

Chapter 66

“Your mother’s service to me exempted her from her family’s curse,” the calm voice returned after a few seconds of silence. “Her lineage was cursed for shedding innocent b***d but she escaped her fate and ran to my sanctuary. I kept her safe in my sanctuary for many years, preserving her.” I blinked because I was not expecting that.

“What – What do you mean by preserving her?”

“Time is a teardrop to me but an ocean to your kind. To me, she had spent less than a week in the sanctuary but she told me one day that she had spent decades. She had not aged in those decades but she wanted to leave to see the world outside.”

I – It was a lot to wrap my head around but I had a goddess in my head. I was listening directly to the he voice of divinity so nothing seemed too big to wrap my head around.

If my mother’s lineage was cursed, did that make me cursed too? “Who cursed her lineage?” I asked.

Cursed.

I had played around with that idea all my life. I had called myself cursed with bad luck. I’d suffered enough to assume my bad luck was not ordinary. Yet, I never actually expected to be cursed for real.

“I did.” I looked up, forgetting that she wasn’t sitting in front of me.

“What?” Things just kept getting worse and worse the more I listened to her voice.

“Her grandmother spilt innocent blood so I cursed her and everything that came from her, including magic.” Some pieces were moving into place to form the giant puzzle before me. “I annihilated the others like her who aided in spilling innocent blood.

They served two deities so it was easy for them to hide from me but the earth goddess cried out when she was muddied with the b***d of the innocent.” Realization hit me and with it came discomfort that bloomed into horror.

Surely, she didn’t mean –

“Queen Valencia was a good queen. She was faithful in her duties and served me well. It was not her time to die but greedy men collaborated with wolves blessed with magic. They killed her and altered the future terribly.”

“Are you saying – are you saying that – that –“ I stuttered.

“My dearest, your great grandmother worked with traitors that killed the ones I blessed to rule over my people. I cursed the magic tree after that and took away magical abilities from those that still lived. The traitors would have failed if they didn’t have magic.”

I buried my face in my palms and then I cried. For my mother who had suffered the ill fate. I thought my life was bad but she must have had it worse. I couldn’t imagine having to flee my home to avoid the wrath of the people my family had hurt only to end up in the same situation as before.

My blood.

I had the blood of a traitor. I always thought it was an insult meant to get me down but it was true. My great grandmother had been a traitor and my parents too. How soon would my traitorous gene manifest to haunt me?

“I am a traitor. I have the blood of a traitor,” I whispered to myself, raising my head to look at my hands as if expected to see blood.

“The bitterness in your heart,” the goddess said in a subdued tone. “It is spreading.”

“And if I – so Valens –“ My mind travelled back to the day I heard him discussing vengeance against those that wronged him. I didn’t understand at first because I thought he’d killed them all but I did now. He knew my mother fled and he was searching for whatever family she may have started.

I was the one he was looking for.

If I wasn’t seated already, I would collapse into a seat.

We were so terribly matched that it didn’t make any sense for us to be mates. He hated me!

“Miriam was dear to me and as her daughter, I will give you this perk. He will never find out if you don’t tell him.” I laughed out loud at that.

“A perk? Why – why would you even make me his mate when he hates me?”

“It is the only way to save the two of you.” I was doomed. “I created you for him.” The goddess went quiet. “I made you and gave you Artemis. Artemis and Zino have been mates in all their lifetimes.” I blinked at her as if I was stupid.

“I did not turn away from my prince during his curse. I put plans in place to free him but as I said, time is not the same to me and your kind.” She paused. “His heart – his heart is black and coated in bitterness. I could not break him from his curse with such a vengeful heart.” She went quiet and sadness wrapped around me.

“I hid Miriam because she served me and because I did not want Valens to continue his revenge with her. I gave him time to get over his loss and forgo vengeance but the more time that passed, the more bitter he got.” The sadness around me spread through the room.

