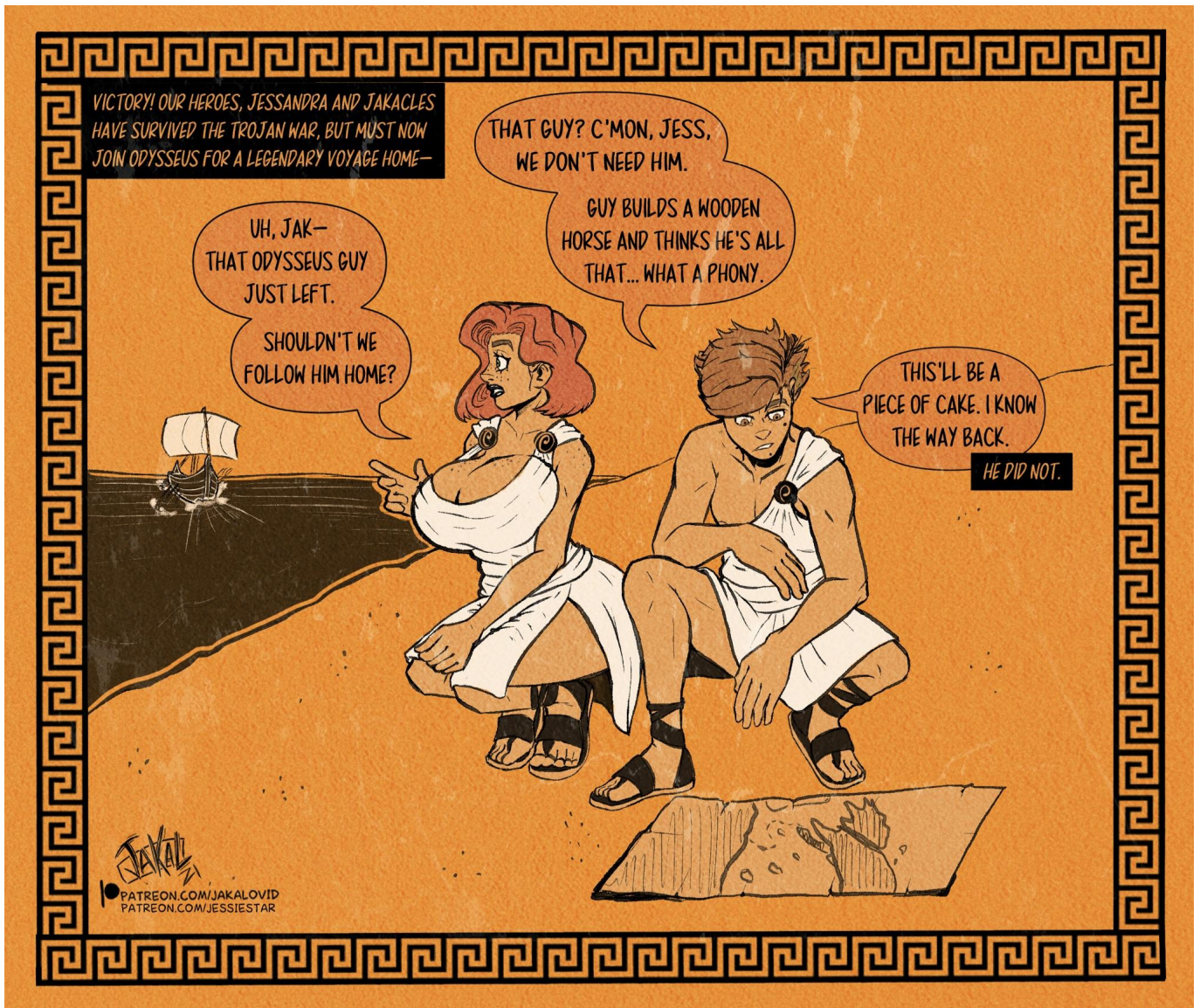


A Transformation Odyssey

Art by Jakal

Written by Jessie Star

PROLOGUE



“And that’s your early Christmas present!” Jessie smiled after finishing her long presentation.

“You want to send me back to the Ancient Greece of mythology because you know I am a super fan of it?” Jakal raised his eyebrows worriedly. “Won’t it mess with the timeline?!”

