Among Teeth & Brimstones

Posted originally on the fanfiction.lol at https://fanfiction.lol/works/1362.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warning:	Graphic Depictions Of Violence
Categories:	Slash (M/M), Getting Together
Fandom:	Hunter x Hunter
Relationships:	Chrollo/Shalnark, Phinks/Feitan, Phinks/Shalnark
Characters:	Chrollo Lucilfer, Phinks Magcub, Shalnark Ryuseih, Feitan Portor, Machi Komacine, Nobunaga Hazama, Uvogin (Hunter x Hunter), Sheila (Hunter x Hunter), Pakunoda (Hunter x Hunter)
Additional Tags:	Werewolves, Monster/Human Relationship, Minor Character Death, Angst, Mystery, Alternate Universe - Setting Change, Fake/Pretend Relationship, Not Beta Read
Language:	English
Series:	Part 2 of Phantom Troupe Monster AU Multiverse
Stats:	Published: 2026-11-06 Words: 2,513 Chapters: 1/?

Among Teeth & Brimstones

by SilverHypnos

Summary

Meteor Grove, a large but isolated village surrounded by endless forest, is plagued with many misfortunes. Resources, criminals, but worse of all, there is a werewolf crisis. So many children were found dead with their necks nearly bitten off was a monthly occurrence.

However, those who survived… well… Truth be told, no one knew. Every kid who's been bitten has been taken away. Sarasa, a young girl who survived a werewolf attack only to be taken away, was the final straw for the Troupe. Half ventured to be trained by a famous Werewolf Hunter, Renko, for five years while the rest stayed in the village.

Things took a turn when Phinks was bitten, with Shalnark being his only witness. Fearful of Phinks sharing the same fate as Sarasa, Phinks and Shalnark decided to keep this secret between them. Trying to find a cure while keeping their friends protected in the dark.

Unfortunately, their sudden change in behavior was misread by everyone else, and now… Feitan and Chrollo come home to find themselves in unexpected romantic drama.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Chapter 1: Chapter 1

“Please... Don't tell anyone…” Phinks pleaded, still shielding Shalnark’s vision with his shoulders. Doing everything in his power to prevent Shalnark from seeing it all. No matter how hard he tried, the dripping blood painted the ground red. That metallic smell of it all lingered in the air, and he was caught red-handed… Literally.

Shalnark's gaze slowly rose from the ground until their eyes met. “You mean don't tell anyone or don't tell Fei?”

“Shal, please. I'm begging you.” Out of everyone, out of all of the kids he hung out with, why did it have to be Shalnark? “I don't want to be taken away like Sarasa.” His voice quivered; the pressure, the fear, the consequences of the situation loomed over him.

Shalnark took a step forward, finding the meaning of each word Phinks uttered. He leaned in with a mischievous smile, humming, “Ooh, so you’re saying that's not a normal injury.”

He would have beaten himself up over that slip-up, had he not known that Shal was full of shit. Gritting his teeth, with a low growl, “This isn't funny! I know you saw the wolf.”

“What wolf?” A statement so direct, a gaze and smile so deceitful. “There was no wolf. You are just some stupid kid who tripped and cut yourself on a sharp rock.” Shal pointed to a clean, sharp rock lying around the dried leaves.

“Shal… what are you-?” Blinking profusely, reading between the lines was never his forte.

Shal sighed, shaking his head. “If you were Chrollo, he'd understand immediately.”

Shalnark lightly reached out for his bleeding hand. The bite marks were deep and defined. Puncturing the skin, inflaming the ripped area as his wound began to puff up. Shal’s finger lightly traced against the open wound. “The cut from the rocks looks like bite marks…”

Phinks's gaze widened, slowly picking up on what Shal’s been implying this whole time.

“You should fix that, Phinks.”

Mess your hand up badly enough that the adults can't tell that you've been bitten. The underlying message between his words.

Phinks grabbed the rock, pointing the sharp edges towards his bitten hand. Hesitating, as simple as it was, was easier said than done.

