

# Under the Christmas Tree in NY

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## Kapitel 1:

Her sword slashes through another one of those pesky Lamias. They just keep coming, and when you think you finished one wave, another one is already on your doorstep. Arturia wipes away the sweat on her forehead. With that done, she can get her bounty and settle down for some food.

Excited for a really big cheeseburger they have in a small shop a few streets away, she dissolves her sword and gets on her way.

She has been working for a headhunting agency for the past half year, since...well since that happened. It paints thinking about, so Arturia often just force stops her thought train and gets back to her business mode.

Today's profit is enough to pay for the entire week's meal and her rent. Just for some Lamias, that is. Maybe next week she should go for something even bigger?

Absorbed in her own thoughts, she walks down the sidewalk, until she arrives at her goal. The streets are now opened to save walking again, and the people spill outside like beans and start chatting and flood into the stores.

At least her Agency always saves the people first, before she starts her job. Nobody would want to have a really big Spriggan stomping on you on accident, or Arturia hurting a pedestrian.

The door opens swiftly and the air conditioned warm air welcomes her comfortably back.

"Damn, good job out there!" The secretary behind the front desk is a young lady with wavy brown hair and glasses on her nose. Always a smile on her face and sometimes a bit talking too much.

"Ah, don't worry about it. Wasn't much of a hassle." Arturia waves at her and signs the paper on the desk. In exchange she gets an envelope handed, filled with those beautiful paper bills.

Trying to hold back her excitement, she excuses herself and leaves the shop quickly. Finally burger time! With a bit too much swing in her step the young woman makes her way to her beloved diner.

The smell of grease and meat welcomes her back like a mother and her child in her arms. Today is the special "Three layers of meat with extra cheese" day, which is one of the weekly highlights and the reason she goes here once a week. The woman behind the counter recognises her already.

"You want the Special?"

"Of course." Arturia answered and paid her. "Add an extra Soda today."

With the food on her tray she sits down in one of the comfortable corners next to the huge window. Watching the cars while eating can be quite calming sometimes.

Odd, but good.

Arturia munches down her food too quickly, and the sweet taste of soda just barely quells her desire for this shabby fast food that would absolutely ruin her health if she goes on like this. With a sigh Arturia cleans the remaining trash and checks her phone. No new messages, but a few social media notifications. Upon opening instablam, a familiar face greets her and sends a light shock through her body.

Damn, not you...

It's a picture of a snowy landscape and a handsome fair haired young man in the

center. He poses extravagant and smiles extra wide, just as if he had to prove how happy he is living his life and going skiing in the mountains.

The post is relatively new by @ gil.gold, and @ clayman is tagged as the photograph. Ah, so he is going with Enkidu but not another woman...

"Urgh what am i even thinking?" Arturia reminds herself loud and pinches her cheeks. No time for jealousy, I'm over this!

Frustrated she slams her phone face down on the table and tries to distract herself by staring outside. The sky is dark and the forecast said there might be snow for christmas. If that is the case, it might be quite a nice weekend to spend alone. But she was sure that Merlin messaged her about coming to visit...

Quickly Arturia scrolls through her old messages and finds said conversation. Merlin said he is going to have some business here in New York and would stop by for a few hours and give her a present. He might be an idiot sometimes, but he always cared for her, even after a certain breakup happened.

The memory still stings, it has already been a year but still she cant stop thinking about Goldie.

One day he approached her, they went shopping together and Arturia only agreed, so he could carry her shopping bags. But in the end he proposed to her out of nowhere, completely catching her off guard.

Then things happened, an argument after another followed and doubts why she said yes emerged pretty quickly. And so she called off the engagement.

The ring he gave her is at home in a small blue box, completely covered by her stuff in the closet. Yet ever since they stopped talking about a year ago, Arturia still feels somewhat restless. Maybe a bit of regret.

But he was such a fool, annoying and arrogant, it was too much. This was a good decision, she keeps telling herself to be more confident in herself.

Half an hour later, her phone pings her a new message. It is from Bradamante, one of the other groups leaders in the headhunting agency. This cunning woman leads the Knights, they are tasked with more heavy takedowns that require more than one sword.

