's for myself and Amaris. We are true lovers and allies both."

Medea grinned, as did Lydia. They took each others' hands, and made a very public kiss that went just a little longer than usual.

"So are we," Lydia said tauntingly.

Naveri snorted, and even Amaris seemed amused.

"Well, I'm glad you'll have someone to console you when we come ahead of you!"

"We'll see about that," Medea said. "I think you might be left in our dust."

Once more Naveri extended her hand, and this time so did Amaris. Medea and Lydia took their hands respectively.

"May the best women win," both parties said, altogether.

But then they refocused. Calliope had a spear of pure gold in her hand. With her super strength, the impressive Amazonian woman hurled it into the air far over the assembled competitors' heads. It crashed into the great cymbal that hung far above, and in that moment, the crowd broke loose, surging forward like an implacable stampede.

The Great Olympia had begun.

Warriors leapt and ran, some used their talismans to turn to great animals like leopards and cheetahs, while others achieved temporary flight. One even used her lasso to hook the flung javelins of her partner, and together they broke the very nature of physics by swinging through the air, their powers in full concert. Lydia and Medea leapt together, their moves matching one another perfectly as each left the theatre and broke out in the open, beginning the great march around the island. Some thinned out, others fell behind, but Medea and Lydia had trained for literal months by this point, and they kept near the front of the group alongside Naveria and Medea. Lydia crackled with lightning around her form, using it to empower both her and her partner, so that neither would struggle with energy for a while yet.

The first part of the course was a simple speed and endurance test, but as they reached the beginning of the western cove the next challenge awaited them; the test of the spear. Medea was anxious and glad; her weakest point of training would at least be addressed straight away. Each pair had to grab a spear and hurl it from the low cliff and into

the far ocean waters, striking a target floating peacefully upon them. Naveri and Amaris got theirs straight away, and so did Lydia, but Medea failed three times in a row. Her gut clenched.

"You can do this," Lydia said, "just focus on the wind. Think about the course of the spear."

But it was too difficult. Medea could scream. Others were passing. But then she saw a flying albatross above.

"Hey there!" she called to it. "How fast is the wind? Where should I aim the spear do get it to land true from my position."

To Lydia's surprise, the albatross landed near them, eyed her form, and then made a series of strange caws. She heard it as: "*Further left, further left, halt! Now reduce your strength a little. The wind will also carry it. There!*"

She flung it, and it struck the target, shattering its wood.

"Ha!" she bragged to Lydia, clapping her hand. "I told you speaking with animals is cool!"

"Fine, I was wrong, now let's get running! We're falling behind!"

They took off, and this time their determination was even greater, the challenge increased. Their path took them inland, and as they ascended Mount Strolis they were able to carve a shortcut that brought them back near the front using a combination of their bracer quakes and Medea's ability to slice through solid matter effortlessly.

"We can do this!" Lydia cried.

"I know!" Medea yelled, right as they reached a great chasm. An enormous set of poles had been erected in its centre with huge ropes to cling to, but a discus shot was required to unlatch them. The two of them threw theirs together, and this time Medea got her shot home; the rope trailed down and she leapt at the same time, grasping the rope and using her momentum to make it to the other side. They poured down the hill, the warriors now separating into various groups that trailed to the end. But Lydia and Medea were indeed gaining, and Naveri and Amaris were in sight, leading the pack as they were.

"It's a good thing she's still short!" laughed Lydia.

Unfortunately, Amaris was also a champion swimmer, and the next bout required them to cross the Lake of Tears. Lydia's solution was surprisingly brilliant, however, halting Medea before she could get into the lake.

"Don't! I've got a better idea. Can you still do that hurricane breathe?"

Medea realised instantly what she was suggesting. The pair ran off to the side even as other Hyrene women looked on with confusion, and they snapped free a large board from the lake dock.

“We’ll fix it later!” cried an embarrassed Medea as they lay it flat on the lake. Lydia used her electric power to generate a current around her, propelling them forward as they surfed it together. She clung to Medea, who then faced backwards and blew out her breath with all the force she could. They *rocketed* forth, shooting across the surface of the lake and overcoming some of their strongest competitors. The pair couldn’t help themselves; they cheered at their success, leaping forth as they reached the other side to scramble up the bank and leap to the next section. Amaris and Naveri were now parallel to them, alarmed at the pair’s sudden appearance.

“You’re kidding!” Amaris declared, clearly frustrated.

Naveri just cackled. “Second-to-final stretch, everyone!”

It was an obstacle course, and a brutal one at that. It extended around part of the southern reach of the island. The two pairs kept even pace as they clambered up walls, darted across uncertain footing, pole vaulted over high sections. Medea’s body was flushed with power, and while the tiredness was starting to set in, she’d never felt more alive. Nor had she ever been so comfortable in her own skin, or besides someone else. As they rocketed out of the obstacle course and back onto the planes of the final stretch, she let out a giggle just to herself.

“I never want to change back,” she said to herself.

