

**(Every character depicted in the story below is a consenting legal adult over the age of 18)**

**A/N: Kaina tests Izuku~**

**-x-X-x-**

“... I want to leave Japan altogether. How quickly can you smuggle me out of the country?”

She would be a fool to accept his offer upfront. Instead, Kaina decides she’s going to test him just a little bit, by seeing how genuine he was actually being when he said there were no strings attached here. At least if he stuck her back in Tartarus or tried to kill her, she would know what sort of man he truly was.

And yet... while Shroud does look disappointed, he nods all the same.

“I understand. I should be able to get you out of the country relatively quickly all things considered... so long as you know where you want to go.”

Kaina hesitates at that. Where even would she go if she were serious about wanting to leave Japan? If she actually did want to fully escape and never return, she might think up a more specific destination... but as it is, she just shakes her head and decides to go with something simple.

“Just... get me to the mainland and I’ll take it from there.”

That brings a frown to Shroud’s young face. He really doesn’t look old enough to be some criminal mastermind despite being in his twenties. And yet... he’d just gone and broken her out of the most secure prison on the planet, or so the Japanese Government claimed.

“You don’t want any money?”

Kaina raises a brow.

“What use would Japanese Yen do me on the mainland? No, I’ll make find my own way and make my own fortune. All you have to do is supply me with the ability to escape.”

Shroud hesitates, but she doesn’t get the impression that it’s because he’s trying to decide how to screw her over. Rather, it feels more like he’s worried about her, oddly enough. Finally though, he nods.

“... Alright then.”

With a snap of his fingers, another of the portals he used to bring them out of Tartarus opens up.

“This will take us to the coast. From there I’ll be able to open a portal to South Korea for you.”

With that, he steps on through. Kaina stiffens up, half-expecting a trap of some sort... but it’s not like she has any choice but to follow him. Being otherwise stranded on Mount Fuji in nothing but her prison uniform would otherwise be a death sentence.

When she steps through the portal though... it’s as he said. They’re on Japan’s coast, specifically on a cliff overlooking the Sea of Japan. She can actually see the mainland off in the distance, which must mean they’re either on Kyushu or Tsushima Island.

At the same time that she’s cataloging this fact, Shroud clears his throat and Kaina looks over to see him... holding up clothes.

“I know you said you wanted no money, but at a bare minimum it seems like you should change out of your current attire.”

Hm. Good point. Nodding sharply, Kaina wordlessly takes the clothes and then watches as Shroud willingly turns his back on her, looking away entirely. She watches him with narrowed eyes the entire time she’s changing, but he makes no attempt to peek. Nor does he even try to convince her not to do this.

... Seriously? He's really on the up and up, isn't he? As she slips on socks and shoes for the first time since she was imprisoned and straightens up, feeling more like a human being again, Kaina lets out an explosive breath.

"I'm done."

Turning back around, Shroud nods... and another purple portal appears off to the side.

"Then here we are. This will take you to South Korea. And for what it's worth... good luck."

For a long moment they just stand there staring at one another. Kaina at Shroud's earnest face and Shroud at her narrowed eyes. But she makes no move towards the open portal. Instead...

"I'm not going anywhere. You, Shroud, are an idiot who needs my help."

He blinks at that, looking a little baffled.

"Excuse me?"

"You're clearly in over your head. I won't pretend to know the first thing about how you managed to break into Tartarus like you did, or how you got away with plucking me from the depths of that prison. Even with a Teleportation Quirk it shouldn't have been possible."

"... I created a sizable number of distractions, to be fair."

She ignores his explanation, continuing on as if he didn't say anything.

"However, showing me your face right after rescuing me was foolish in the extreme. You said you read my file, but my file doesn't tell you who I truly am as a person. It certainly doesn't tell you who I've become in the years I've been in Tartarus. You should never have trusted me with such important information. If I

was captured or decided to turn on you of my own accord, I could sell your face for any number of things.”

Shroud opens his mouth to speak, but Kaina cuts him off with a sharp shake of her head.