15:03 Wanna go shopping? U^ ^U

Arturia thinks for a moment, and then just types out her answer.

15:05 Where do u wanna go

The response is there in a flash.

15:05 just Vinci center they got cute new stuff (□□□)V

15:06 k lets meet up in front half hour?

15:06 aight sure!!!

Arturia slips into her winter jacket and waves the counter lady goodbye, then slips on the gloves and braces for the cold wind outside. The Vinci Center is one station away, but Arturia got her monthly subway ticket and uses it frequently to just drive around the city.

It doesn't take long for her to arrive. In front of the huge building, that has way too many windows, already stands a tall woman with two big ponytails. That is Bradamante in her glory. Always noticeable in the crowd just by looking for her hairstyle.

"Ahhh, thanks for coming on short notice!" Bradamante hugs her tightly, her cold face touches her cheek. How long has she been waiting here? Arturia was in time, but it still concerned her a bit.

"Where do you want to go first? Need to do any last minute christmas shopping?"

"Hmm, i have pretty much everything i need but they got a really cute new clothing brand in and i wanted to check out what they have in store." Bradamante thinks posing exaggerated, and then claps her hands.

"Let's go, I'm freezing!" Arturia smiles at her cheeky and fresh behaviour. Sometimes going outside with your friends or coworkers more in this case helps to feel better. Maybe they are friends, their case is a bit blurry.

Inside an extremely huge christmas tree greets them, the lights shine so bright you can't look into it directly.

"Wow, i haven't been in here since they put this up. That is gigantic every year, huh!" notices Arturia and shields her eyes.

"Oh yeah, i wanted to see this year's decoration too!" exited Bradamante snaps a picture, probably to post it later to instablam. Maybe Arturia should do the same, to show how much fun she has to him. Damn, i'm not the same as him! Internally she slaps herself and concentrates on the upcoming shopping tour.

The lady knight swoops through each floor, picking up a few new items here and there. Arturia just lets herself being caught up by her enthusiasm and finds herself a pair of pretty new winter gloves.

At the end of their tour they sit down in one of the small cafes on the ground floor. Bradamante pays, so Arturia can't really complain about it.

"Wait, come closer. I need a picture for instablam if you don't mind."

"Hm, yeah sure." Arturia takes out her phone too. Bradmante has a really cute strap on her phone, and her nails are decorated with small snowflakes.

She is just much more pretty and girly, maybe that's why she couldn't keep up the relationship? Perish the thought, everyone is pretty in their way. This girl next to her is just a bit more stereotypical cute.

"Aaand cheese!" They both post with a peace sign.

"That turned out soo cute, you are so adorable when you smile!" This compliment seriously flatters the young woman.

"Ah, really? Sometimes I think i am not." Shyly she takes a sip from her coffee. Bradamante's eyes widened as if she was in genuine shock.

"You were engaged to the sexiest man on this planet, and you think you are not pretty? I wish I could bonk you with my Atlante!"

That one made her actually chuckle.

"Sorry, lately I've had my thoughts. A bit of...i don't know." frustrated she puts down her cup.

Bradamante finished posting their cute selfie.

"I tagged you by the way" and then puts her phone aside, fully listening to her.

"I mean, you totally had the chance with him and you already told me why you broke

the engagement. It is okay to have afterthoughts, so you have two options.”

Arturia listens up, Bradamante puts on her dramatical voice.

“Either you try again and find out if your feelings are genuine or you goddamn forget it and look for someone else! If you are into blonde guys I have a few on the list. Suzu probably too if you ask her, she has been to a few mixers.”

“Ah, I thought i'm over this. It's time for something new. But something in my heart lately just feels different about this.”

Why don't you ask Merlin about this, he is the pro in stuff like this! Well, I can't give you more than my advice. ”

“I appreciate it, thanks for being here.” Arturia is a bit more calm now, but asking Merlin is a bit too weird. He is like her big brother and telling them about your love problems is not always optimal. Bradamante looks up to him, so she tries to slip him in here and there. But she is loyal to her husband Ruggiero through and through.

