



Reindeer Games

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When Loki gets a present, it starts a conversation about family, blackmail, and spatulas.

(Edit: My Little sister has deemed this trio 'LOL' based on their names and I just... How did I not see that?!)

Hope you enjoyed this bit of randomness that entered my brain space.

"Why are you carrying around a stuffed animal?" Octavius asked, closing the spiderman files he'd been looking at more out of habit than any real desire to hide them.

"It is a passive-aggressive 'present' from the Man Of Iron." Loki sulked, holding up the 'Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer' doll with a look of utter disdain.

"I've been meaning to test a new laser recently." Leader offered, staring at the doll with a well-hidden gleam of destructive desire in his eyes.

"Apologies, Lee, but unfortunately I cannot destroy it." Loki sat next to him on the busted couch Octavius had reluctantly added to the lab. "Stark is one of my brother's friends, so I must 'play nice'."

"Don't you hate your brother?" Octavius asked.

"No!" Loki immediately denied, offended. After a second's thought, he shrugged. "Well, yes, but he's still my brother. You know how it goes."

The other two shared a confused glance, prompting Loki to gape. "Seriously? Neither of you have siblings?"

"Not unless you count an alternate version of me from another universe." Octavius scoffed. "But she's a bitch, so..."

"Ugh, do not get me started on female counterparts." Loki shuddered, briefly shifting into a feminine appearance before switching back.

"You both have met female versions of yourselves?" Leader asked incredulously. At their nods of confirmation, he grew thoughtful. "Query: is it incest if--"

"Yes." The other two said in unison.

"Oh, alright then. So much for that idea." Leader shrugged. It was quiet for a while, with the exception of the click-clacking of Octavius' typing, before he spoke again. "Query: why a Rudolph doll?"

"Stark has decided I somehow resemble the malformed ungulate." Loki scowled, pulling on the doll until it threatened to rip. An apologetic expression flashing across his face, he loosened his hold and adjusted the thing to be comfortably sitting next to him, tucked under his arm. "Personally, I don't understand the comparison, beyond being vaguely insulting."

"Actually, it makes a bit of sense." Leader hummed. "Premise: why is Friggason like the Red Nosed Reindeer? Conclusion: horned being from a cold place who was ostracized for their unique abilities."

"I don't have horns." Loki's face twisted in confusion.

"You do when you're wearing your helmet~!" Leader explained, sticking his pointer finger in the air triumphantly.

"How does having a red nose count as a 'unique ability'?" Loki asked after a moment of consideration.

"Because it glows." Octavius chimed in, still working at his computer.

"It does?" Loki asked, eyes flicking to his doll.

"Of course it-- do you not know what Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer is?" Leader asked, getting a head shake in return. He clapped excitedly, bouncing in place. "Oh! We are watching the movie *right now*."

"We are not watching a children's Christmas movie!" Octavius contradicted. "Especially not when I have work to do."

"I think you can take a small break from trying to catch Spiderboy." Leader rolled his eyes. "Your Octobots do most of the work anyways."

"First of all," Octavius growled, turning to look at him, "it's *Spiderman*."

"There is no way he isn't a teenager!" Leader said incredulously. "And, really, does it even matter?"

"How would you like it if I started calling The Hulk 'The Hunk'?" Octavius asked threateningly, eyes narrowing behind his goggles.

"...I think we'd all be uncomfortable with that."

"Exactly, get other villains' heroes' names right." Octavius huffed. "Second of all, my Octobots do not do most the work -- they just do the stuff I couldn't be bothered to waste my time on, and they're very good at it." He used one of his arms to gently pet one of the Octobots, who rumbled happily before continuing on whatever task it had.

"Third of all," Octavius continued, "we are major Supervillains, we are not going to sit around and *watch cartoons*."

"Don't think of it as 'watching cartoons'," Leader insisted, "think of it as cultural training! Loki needs to increase his knowledge base of how humans work if he wants even a sliver of a chance at enslaving the planet before I do."

"Hey! I know plenty about this backwater realm." Loki crossed his arms, insulted. "I do not need-"

"Query: what is the definition of 'spatula'?"

Loki glared at the interruption, but nonetheless answered smugly and confidently. "A type of pasta from the isle of Italia, usually served with butter and seasoning." At the others' stares, he grew a bit sheepish. "Is that not correct?"

"...be that as it may," Octavius said after a moment more of staring, "I simply do not have time! I have an entire squad of teenaged/extremely-childish Supervillains to manage, Taskmaster still needs to be paid, and I'm expecting a call from Green Goblin soon."

"Why are you working with that troll?" Loki asked. "I thought you and he despised one another?"

"We do, but he's blackmailing me—"

"What?" Loki interrupted. "Why didn't you say anything before now?"

"Premise: Octavius didn't tell us he was being threatened." Leader lifted a finger into the air, closing his eyes and humming as he thought. His eyes snapped open, his fingers snapping with them. "Aha, conclusion! He is either embarrassed about the nature of the blackmail or unworried about the possibility of it being used."

"It's fine, Spiderman's already dealing with Osborn, I'm sure he'll get rid of the blackmail if he finds it." Octavius blinked as he realized what he just said. "If either of you ever tell anyone I'm relying on a hero—"

"Agree to watching the movie, and our lips are sealed." Leader grinned.

"Can we change the wording of that vow?" Loki asked, wincing.

"Fine, we'll watch the stupid movie, and you two will keep silent about it." Octavius groaned, maneuvering himself next to the couch. "But we are not watching the claymation version."

"We are definitely watching the claymation version." Leader retorted, prompting an argument.

Eventually, the movie was indeed watched, Loki clutching his doll in wonder as the events unfolded on the screen. Then, several more versions were watched. Then, Loki began singing the song on a daily basis.

The Leader regrets nothing, even if he has invested in high-quality earplugs. Octavius regrets everything, and is debating the ethics of resewing a certain God's mouth shut. The Avengers are very confused when Loki starts singing in the middle of battle, with the exception of Tony, who mostly just sings along...

— end of "Reindeer Games" —