

((I've only done a one-shot once before and it was certainly not a crossover! I did this to accompany a photomanipulation I did putting Aro in Stark's place as Loki threatened him with the scepter. Originally this was just dialogue, but I hope adding the rest in helped make it more smooth. Enjoy!)))

### **Revelation of Desire**

Aro suddenly noticed a glowing cube on the desk in front of him as he was reading. His eyes widened in shock and wonder at the blue oddment. How extraordinary! He had only heard of this object in myths and stories which, like so many other histories he knew intimately, had to real. This was the fabled Tesseract, the Cask of Odin, a relic of immense power that had once been manipulated by the most evil of creatures on earth during man's most devastating war with one another. It had also at one time been the crown jewel of Odin's armory, or so he had been told. He quickly closed the book and set it aside. He stepped away cautiously and stared at the cube with great interest. Marcus, not even a full yard away slowly put down his own tome and stared in bewilderment at the object as well, sensing his old friend's cold heart began to race with enthusiastic contemplation. Caius noted this as well, but furrowed his brow into a scowl at the cube. This was a relic that had been caught between mortals and otherworldly creatures, it had no place with them and would surely only mean trouble for them. Aro froze and suddenly sensed a presence behind him. The other two felt the same and turned before their unspoken spokesman could do the same. Aro smiled brightly and turned to see a magnificent Asgardian standing at the other side of the room. Clearly the cube had appeared at the same time he had, but none of them had heard or sensed him until now. His garb was tremendously Germanic and yet somehow not of any region ancient or modern. He was clad primarily in green cloth, but surrounded by fierce black and brown leathermail trimmed in gold. As he stood, a flowing green cape formed behind him. Caius and Marcus both took defensive steps backwards while Aro moved forward a pace, watching golden armor and a long-horned helmet form on this delicious nobleman. His dark, wild hair, immense height though very thin, and piercing green eyes contrasted by his pale skin told the trio exactly who he was . . . This was Loki, the second born son of Odin and the legendary God of Mischief. Aro smirked and appraised the Asgardian for a moment as the armor finished forming and a long golden scepter appeared in Loki's right hand; a glowing blue gem appeared at its center and it was matching the Tesseract's colour and, possibly, its power as well.

"There aren't many people who can sneak up on us," Aro remarked casually.

"But you knew that I would come," Loki replied emotionlessly.

Aro smiled brightly and nodded to him. "After, after whatever dominion you sought over their race you would hear of our kind and present yourself as a generous king, and we would cooperate."

Loki gave him a sideglance and moved less than an inch towards him, gripping the scepter. "It is curious that you have made yourselves separate from them when you are still quite human." The trickster smiled triumphantly as a scowl formed over Caius's face.

Aro frowned at the trickster. "Humanity may still yet exist somewhere within us, but mortality is far removed from myself and all of my dear ones," he corrected.

Loki chuckled mockingly and cocked his head to one side. "Dear ones? Is that love I hear in your tone, Aro?" He asked with disdain.

Aro frowned and glared at Loki, still maintaining the illusion that he was calm and in control. He gave an indignant huff before continuing. "Of course it is, they are all my charge, my children. We are transformed and united against what we once were," he explained slowly.

"Then what are you now?" the trickster asked with a false tone of curiosity. In his opinion mortals were the unfortunate highest species of this realm and despite the notion that vampires were stronger and longer-lived, they still had all the mortal limitations of mind and body that made all the races of the other nine realms superior.

Aro shrugged and took another step towards him. His hands trembled, desiring more than anything to flex his power over this exotic creature and see worlds beyond his own. He refrained, but found it extremely difficult to do so. "It isn't terribly complicated, Son of Odin; we seek blood and cleanse our souls with the justice and order we bring to our kind. We protect both sides from harm in the end," the vampire replied calmly. He folded his hands neatly in front of him and appraised the taller trickster once more. "We have had crimson stain our history, but we expunge it with great zeal for law and peace. I suppose the American way to explain it would be to say that we have 'red in our ledger' and through our keeping of justice we seek to wipe it away."

Loki smirked and chuckled. "Can you? Can you wipe out that much red?" Loki's face suddenly fell to a somber expression. His tone softened and commanded both attention and a measure of fear from those listening. "*Aristatole*," Loki said in nearly a whisper. Aro froze. There had been few, if any creatures, during his life that had known his real and more full name. Aro, a nickname from his sister, was not only easier to use, it had become an exotic source of fear for all the others beneath him. His breath caught in his throat and he swallowed hard at realizing just how knowledgeable this creature was. Loki moved closer, a triumphant glare forming in his eyes. "Didyme's murder . . . the immortal child slaughters . . . the destruction of countless covens? Your history is dripping, it's gushing red and you think governing a race of creatures no more noble than yourself in any direction will change any of that? This is the basest of sentimentality, this is a child at prayer, pathetic!" Loki had raised his voice at the end of the last sentence, but now returned to his eerie, half whisper. "You lie and you kill in the service of liars and killers. You pretend to be separate, to have your own code. Something that makes up for the horrors, but they are a part of you and they will never go away."

Aro glared back, clearly preturbed. "You, sir, are a monster," he said flatly.

Loki chuckled, looking from one ancient master to the next as he spoke. "Oh no, I'm not the monster."

Aro suddenly sensed that they were quite vulnerable and that Loki would attack at any moment. Panic gave way to anger and he knew exactly how best to combat this arrogant stranger. "Guards!" he shouted.