They empty their coffee, chatting about this and that, work and life and eventually part ways. It's darker outside, and time to get home to make her meal.

Maybe today she should treat herself a good pudding or chicken wings? The thought of some chicken wings already makes her happy.

On the train she posts the picture of the tree, thanking Bradamante for the wonderful day. The selfie already got liked by a few people she knows.

The first notification pops up, and it shakes her up quite a bit again. It's a certain @gil.gold.

Arturia reminds herself to stay calm and not get all weird over a like. Good for him, see how good I live my life! God, she sounded stupid in her thoughts.

Arturia puts her phone back into her bag and gets out at her station.

Everything just has to continue every day the same and maybe looking for someone else will help her get off the case Gilgamesh.

But some things are easier said or thought than done.

## Kapitel 2:

Christmas is four days away, and Arturia is outside again working her butt off in the cold. The snow has fallen last night, it's freezing and the stupid possessed snowman roams on one of the bigger plazas in NY. Arturia alone was sent to take care of it, since they are not really strong but coming in masses. An easy job for Excalibur.

The huge light beam eradicates every enemy presence in the area. Relieved, she lets her sword vanish and looks at the chaos this ruckus has caused. Soon the cleanup crew will work their magic and everyone can continue to do their last minute panic shopping.

Merlin said he would stop by tomorrow, so maybe Arturia should clean her flat, she thinks to herself. Another one of his long speeches about "your mental stability is partially influenced by your room being clean!" is something she can absolutely live without.

The same again, reporting the mission back, grabbing a few bucks and off home. It's getting late again.

Deep into reading a novel on her phone she walks home, it's not too far away. But today something else surprises her. Someone is standing in front of her flat. A big blue jacket and the hood is hiding their face. Hasn't she seen this long hair somewhere before?

"Uhm...." She approaches them slowly.

"Oh, wonderful!" suddenly the person turns around. The beautiful symmetrical face out of another world, the small smile, yeah. That in front of her is Enkidu, Gilgamesh his best friend.

"What are you doing here?" hesitant she walks a step back.

"That is a long story, but will you listen me out?" they ask her, the red cheeks and light skin are in contrast to each other. If he was not well, a clay man made from the gods he would have been a choice for her probably.

"Alright, come in." Arturia opens the door and cleans her shoes.

"Take them off and leave them in the entrance." she tells Enkidu and throws her winter jacket off.

In the kitchen she warms up a tea and puts the cup in front of him.

Enkidu takes a sip and smiles lightly. "A good choice for a tea."

Arturia taps with her foot, a bit nervous and impatient.

"What are you doing here?" He is Gilgamesh, his best friend, so being around him makes her feel somewhat uncomfortable. And his entire godly air, it's different from Gil but still intimidating.

Enkidu looks up, his beautiful green hair falls in his face.

"I have something to ask of you. My best friend you see.... he seems to be emotionally unhappy about what happened and I can't stand being around him knowing he still has feelings for you and not at all processed that you ditched him."

Too straightforward, but the truth stings in her heart.

"Please go on a date with him on Christmas Eve and talk about it!" Clay even got up and clapped his hands, praying towards her to listen.

Arturia just crossed over her arms, still having a bit of nervous face on.

"You want to be his wingman and fix our relationship. Didn't expect that." she then answers.

Enkidu empties the cup and gets back his composure.

"Yes. And I am sure you will listen and still have somewhere inside you some love left for him."

That's quite a bold assumption you're making here!"

"I know, but please! I just want you to be happy and not force you to mend your relationship. Just think it over, have a talk and then hopefully be a bit more at peace with each other." he explains calmly. The blonde woman sits down and started to think about his proposure a bit.

"Okay, i do it. But you tell him." she answers after a few minutes passed.

Enkidu jumps up out of joy.

"Thanks, i will do that! I pray for you to come to terms."

"He hasn't started dating Ishtar" The lady akss out of nowhere.

