

A Warlord and his Princess

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Prolog: Prologue

Kuraigana is not the kind of place someone thinks about when going to a holiday trip. The sun barely shines, the resident kingdom was destroyed during a battle years ago and the dark and gloomy aura of the castle could be really frightening for outsiders. The violent humandrills were a further reason to stay away from this island. This was one of the reasons Mihawk took up residence here. He enjoyed the peace and quiet he had on this island. After necessary trips for the marines, it was best place to retreat and the humandrills were good sparring partners to train. He barely got any visitors, except for business and sometimes a certain red-haired pirate and his crew came by to simply annoy him. But other than that, he was alone on this island.

Which is why Mihawk was a little bit irritated when he came back from Marineford to Kuraigana and sensed the presence of two other humans near his castle - a ship was nowhere to be seen from the docks. When he left his small coffin-shaped boat he went directly to where the others were located. Mihawk knew the first presence he felt. How could he forget. It was the only person to ever dare him into a duel about being the world's best swordsman who he left alive. Badly wounded but alive. Mihawk has seen the potential in this young man. Zoro was strong, but also naïve, young and unexperienced compared to him. But why would he be on Kuraigana? Zoro could not be so foolish to believe that he was already able to defeat him. And who was the other person with him?

When Mihawk came closer he saw the two cornered by some angry humandrills, who were cheering about their former triumph. Zoro was wearing a dressing around his upper body which means that he must have been wounded before. Panting, he tried to reach for his swords, which were stuck into the ground close to him, but failed. Next to him was a young, pink-haired woman floating a little bit above the ground with an umbrella in her right hand. Now Mihawk remembered her. She was Perona, one of the fleet commanders of Gecko Moria – another one of the seven warlords. He has seen her sometimes when the warlords got together for some meetings. But as he never really had much respect for the other warlord, he was definitely never in contact with the woman. Not that he regretted it.

"Zoro do something!", Perona shouted, "You cannot simply let them defeat you and they look really pissed." Zoro looked at her grumpily and retorted: "How about you do something to help and stop annoying me?!" Then suddenly the humandrills became rigid in fear. With eyes wide open and shaking from head to toe they slowly turned their head to the side from where Mihawk came walking slowly towards them. As soon as the humandrills saw Mihawk, they ran back into the forest in fear.

Zoro was the first one to notice the new arrival. He felt chills down his spine when he

slowly looked into Mihawk's direction and mumbled a low "damnit". This was not how he expected their second meeting to be like. He wanted to kill that man. And worse – he feared that Mihawk would be the one to kill him on sight.

Perona next to him was not doing any better. She looked from Zoro to Mihawk and she felt a bit frightened. "You...you're Hawkeye Mihawk", barely escaped her lips. With any other opponent she would not be so hesitant. But Mihawk was one of the warlords, possibly one of the strongest among them. Perona lived under the roof of Gecko Moria and she always had big respect for the strength of all the warlords. Now even more as she was alone – with a wounded Zoro – and knew that she barely stood a chance against him if he was really starting to get serious. More so because Gecko Moria was never really fond of Mihawk and she knew the feeling was mutual on Hawkeye's side. Out of the corner of her eye she saw Zoro again struggling to stand up and take his swords as Mihawk was now standing right before them.

"Don't", Mihawk started, as uncompassionate as ever, "You're closer to the dead than to the living. Do you really think you can beat me if you are not even able to defeat some weak baboon?" Zoro ground his teeth and admitted defeat. He fell back on his bottom, let out an annoyed sigh and grumbled: "What are you doing here?" "I live here", Mihawk responded, "The question is: What are you two doing here?"

At this time none of them had thought that this moment was the start of a two-year long residence of Perona and Zoro on Kuraigana, where Zoro would become the student of Mihawk and Perona being the irritating loud woman of the house.