She was a woman now. A Hyrene warrior. A champion. Her body was capable of great feats, but even when it wasn’t, it was the skin she was comfortable in. The shape of her. The armour that surrounded her. The myth she was taking part in.

“Watch out, mounted section,” Lydia said, snapping her out of this reverie.

Medea could have sworn. She did, in fact. Horse riding was not her expertise either, and it was now the final stretch of the Great Olympia. And Naveri was a *great* horse rider. Both partners needed to reach the end before their victory was counted; the last place of the pair would determine their overall standing.

“Shit!” Medea said.

“I trust you! You can do this, my love! I know you can!”

Borne by those words, Medea reached one of the handlers, a gorgeous dark-skinned Hyrene who was holding the reins of several horses.

“Please, I’ve never met you, but who among you will lend me victory, sisters?”

One of the horses, a gorgeous hazel-haired steed, snorted. *“That will be I, warrioress. I was planning a slow trot, but such respect will earn you much.”*

She hoped it would, because she leapt onto the back of the creature, thanking it even as she took the reins. There was little time to get comfortable in the saddle though, because the horse then took off of its own volition, nearly throwing her. Lydia looked on in amazement as Medea’s position actually kept equal to Naveri’s, who by this point had her gaze focused

on the theatre they'd started at on the far horizon. They sped along, leaving Amaris and Lydia behind them, steeds pushing themselves to the full limit.

"Looks like whatever happens, we'll be first and second!" Naveria called out.

"I know which one I intend to be!"

"Ha! I love your spirit! You truly have become a Hyrene woman!"

Somehow, the compliment meant all the more coming from a rival, especially one pushing herself to get ahead of Medea. The theatre loomed closer and closer, its great walls beginning to rise in the former male's vision. Her heart pounded, her body was electrified, and her steed and her were one.

But Naveria had the greater experience, and not even her ability to talk to animals could match up to years of equestrian training. Slowly but surely the woman pulled ahead. It was her that first crossed the finish line to immense cheers, and Medea passed just a few seconds later.

"*I apologise,*" the steed said as they pulled to a stop.

"Nothing to apologise for, friend," she said, patting his mane. "You were incredible."

Next to come were Amaris and Lydia, holding neck and neck. Naveria and her watched with tension in their bodies. The finishing partner would determine placing, but if they were very close together, then the overall difference would be decided by whichever partner that came first pulled ahead by. Unfortunately, despite her own brilliance, Lydia came just shy of Amaris over the finish line, just as Medea had. There was the brief feeling of despair, but it was followed by elation for the two other women: Amaris leapt off of her horse into Naveria's arms, and the two shared a passionate kiss. The crowd roared again, cheering loudly at this display, and Medea and Lydia decided to join in, kissing lovingly also once Lydia was off of her horse.

"You were spectacular," Lydia said. "What a way to end this adventure. Too bad we didn't win though. I would have liked to have earned a great boon."

Medea shrugged, placing an arm around her lover's armoured waist. They watched as Naveria and Amaris were summoned forth for their trophy, knowing they too would be called upon for medals soon for their second placing.

"Well," Medea said. "There's always next year, right? It's not the end of the adventure, Lydia. Not by a long shot."

There was a brief pause as Lydia sorted through Medea's words, the roar of the crowd and her own calming body making for good distraction. But then the realisation was obvious upon her features, and her beautiful face lit up with an utterly *glorious* smile.

"You plan to stay here? As a Hyrene woman?"

Medea laughed and gestured to her fit, athletic, and voluptuous form, encased in its Greek-style armour perfectly. "I'm already a Hyrene woman, Lydia. Maybe this was what I was always meant to be. But I don't plan to stay here."

There was a brief disappointment on Lydia's face, until Medea kissed her on the lips.

"I plan to stay with you," she said. "Wherever you go. I love you, remember? So if you go back to the world of man as Amazonia, stronger heroine than ever before, then I'll be by your side as her partner, if you'll have me. And if you stay here, then I'll be here too. I don't want to be anywhere else but with the woman I love."

Somehow, Lydia's beaming smile from before was eclipsed by this one, and Medea was once again reminded of how beautiful her True Form was. She placed a hand on Medea's cheek, tears flowing in her eyes.

"I don't know if I want to leave yet, but I *do* want to get back into the world and start helping people again. You'd really join me in that?"

"Seriously, Lydia? You know I'm a big superhero nerd. I'd want nothing more, especially alongside you."

Calliope was calling them now, instructing them up onto the dais to receive their medals. The pair shared another kiss, long enough to annoy the captain of the guard.

"Then let's spend a little more time among our sisters," Lydia said, "before returning to the outside world. It'll need us, after all."

Medea grinned. If the bad guys had trouble with one half-trained Hyrene woman before, what chance would they have against *two*? Especially a matched pair like them?

But that was food for thought later. For now, she walked hand in hand with her lover up to the dais, and accepted her medal. It was a triumph.

The End