Enkidu is a bit taken back, but then shrugs his shoulders. " She is terrible and obnoxious in the most terrible way sometimes. Gilgamesh still has feelings for you, so he rejected all of her advances." That is quite peculiar.

Maybe there is still hope.

"Good, tell him we meet up at 5 PM in front of Vincis, and we are going to eat something together. That's it." The young man nods, and types something to one of his contacts.

"Can't thank you enough for it, you know. Being around a depressed Gil can sometimes be really tiring, but you should know that best too."

Arturia chuckles and thinks about the moments he would come to her, all sad like a puppy and behave when she would put on a more serious face and not her calm demeanour. Actually it was pretty cute and refreshing.

Enkidu stays for a while, they chat a bit more about how work is going for her and what he has been doing the past year. When they said their goodbyes, the anxiety comes in like a huge wave down on her.

She said damn yes to a date, a goddamn date with her ex fiance?

"Ah fuck..." she mutters to herself.

But as Bradamante already told her, mending it would be something she could try and maybe re-discover her feelings.

What should she wear? And where are they going to eat? Is he going to pay? The thoughts swirled around, but one by one she sorted out the matter.

Don't look too fancy, but happy and chic. There's a restaurant in the more pricey category they have been to on their third date too. The young woman clenches her first as if she is preparing for a fight. Ready or not, just four days to go.

## Kapitel 3:

Merlin stopped by, but he could not stay for long. His gift was a beautiful hairpin, something she could use to make her hairbun a bit more exciting, is what he told her with his impish smile.

Sadly they didn't see each other for long, as he departed for another appointment.

Another two days of work, and then the fated Christmas Eve arrived.

Her phone pings her a new message, it's the group chat with the other girl friends they put together to stay a bit more in touch.

14:06 Suzuka Ahhhhhh you totes date him againnn????

14:07 Bradamante is that not a bit uncool were in our girls chat (ಠ\_ಠ)

14:07 Suzuka Girls matters we discuss together u forgot??

14:08 Bradamante kk ure right tell us more @ Arturia!!

Damn, in front of the other five girls in here? They haven't read the messages yet, but now not answering is not an option either.

14:10 Arturia Yeah Enkidu asked me and i said yes

14:10 Suzuka brave u go girl, gl out there \*3\*

14:11 Bradamante he just asked u? wow damn but now go do it right and be nice!!

She sent in a gif of a seal spinning around.

14:12 Bradamante look @ this when its not going well!! good luck seal ^\_^

Arturia chuckles about this cute idea, before typing a quick answer.

14:13 Arturia gtg getting ready takes time and thx @Bradamante for this cutie

Suzuka also sends her best regards and wishes her luck for this date. Time to start by taking a shower and putting on make-up and her hair bun she always styles.

The new hairclip Merlin gifted her might be something for today.

The shower refreshes her, and calmed all her worries quickly. Arturia is putting on light make-up and slips into her favourite set of skirt and blazer. Classy, but not too much and not sending the wrong signals.

There is still an hour and a half left, so she sits down to read the cute Novel she started reading, and waits for time to pass by.

To her own surprise she is pretty calm and composed. Time to hammer in nails today and finish this.

As she got off the train, the streets are filled with a lot of people in the Christmas rush. Little sad for those who have to work until later this evening, that can't be with their loved ones today.



Just down the street, turn right and there already is the towering huge building for Vinci's Shopping Centre.

The lights are on and shine bright in contrast to the dark night sky. Everywhere are lights and christmas music plays. Arturia stuffs her hands into her coats pockets, and waits for him to arrive. Since she is a bit too early, she thinks a bit more about what to do. But the answers wont come easy.

There he is, this silhouette. The broad shoulders, tall slim figure and golden hair illuminated by the Christmas light. He doesn't look too cocky as usual too at this moment, somewhat tired.

"Let's go Arturia!" She tells herself and walks towards his direction.

They stop in front of each other, waiting and breathing into the cold air little puffs.

It's like time is being frozen as they stand there, seeing each other in person after already an entire year has passed since the broken off engagement.

His red eyes inspect her from head to toe, not even hiding it.