Loki watched with cool satisfaction as the entire Volturi guard appeared in the throne room. The trickster appraised the sight of the enormous Felix, the penetrative gaze of Demitri, the dark and scowling Alec, and the dangerously innocent Jane. There were others, but Loki (in penetrating Aro's thoughts) knew that these were the most powerful and acted as personal protectors for the master. Loki smiled and unleashed an unmatched power of his own. Numerous doppelgangers of the trickster suddenly appeared around the room. The group froze and watched in stunned silence as Loki raised his scepter. He turned, in all his numerous forms, to each vampire respectively.

Loki raised the scepter more menacingly as he spoke. "Kneel before me," he said flatly.

The guard remained standing perfectly still and silent. Loki could tell that they were all trying with no avail to use their powers on him. He snarled and, when he realized that they would not obey without incentive, fired a blast from the scepter at an ornate statue, obliterating it. The guards all jumped as well as two of the primary Volturi, it's chief founder included.

"I said . . ." Loki lowered his voice before shouting furiously, slamming the end of the scepter into the floor while the doppelgangers positioned themselves behind the creatures all around the room." . . . KNEEEEEEL!"

Aro quickly nodded to the others who complied with their master's unspoken wish. Each slowly, hesitantly, knelt and looked back at the trickster defiantly.

The trickster smiled triumphantly and looked the crowd over carefully. If he could command obedience from these powerful quasi-immortals, the rest of Midgard would be nothing. "Is this not simpler? Is this not your natural state? It is the unspoken truth of any Midgardian, human or otherwise, that you, all of you, crave subjugation. The bright lure of freedom diminishes your life's joy in a mad scramble for power . . . for immortality. You were made to be ruled. In the end you will always kneel," he said with a broad grin.

Marcus, noble and defiant, stood slowly and glared angrily at the intruder. "Not to men like you," he stated.

Loki let out a soft chuckle, meeting eyes with the listless vampire. "There are *no men* like me," he corrected arrogantly

Marcus frowned and shook his head. "There are always men like you."

Loki smiled and raised the scepter, aiming it at Marcus entirely. "Look to your elder people and let him be an example."

Just as Loki fired an enormous blast of energy from the gem, Aro reached forward and pulled his friend down, dodging the blast as it landed in the wall behind them. Small bits of stone and dust flew through the air for a moment. The two rose slowly and Loki glared back in irritation.

"You know, the last creature that threatened my dear ones did leave us, but with an important lesson learned," Aro remarked hotly. "They knew their place beneath us by the end of the great war."

Loki scoffed. "I doubt your war was by its own right in any way 'great'."

"Then face us in battle . . . it will be," the vampire countered.

The trickster gave another indignant snort at the challenge. "I have more important things to attend to, but I will return for your obedience once the earth is under my reign and protection."

Aro moved forward until standing much closer to the trickster, placing himself between his dear ones and the real form of the Asgardian. "We need neither your rule nor protection, trickster."

"Why not?" Loki laughed mockingly. "I have an army."

Aro smirked in his best condescending manner possible. "We have an army of our own."

"Oh I've heard," Loki replied with a wink and another arrogant chuckle. "Not meant, I think, for battling me"

"Meant for battling something stronger than you," Aro added.

The trickster took three steps forward and lifted the scepter's end to Aro's chest, wondering if the feat would work on creatures that were once human as well. "And how will your army have time for me when they're so busy fighting you?" With the last word, he forced energy from the gem to emit and penetrate the heart of the vampire. It fizzled and died down. Loki tried this thrice more, each time frowning at the scepter and sighing in frustration. "This usually works."

Aro smirked. "Oh I imagine your ineptitude reflects solely on your limited power and not on our superior strength and cunning."

Loki reached out and grasped Aro by the shoulder, hurling him to the ground. "You are all of you beneath me and I mean to rule more than humanity!"

Brushing himself off, Aro stood slowly and glowered at the immortal. "Go then and make your preparations. But until the earth is yours, until humanity is yours to command, you are but words."

The trickster sneered at this. "Very well then, gather your forces and let them gird themselves. I will defeat them in a glorious battle."

"Battle?" Aro asked, forming the most condescending and wounding of phrases in his mind. "Against the would-be King of Asgard?"

Loki's nostrils flared as he shouted. "I *am* the King of Asgard!"

"Not anymore!" Aro shouted in reply. Loki began to growl softly as the elder vampire took the Tesseract from their desk and hurled it at him. "You take your Cask of Odin, you fulfill this poisonous dream, but then you go home and never return."

Loki caught the object and looked down at it for a beat. A smile, a wry and wicked smile, slowly moved across the trickster's mouth. "Ooooooh. It burns you, doesn't it? To have seen the Tesseract, to have tasted power, unlimited power," he crooned patronizingly. "And then to be reminded what real power is."

"Very well then, but know this. The earth has chosen its dominant species and it will find a way to defend it . . . or else avenge it," Aro warned.

Loki laughed at this, gripping his scepter more tightly. "And you'll do a marvelous job of that. I will return and you will all of you fall before me!" And with that, the trickster simply disappeared.

The rest of the coven slowly stood, muttering in whispers about what had just transpired. Caius turned and frowned at Aro. "Pathetic creature. What a disgraceful display," he growled. He turned to Aro and sneered. "Why did you not dispatch him when you had the opportunity?"

Aro simply grinned, a host of plans and possibilities now forming in his mind. "Why dear brother I thought you understood," Aro replied, using a tone as condescending as the trickster's. "He has something we want."