

# Iorek's Escalade (Northern Lights Fanfiction)

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The icy wind swept over the frigid wasteland as two bears walked alone together, their flanks like freshly fallen snow. The male, a young prince named Iorek Byrnison, sat, and his she-bear companion sat also, as they shared their warmth in a comfortable silence. The snow was deep and unforgiving; but their love was stronger, and they both knew it... as did a young, headstrong bear watching them enviously. As he strode back through the camp in blind rage, he marched directly into the sleek, paper-white pelt of his friend and elder, Iofur, who greeted him and brought him to one side surreptitiously.

"Is there anything you wanted from me?" enquired the younger bear, polite but curt, the last traces of his fury curling through his mind like dark smoke.

The strong, experienced warrior observed him solemnly. "I saw you watching Iorek earlier," he mumbled. "What of it?" came the daring reply.

Iofur snarled, and for a fleeting moment the junior bear thought he had ventured too far, but the snarl changed to an amused growl, and Iofur's mirth filled the empty space between them. "I see how it is now, little one! If you wish to challenge Iorek, I will support you. Meet me at sunrise, and I will ensure Iorek is waiting for you."

With that he departed with confidence, leaving the poor young bear at a loss. It was true that he wanted the beautiful she-bear's attention more than anything else on the frozen wastelands, but challenge Iorek Byrnison? Few would dare suggest such a task. At that precise moment, Iorek sauntered past with the cause of his distress by his rival's side, who was clearly admiring the precision, and shape of the armour glistening snugly on his immaculate hide, and the rash bear's resolve hardened to be set in stone. He would face Iorek in combat.

At the dawn, the sky was illuminated by the sun's first rays, and Iofur Rakhison woke the foolish bear, hardly more than a cub, and led him out into the fresh white snow which fought the light of the new white sun, blinding both the old and young, the cunning and naive. Before the bear wore the weight of his armour, he was approached by Iofur, who had with him a mound of suspicious green herbs.

"What are those, Iofur?" the young bear asked, wary of anything that might break the code of honour.

"They will help your strength, nothing more," answered Iofur casually. "It's completely allowed. Don't you trust me?"

The foolish bear murmured the appropriate response but upon eating the herbs felt a strength flow through him, uncontrolled, unconditioned, and most likely extremely far outside the bear's code of honour. When Iorek came walking out his armour put on haphazardly, a cold hate and burning anger collided inside him, sparking turmoil, starting a fire to melt the ice, and destroy the hated bear, the source of suffering, Iorek Byrnison.

By now Iorek was concerned. Unwilling to harm the raging young warrior, but very aware of the ever-growing crowd of bears he moved out of the way and allowed the bear to charge past - but he did not realise his adversary's newfound strength. Sharply halting, the young bear leapt onto Iorek's back, digging in his white claws, and Iorek rolled onto his back, crushing his juvenile skull and killing him instantly.

A dead, hostile silence fell over the word and greedy Iofur saw his chance. "Iorek Byrnison, you have killed an innocent bear in front of a sea of witnesses. Is there any bear here who denies what he saw?"

There was some muttering and shuffling, but no protest came. Iofur's proud black eyes glimmered with triumph.

"You have broken our code. You will forfeit your honour. Lay down your armour and leave our camp. I give you until sunset."

But Iorek didn't need that long. He cast off his armour onto the mangled body of his former foe, and with one last look of loathing spoke. "There will be consequences, Iofur. I will be back."

With this he walked away, his thick coat flapping in the boreal wind, before he was lost in the blizzard.