"So, uhhh..." why is her voice so raspy right now! She can feel her cheeks getting a bit red. Flustered by one godly man in front of her the young woman used to love.

"Good you decided to show up today" he answered and avoids her eye contact as he is saying it, he sounds as usual very arrogant but seems to mean it honestly.

"Don't worry, it's alright. Enkidu told me everything and I think yes, we should talk about it. I wasn't very tactful." Arturia admits her fault and finds her composure again.

Together they walk into the mall. The giant tree she posted greets them once again, in his absolutely stunning yet too bright glory.

Gil just seems to fit in here quite good, his hair looks like gold as his battle armour does. Arturia catches herself staring at him and quickly turns around. This is going already into a very different direction.

"I picked Chilis for tonight." she tells him and directs him towards the restaurant.

As they sit down inside and put off their jackets, she can see a necklace hanging from his neck. Something round and small stands out from the shirt.

Is he still wearing that ring or is he putting on a show?

For today she has the small engagement ring box in her bag. Giving it back in case it doesn't work out was her plan for it.

The waiter takes their order, and then just silence between them. Unusual for him. But he quickly catches himself and puts up his usual "cool king face".

"So, you decided to go on a date with me. Why? Has Enkidu convinced you so well?"

"You send him to me?" Arturia questions back.

"No, he did that without my knowledge. But still."

His eyes pierce her through mind and body, leaving her defenseless.

"My friends gave me honest advice to try it again and sort out my feelings today. Here and now."

"Ohhh, hmmm-..." Gilgamesh takes up the napkin and starts to fold it neatly.

"I have to admit I was.... not good. I'm sorry from my side." Arturia finally said what she wanted to for so long.

The man looks up from his napkin foldings.

"Seriously? I should be the one being a bit more humble. But being me that is hard." he chuckles and has his arrogant look on already. Damn, that's why it's so tough to get along with him. Never really caring for those around him as long as he gets what he wants, not minding consequences.

"See, we got that done. You are still cocky and I have moved on." Maybe that comment sounded a bit too snarky.

"Honestly, I have been trying to better myself. I just....need to learn to step back a bit."

Gilgamesh now has a different look on his face, more serious and as if he actually thought about what he said for long.

"Huh, really?" it slips her out of the mouth.

The young man's gaze falls on the napkin again.

"Alright, i'm trying to show here how serious I am. Give me another chance." He doesn't say anything for a moment, then hesitantly adds "Please."

What he did is something she is trying to forget, but him apologizing is at the same time out of and in his character weirdly.

He stands up, reaching out with one hand. On his palm is the small silver engagement ring he gave to her last year, but his one with her name carved in.

"I kept it all this time, and..." he really forced himself to press out the words, but it wasn't the bad type of it. He really tried to win her back.

"...Kept thinking about you and hope you give me another chance. And I promise to better check your feelings first before assuming things."

Arturia just chuckles.

"You are like a trained puppy now, what happened?"

Gilgamesh is taken aback by her reaction, for a second his usual cocky self slips through but he catches himself.

"Be my Woman! The only one I can think about! And i'm not going to say please again." Definitely it's him speaking seriously.

"Alright, calm down you're making a scene!" With a red face she looks around the restaurant, where people already started looking.

Gilgamesh sits back down, the ring still in his hand.

"Okay...i..." Arturia breathes in and out slowly to stop her racing heart. His brazen attitude, him showing feelings so differently, probably thinking of her only as the great king, somehow managed to light up the feelings inside her again.

Underneath there is a calm man hidden, that seems to truly care for her.

"Okay. I take your offer. Slowly she takes out the ring out of her bag and shows it to him.

"Would you mind?!"

Gilgamesh laughs his usual loud laugh, then takes it and slips it back on her finger.

He kisses her back of her hand, and slowly let go of her hand. Where he touched her she still felt his warmth burning on her skin.

The food is being served, so they first eat, both a bit flustered. The entire air and feel of the conversation has changed.

Once they are done, Gilgamesh pays and they go outside next to each other. Slowly he takes her hand and presses it.

They are so close again, his touch leaving her feeling all fuzzy inside.