“Nah! Not if we get you back right away! All you have to do is ask past me to activate the send-back spell. I’ll make sure I send you right to her.” Jessie began building up the spell to send him.

“But won’t she freak out? Someone from the future claiming to know her by-” Jakal was cut off by Jessie putting a finger to his lips.

“You wanna see Ancient Greece? Mythological monsters? A world steeped in magic and sex?” Jessie smiled and winked.

“Well, of course, minus the um... Last part, maybe. That’s a little overwhelm-” He was cut off by a large portal popping into existence.

“And besides, I’m pretty sure I have a vague memory of meeting you five thousand years ago. It’s gonna be fine! Now enjoy your present and bring me back something fun!” She pushed her friend through the portal and waved as it shrank out of existence. “I wish I could remember what I was up to during the time I sent him. To be fair, I drank a lot back then, and ... well, things blur together after you get over a thousand years old. He’ll be fine, though!”

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“This is not fine!” Jakal squealed as he ran from one burning building to the other.

“So future me totally forgot I helped with the siege of Troy! What an idiot.” Said past Jess (Jessandra in this period, apparently), as she cast magic to shield against some flaming arrows. “What was your name again?”

“You can call me Jakal!” He slipped in some mud and flopped against a stone wall.

“Oh no, no no, unless you’re some gladiator or scourge of the sea or something, we can’t go with the Jackal.” Her new companion tried to explain it wasn’t the same thing, but she was too busy throwing fireballs at invading soldiers. “How about, Jakacles?”

“I mean, if I was intending to stay maybe, but you said you could send me back!” He jumped behind her as Trojans and Greeks clashed shields past them in the alley.”

“Are you sure? We already got past the hard part, getting in! How many people get to ride in a giant wooden horse?” She elbowed him and chuckled. She might be a much younger Jess.. er Jessandra (not that you could tell an age difference), but it was clear she would not change much in the years to come. When ‘Jakacles’ shook his head no, she shrugged and pulled out a vial. “Please tell her, her past self is super mad she made me waste this magic concoction to finish up her spell. This shit is super rare. I probably won’t have the ingredients for it again for another 100 yea-”

“AHH MY ANKLE!” A man above screamed like a little girl, falling from a balcony above and falling right in front of Jess. The vial was knocked from her hands and blew up with a sizeable smokey POOF as it hit the ground.

“Damn it, Achilles!” Jessandra spat, face turning red.

“What do we do now!?” Jakacles’ eyes went wide with worry.

“Well first off, we survive. At least we know I do already, am I right?” The curvy ginger burst out laughing, cut short by a charging man with a spear. She went back to deadpan and knocked him out with another cast.

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Four days later...

“This... this will be okay. I have an edge, right? Being from the future, I have information that you don't. Like I knew Achilles would hurt his ankle.” Jakacles stretched on the beach, looking out at the Mediterranean. “This will be like our own Odyssey!”

“What the hell is an Odyssey?” Jessandra brushed some sand from her Toga and looked around. “Sounds like some nonsense Odysseus would try to market himself.”

“Well, it doesn't matter, your magic and my knowledge, we'll do some traveling, see the ancient world, and get the ingredients you need!. I think history will end up remembering me as a better navigator than that 'Odysseus Guy.'” He laughed at his own joke but stopped when he saw Jess didn't get it. “Sorry, no spoilers.” Maybe this won't be so bad, Jakacles thought to himself. Jessandra seemed powerful and more than capable of protecting them, and now he could see all his favorite stories as they happened first hand! “Now, let's get back to your home. Like you said, see what ingredients you already have.

“Um, Jak? That 'Odysseus Guy' just left, shouldn't we be following him home.” Jessandra watched as the boat left the shores of Troy.

“That Guy? Mr-Big-Shot?” Jakacles held up a map and winked. “Come on, Jess, we don't need him.” While, sure, he would have had a fun time living out the Odyssey, he also didn't want to be lost at sea for years. “Guy builds a wooden horse and thinks he's all that... What a phony. This'll be a piece of cake. I know the way back.” Jakacles rolled out the map on the sand and frowned. “Right... This is a period map, not a modern one.” The paper in his hand looked nothing like modern geography. He might have spoken a bit too soon.