“Want me to do it?” Shal softly asked. For once, his tone and demeanor matched his expression.

“No, I got this.” Gritting his teeth, preparing himself for impact, he smashed the rock into his wounded hand. Both boys struggled to look at the bloody display.

“Try cutting more than smashing it; you're going to lose too much blood.” Shal crossed his arms, averting eye contact. Phinks thought this was too much, even for someone like Shal.

It was excruciatingly painful, Phinks holding back tears while Shal lightly patted him on the back. Dropping the rock, Phinks covered his wound with his other hand.

“Now what?” He asked, while shaking was a hint of anxiety.

“We go back and get you patched up. If any person asks, your cover story is that while playing you tripped and fell onto rocks.”

“What if no one believes me?”

“They're gonna have to; I'm your witness.” He smiled, shining out his sunny facade, “Remember, we were playing in the woods. You got a little rough with me but somehow ended up tripping on rocks.”

“Couldn't you make me sound cooler in the cover story…” He pouted.

“Hey! Beggars can't be choosers, Phinks.” Wagging his finger, with a light smile.

The long walk back to the Hamlet was dreadful. Every wandering eye that glanced over felt overly watchful. Fear echoed in his head: *“They **know.** They're onto **you.** Don't act **suspicious.**”*

Walking closely behind Shal, Phinks tried focusing his attention on Shal. The stark difference between Phinks' nervousness and Shal's facade was night and day. He's used to it, pretending everything is fine when it isn't, something that Phinks would secretly envy.

"Ah, over here," Shal pointed to his tenant, "My caregiver is rarely home, so we should have enough privacy."

Finally, finding themselves alone in a room, Shal grabbed the closest thing that resembled bandages, quickly bringing it over to his friend. Doing his best to disinfect it and wrap it up, Phinks found the courage to speak up again.

“Shal, uh…” fidgeting with his other hand, “Thank you.”

“Of course, you're my friend.” He paused, looking around the room. “What are you going to do about…”

“I-”

“Do you think it… was actually a-”

“I don't know.”

The air around them grew heavy.

“Well, just in case, when the next full moon comes out, avoid everyone.” He sighed, “Then afterward, tell me everything.”

Phinks looked up at Shal. “Okay…”

The long pause between them remains.

Phinks hung his head low, murmuring, “Do you think I should tell Fei?”

Loudly exhaling, “The less people know, the better. If you get found out, I'll also get in trouble. If you tell Fei, he'll try to protect you.” Pausing momentarily, “If they try to take you away, what do you think Fei would do?” He shrugged, pulling a knee to his chest while sitting on the chair.

“You're right…”

“Of course I'm right. Don't you know me?” He chuckled, lighting up the mood.

Three years ago, in Meteor Grove, a young girl, Sarasa, was bitten by a werewolf. Surviving the event, stupidly, everyone in that friend group placed their trust in the adults. Expecting there to be a cure, instead, moments later she was ripped away from them. It was dreadful how one-sided the letters, their thoughts, and prayers were.

Sarasa never once responded to any of them. So much so that the others are divided on whether they had made a grave mistake. Some wanted to believe that she was recovering, and that's why she hasn't responded. Others started to question whether she was actually receiving the letters; perhaps the adults were lying to them.

And then, there was Shalnark... The boy who suggested the words none of them ever wanted to admit. The lingering fear that collectively, they all shared.

"What if they killed her?"

Many things plagued Meteor Grove. The lack of resources, criminals, diseases, for starters. However, the number of werewolf attacks was nothing to joke about. So many children were found dead with their necks nearly bitten off was a monthly occurrence. However, those who survived... well... Truth to be told, no one knew. Every kid who's been bitten has been taken away. Rumor has it that they too will transform under the presence of the full moon.