"I just..." she tries to say, but stops mid sentence.

"This time is the one chance i can give you. I still love you, this time we should talk about our problems more." Gilgamesh slowly brushes a loose hair falling into her face aside.

"That's why i tried to learn that and consider your feelings. But it's obvious you have fallen for me the first second we met."

Artoria glances at him, piercing him through.

"Actions speak louder than words for me usually. But so far i can really tell you are trying hard which is refreshing for such a personality like you."

Gilgamesh stops softly touching her face and bows to her down, leaning really close to her face. She just let it happen, as he kissed her softly on her lips in front of the huge tree illuminating the entire mall.

When she kisses him back, he starts to peck her lips and deepen their kiss, coming closer and pushing her towards him by hugging her tight. He smells warm and exotic like cinnamon.

As she brushes through his soft hair, they diverge and look into each other's eyes, the giant tree watching over them.

This incredible feeling she had a long time ago for him has come back, now filling her chest with soft happiness.

Gilgamesh also seems very happy and self pleased. He then suddenly picks her up from the ground, in the middle of the mall.

"Hey, let me down! We are in public!" instantly her cheeks flush red. Gilgamesh laughs loud and carries her to one of the benches under the Christmas tree and puts her down. Arturia evens out her skirt wrinkles and shyly looks at his face.

The King's beautiful facial features shine in the light golden and soft, and his red eyes don't seem to pierce her trough anymore, but rather into her soul.

Grateful for the moment they come closer to each other again, to share another kiss underneath one really big Christmas tree. Time seems to be a non existing concept, as they sit close by each other, sharing one intimate love filled moment after a year of sadness and regret. Truly a Christmas miracle.

## Epilog:

A red carpet has been laid out, between multiple rows of chairs, and at the end of it is a pretty white pavilion, one of those you would see in movies whenever there is a wedding. Actually today there is a wedding.

The weather is nice, there are a few big clouds in the sky and a mild breeze. Most of the guests already gathered together, chatting and some already holding a glass of sparkling wine and punch. Of course there is also a generous buffet of snacks and a place reserved for the wedding cake in the middle of the table.

"Everyone, get ready! The bride is coming!" In an instant everyone turned around to the carpet, where a beautiful young woman in a white dress and with a veil and flowers in her hair walks down elegantly to the pavilion.

Absolutely everyone around Arturia made sure that today she looked her absolute best. Especially Merlin has been doting on her lately, he even took time off to be around her 24/7 to in his words- "make sure she will stun everybody at the wedding". They managed to do that, with her dress being all white with a few blue ornaments and rhinestones sewn on. Her veil only covers her hair, that has been decorated with the hair clip she got a few Christmas back from Merlin, and other blue floral decorations.

"Look at her, I did a great job, didn't i?" Merlin sobs into his handkerchief, dramatically overacting. As she arrived in front, the priest with impressive sideburns gives a hand sign to the other person, that now gestures her still-fiance to follow her up.

Gilgamesh wears a simple white suit, the golden details are small and flatter his hair and overall elegance. His hair is like silk, shining golden in the sun. He is stunning, his simple suit even makes this impression stronger.

As he is standing in front of his to-be-wife, he grabs her hand and softly kisses it.

"You look stunning." he whispers, and Arturia's cheeks flush red slightly.

"Now then, let us start with the ceremony!" As soon as the priest announces the start of their wedding, everyone sits down on the chairs.

The speech and ceremony talks about respect towards each other, and how love conquers all if needed.

"And now, you may kiss the bride!" he announces, and both look each other in the eyes. Full with love and no hesitation, they get closer to each other and share their first official kiss as wife and husband.

The guests start to celebrate, shout and clap their hands as they separate from each other. Gilgamesh smiles wide, with his typical grin. Arturia presses his hands, then waves the guests. Now their cake is going to be served and everyone wants to have even more food and some fun dancing together.

Yet the couple only had eyes for each other, holding hands and showing how happy they are, finally being together. Now truly and forever.

Until eternity or death does them apart, them to be fated to meet and love each other again.

END