“No. You were ready to let me go, to let me leave, with critical information about your identity. If I don’t stick around and keep an eye on you, I fear you’ll continue to make similar mistakes and the next person you choose to foolishly trust with your face will betray you the moment they get the chance.”

Letting out another explosive breath, Kaina curls her hands into fists at her sides.

“I owe you a debt for freeing me whether you think so or not. So I’ll help you with your plans for the time being, Shroud. I’ll be your right-hand woman. Because if nothing else, I’m going to make sure you don’t get yourself killed or incarcerated. I owe you that much.”

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As Kaina’s words hang in the air, Izuku stands there with his mouth open, not quite sure what to say in the face of her diatribe. He... well, he’s somewhat reluctant to explain the truth to her after all of that. After all, if he told her he was planning to erase her memory of his face right before she stepped through Kurogiri’s portal and left Japan for good, it might sour her opinion of him.

At the same time though, he’s somewhat loath to have her continue thinking him that incompetent. More so, he had gone into this whole thing fully intending to be honest with her because Kaina Tsutsumi’s file made it abundantly clear that nobody had been honest with her throughout most of her life.

In the end... as difficult as it was, he could only really make one choice here.

“I wasn’t going to let you leave with knowledge of my face, Kaina.”

The purple-haired ex-Pro Hero blinks at that.

“What?”

Letting out a sigh, Izuku gestures over at the open portal.

“Right when you stepped through... that’s when I was going to erase your memory of my face. You would be free but you wouldn’t have been able to hurt me even if you got recaptured or decided you wanted to betray me.”

Kaina’s eyes narrow again as she turns his explanation over in her head. Her lips purse and she grimaces.

“That’s... bullshit.”

Izuku shakes his head.

“I assure you, I’m telling you the truth. I-!”

“No, I believe you. But it’s still bullshit. What the fuck is your Quirk, Shroud? How many people do you have in your organization, exactly?”

Well if she was going to be the right-hand woman of his Shroud Identity, Kaina would need to know more than he intended for most to learn. Smiling thinly, Izuku just shrugs.

“The man who I killed, the one who had plans for utilizing you as a tool... his Quirk allowed him to take Quirks from others. When I killed him... I inherited that Quirk and every Quirk he’d ever stolen, all at once.”

Kaina’s jaw drops a bit at that, her eyes widening in disbelief. Izuku gives her a moment before dropping the other bombshell.

“Before that... I was actually Quirkless.”

She chokes on her own spit but to her credit, quickly recovers. In fact, after a beat her eyes narrow in thought.

“Vigil. You’re that Quirkless Vigilante known as Vigil.”

Izuku has to admit, he’s more than a little impressed that she managed to put that together. Tilting his head to the side, he can’t help but ask.

“How do you figure that?”

“You said it before when you were telling me about your goals. You mentioned reforming Hero Society... as a vigilante. Now you’re telling me you were Quirkless before killing this man you keep mentioning last night. Even in Tartarus, rumors about you, about Vigil, reached our ears. I guess some of them were right.”

That...

“Which ones?”

“The ones who said you were a scary motherfucker.”

A bark of laughter leaves Izuku’s throat. He can’t contain it. Kaina, meanwhile, smirks a little bit before crossing her arms over her chest.

“So you aren’t as foolish as I thought you were. You still need me, Shroud. After all, even if you’d erased my memory of your face, I would have still remembered the strange number of Quirks you showed off... and the way you sounded without the mask on. I was still a dangerous leak that you never should have considered letting go free.”

... She had something of a point there. And it wasn’t like Izuku was going to argue against needing her. While freeing Kaina from Tartarus had been mostly about correcting the decades-long injustice done to her, there was also the fact that he’d hoped he could recruit her in the same way All For One intended to.

Izuku just figured he would use her for good rather than the evils that All For One had planned.

“Well then, welcome aboard... Lady Nagant.”

When she stiffens up at that and looks nonplused, Izuku raises a brow.

“... Unless you'd rather go by something else after all this time.”

After a moment of thinking about it, Kaina shakes her head.