So many children have been lost to these creatures. However, the situation with Sarasa was the final straw. Since then, their hatred of those creatures has become all-consuming. This caught the attention of famous werewolf hunter Renko, who happened to be visiting. Out of grace, her willingness to allow some of them to be her apprentices was a blessing in a dark place. However, as expected, she was picky about who qualified enough. Chrollo, Paku, Machi, Uvo, and Feitan left in a single night, with little goodbyes attached.

It was heartbreaking at first when he realized Feitan would be leaving for five years. It was depressing, knowing that Renko saw little potential in him. It would fuel his inferiority, yet he couldn't help but be happy for his best friend.

But now, things are different.

Now Phinks dreads what happens when they return... If the rumors were true, would the others inform the adults? Will they continue to see Phinks as Phinks and not the monster they all loathed? Is there a cure? Can he be cured? Anxiety must have been smeared across his face, so much so that Shal actually tried comforting... for once.

"Phinks, we'll figure this out." Shal smiled.

"Shal, what am I going to do?" The more he thought about it, the heavier that hopeless feeling loomed over him.

"We're going to solve this situation." He stated firmly.

"What if I do transform? What if I hurt Fei? What if I hurt you!?" Perhaps, he pondered, "Maybe I should tell-"

"NO!"

Phinks was taken aback; this was the first time he ever shouted like that. Shal gripped his shoulders firmly, with direct eye contact, "You aren't telling anyone. Not even Fei, not even Chrollo." Shal had never displayed emotions like this before; the desperation in his tone was unsettling.

His expression faltered to something more honest. "When Sarasa was bitten. I wanted to suggest withholding that information from the adults. However, everyone believed that informing them was the right thing to do. So, I held my tongue."

"Shal..."

"Not a day goes by without me regretting that decision." Shal exhaled, turning his gaze elsewhere. "Adults are human too."

"What?"

"Someone once told me that adults are human too. I never understood why someone felt the need to clarify something so obvious. I always took it so literally that I never bothered to process it."

"Shal, I don't understand..." Where was he going with this?

"The day when Sarasa was stolen from us, the months of no contact... The moment I realized that she could have been dead, that's when I understood what that person meant."

Shal returned his glance towards Phinks, "Humans are flawed and often selfish creatures. As children, we often think adults know more than us, that they know what's right. However, they are human, just like us. They will make mistakes and hide them from us."

"But-"

"If they get to lie to us about Sarasa's fate. If they get to hide the fact that our friend may never come back to us. Then I get to lie and protect you from them." Shal smiled.

"Okay..." Phinks nodded, accepting this logic. Hypocritically, he knows if the roles were reversed, he wouldn't let any of his friends be stolen away from him. So, it was okay... For him to be selfish.

° °

Years later...

The aroma of the terrain welcomed them home. The earthy hues graced the green foliage, capturing the eye with its visual form of serenity. There was nothing more beautiful than home.

Chrollo took a deep breath, observing the landscape as he did with his friends. Finally, after so many years, they've returned to Meteor Grove.

"Man, how many years has it been?" Uvo chortled, breaking the silence as they followed the trail.

"Five years," Feitan responded.

"Fei, I think that was a rhetorical question." Machi shook her head. Leave it to Fei to be a conversation killer.

Paku giggled, "I wonder how much things have changed. Can you believe we're all adults now!?"

Quick to quip, Machi sighed, "Hopefully not too much. I'm not fond of drastic changes."

Uvo laughed, "Aw c'mon! Where's your adventurous spirit! Change is fun!"

"Scaredy cat." Of course, he'd try to take a jab at Machi.

"Don't even start with me, Fei. You're just as bad at handling change." Machi snapped back.

"Am not." He hissed.

Turning around to her two friends acting like children, she said, "Both of you, behave. No serious fighting." Before glancing at Chrollo, "You haven't said much. Lost in thought, Chrollo?"

Chrollo smiled warmly, "Just thinking, I suppose."

A brief moment of silence. "Finally, we can put our plans in motion. All of the pieces are set up. It's only a matter of time before we eradicate the supernatural plague that haunts Meteor Grove once and for all."

° °

"Is that..." Stopped dead in her tracks, Paku squinted at the figure sitting on a rock at the edge of the village. **"SHEILA?!"** Rushing forward, arms wide open, Paku hugged her friend.

"Oh! Paku, it's been so long." Sheila embraced her warmly. "You've grown so tall, like a model; I almost didn't recognize you."

"You stopped writing at some point; I got worried." Gently caressing the top of her head, Paku always had that motherly touch. Or at least, what they assumed a motherly touch would feel like.

"I'm sorry, I got busy and was dealing with some things." Sheila's expression faltered; of everyone, she took Sarasa's situation the hardest. No one could blame her for the depression she fell into.

"It's okay, I'm just glad you're alright." Paku smiled, refusing to let go.

Scanning the area, Uvo jokingly grunted, "Where's the rest of ya? Why's everyone else late to this reunion?"

Machi sighed, "It's not like this reunion was planned."

"Nobunaga should have been here!" He chuckled, "Gonna have to rough him up a bit for being late."

Sheila laughed, "Well, he's probably somewhere around the blacksmith. While you were away, he got into fighting with swords and has been training himself."

"So I've heard," Uvo smirked.

"Really?" Sheila tilted her head.

"Shal wrote general updates on everyone from time to time," Chrollo added, "Though, at some point, his letters did become less informative."

Finally letting her go, Paku smiled, "I heard Franklin became skilled with a rifle."

Sheila nodded.

"Where's Phinks?" Feitan asked, only to become irritated by Uvo's snickering. It was an inside joke that everyone took part in. Phinks and Feitan were just friends, yet everyone

poked fun at how close they were. Calling them love birds, secretly in love, soulmates, yada yada.

"And Shal?" Chrollo added.

"Oh, the *love* birds?" Sheila giggled.

Feitan clicked his tongue. "Seriously. You too?"

"How nostalgic," Chrollo hummed.

Uvo cackled, unable to contain himself, "Fei, face it. You guys are soulmates for life."

Cocking his head back, he hissed, "Not funny!"

"Huh?" Sheila tilted her head before raising her hands to her mouth. "I see, you misunderstood what I meant."

"Huh?" Chrollo blinked. "What do you mean?"

"I wasn't making a joke about Phinks and Feitan's friendship." Then, with a warm, wide smile, "Shalnark and Phinks started dating."

Immediately, everyone went silent. As if the air that surrounded them became solemn, it was as if time had frozen. Words replayed in all of their minds. *"Shalnark and Phinks started dating."*

"What's the matter? Didn't Shal write about that in his letters?" Her expression was confused, unknowingly dropping an emotional bomb.

"No... He didn't." Chrollo's gaze widened. Paku watched him, concerned for the emotional storm that would be brewing in his mind.

Uvo and Machi couldn't help but observe Feitan. His previous irritation faltered into something more shocked and mortified. Intensely pondering, Fei murmured, "Phinks... and Shal?"

It was almost as if she jinxed it. *"Don't even start with me, Fei. You're just as bad at handling change,"* repeated in her mind. She couldn't fathom what was going on in his mind.

Uvo scratched the backside of his neck. "Nah, I need to see it before I can believe it."

Machi glanced at Sheila. "This isn't a prank, right?" Not that Sheila would have been the type to pull one, but still...

"No, it's not." Sheila blinked, now realizing the surprise she might have ruined. "They've been dating for... a *year* now, I think."

"A WHOLE YEAR?!" Uvo exclaimed.

Sheepishly maintaining herself in a polite stance, Paku clasped her hands, "Let's continue deeper into the village. Let's find everyone and formally catch up, alright?"

With a somber nod, everyone followed Sheila deeper into town.

End Notes

Hello o/ AO3 writer here! I'm reuploading the fic here, you know, just in case. Not sure what the community here is like, but I hope someone here enjoys this. Y'all take care.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!