“No. Whatever you did to stir the hornet's nest back in Tartarus, there's no denying that they'll realize I've been broken out sooner or later. If I'm going to be your right-hand woman... I want them to know. I want them to know Lady Nagant is back. I want them to fear what that means for them.”

He doesn't bother asking who the 'them' in this scenario is. After all, he has a pretty good idea all the same. Smiling, Izuku reaches out his hand again, the portal to South Korea swirling shut off to the side.

“Then I'll say it again. Welcome aboard, Lady Nagant.”

Kaina Tsutsumi, aka Lady Nagant, steps forward and clasps her hand in his, giving him a sharp nod.

“So long as your goals remain the same... you'll have my rifle, Shroud.”

The unspoken threat that she might still decide to turn on him if at any point she feels he's betraying the ideals he's already spoken of lingers in the air. But Izuku isn't worried... he has no intentions of changing course at this point or becoming some sort of actual villain driven by selfishness and greed.

No, with Lady Nagant at his side and the identity of Shroud born and already building a reputation as the first to break someone out of Tartarus in all of its years of operation... Izuku was already taking the first steps down his new path.

Of course, before he finalized any of his plans, he really needed to know what was on All For One's computer. With a snap of his fingers, Izuku has Kurogiri form another portal, this one back to the manor. He gestures for Kaina to follow and she does so, the two of them stepping out into the foyer... where Kurogiri in turn awaits them.

"Kaina, this is Kurogiri. Kurogiri, this is Kaina. Please show her to a set of quarters that will be hers for as long as she wants them."

Looking to Kaina, Izuku grins.

"I imagine you'll be wanting a proper hot bath now that your incarceration has come to an end."

Kaina's eyes widen at that and he can tell immediately that he's hooked her. Chuckling, Izuku waves her off.

"Go with Kurogiri. We'll talk again later."

"... Very well."

As they depart, Izuku makes his way to the study... where he's not surprised to find Mei sitting behind the desk in front of the computer monitor.

"Mei? I'm back. How are things going with the computer?"

Looking up, Mei blinks for a moment... and then leaps to her feet and all but leaps across the room to glomp him. Izuku catches her in his arms with a grunt, holding her steady as he lets out a chuckle.

"Izuku! You made it in and out of Tartarus!"

Raising an eyebrow, Izuku smirks.

“Shroud made it in and out of Tartarus. Thanks for the quick work on that front by the way... I think the Shroud Identity will make for quite the distraction while we’re still finding our footing in the coming months.”

Pulling back, Mei slowly nods, though she still looks him over like she expects him to be hiding some sort of injury from her. When she doesn’t find one, she huffs.

“... And how did it go with Kaina Tsutsumi?”

Here, Izuku can’t help but feel a little proud of himself. After all, he’d succeeded beyond his wildest expectations.

“Kurogiri is showing her to her rooms. I believe she’s looking forward to taking a bath.”

Mei’s eyes brighten.

“So she’s onboard then?!”

“Yes, she’s onboard. Now please Mei, how are things going with the computer?”

Blinking, Mei glances back to the desk she’s abandoned.

“Oh that thing? Yeah we’re in.”

Wait... what? Izuku hurries over to the desk, Mei following on his heels.

“We’re in?”

“Mhm!”

“But how did you get the password?”

He assumes she somehow managed to bypass the security somehow, but really, he’d never known Mei to be much of a hacker so he wasn’t sure how she-

“I just asked Kurogiri if he knew it! Turns out he set this whole place up so he did! Honestly, I don’t even know if All For One knew the password or not!”

Izuku stops in his tracks and stares off into nothing for a long moment as he processes that fact. After a moment, Mei clears her throat and continues on.

“Anyways, I’ve been looking at some stuff while you were gone and I found something really interesting. Check it out, this might be exactly the kind of thing you’re looking for!”

Sitting down behind the desk, still in a bit of a daze, Izuku looks at the monitor to see what Mei is talking about. As he reads, the dazed look in his eyes fades away and quickly becomes something more focused... and intense. His eyes roam back and forth across the screen and his jaw clenches.

“... You’re right Mei. This is exactly what I was looking for.”

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**Remember to go back and VOTE!**