“Once, he cursed my name but he repented before I reacted. I had my plan set out but I knew I had to do something urgently to save him. I made you and gave you the other half of his soul. I made you from Miriam because I know a mate bond is the only thing stronger than my prince’s thirst for vengeance.”

I looked at a curtain dance softly in the windless room. I stood and walked over to the window. Drawing the curtains and opening the louvers, I leaned out to watch the people passing. I looked to see if there were people like me out there who the goddess had used as mere pawns.

“What of Lucien? He was my first mate,” I said.

I didn’t see anyone who had been created for the sole purpose of helping a vengeful prince. I didn’t see anyone who had suffered like I had because the goddess chose me as a pawn. No, she hadn’t chosen me as a pawn; she made me to be a pawn.

“Lucien was a mere distraction. In another life, with another wolf, you may have been together but I gave you Lucien to calm you.” I turned, forgetting again that I couldn’t see her. “Artemis has always displaced initial signs of latency in her previous lives. I did not want you to question if you were truly my creation so I gave you Lucien. He was never in your future. I tried to hint at you that there were better things ahead but you took it the wrong way, sadly.”

Sadly? Sadly!?

“You are admitting that you condemned me to a life of suffering because you wanted to stop your ‘dearest prince’ from walking the path of

vengeance?” I wiped tears from my eyes. “You are admitting that I suffered for nothing because I was born a mere pawn? A way for you to get back into your prince’s good books?” This time, I fell into a seat because it was all too much.

I’d suffered for nothing. Every moment in my life had simply been leading up to when I mated with Valens and he fell in love and abandoned his vow of vengeance.

“Your lineage is cursed,” the goddess reminded me.

“You cursed my lineage. I am part of a cursed lineage because you specifically made me to be a part of a cursed lineage!” I screamed.

“I understand if you are angry.” Angry? Angry didn’t begin to cut it. I was feeling too many things all at once and they made me feel like I was about to explode.

“I have not been fair to you so I am offering to grant you one unconditional wish. You can take your time to think –“

“My child! Give me back my child!” What was there to think about?

“They had no wolf yet so I cannot do that. I am sorry but that child was never in your future. You will have children in the future but –“

“Children? I can’t even stand the sight of my mate! Give me my child back or you can forget everything. I will curse your name here and now. I will desecrate this temple and laugh when you strike me down because then everything you’ve put in place would be ruined.”

“It is not in my power to do. Your bitterness is radiating off you. I am watching your heart turn black with every passing second. I want to halt that darkness but the child had no wolf. It cannot be brought back. Choose something else.”

“Then magic.” I laughed. “Give me back the magic you took from my people.”

I knew I wouldn’t get it because she was a useless goddess. Her eyes flashed as if she heard my thoughts. She was in my head and could see my heart so she must have.

“I took away magic for a reason.”

“If you cannot give me magic, you cannot give me anything.” I stood as if I could walk out and evade her voice.

“I can give you a child. If you want it, you will conceive this night with as many children as you want in your womb at once,” she whispered as if it was a good deal.

“You will give me a child anyway. No, you will give your prince a child because you are eager to atone for the years you left him to wander but I am nobody so you cannot grant me a wish.” I sighed. “You know what? Now that I know all these, I am going as far away from him as possible. He may not hunt me down if he finds out who I am but he is a deserter Alpha. He will leave once again and my pack and I will have to deal with the calamity he causes. Do you even think I want to lay with him anymore?”

“Very well.” She seemed resigned. I picked my way to the door but her next words made me pause. “I will grant you your magic but only when you love your mate.”

“You granted me an unconditional wish. I owe you nothing,” I reminded her.

“Fair enough.” She sighed again. “You will have the magic you would have had if I never cursed the magic tree but let me make you a deal this time.” She paused and I raised a brow to show I was listening. “I will restore magic to werewolves through your lineage. Your children will be

born as princes and princesses with magical powers and their children will be the same but I will only do this if you give your mate a second chance. If you leave him, you will never find happiness and whatever magical powers you get will die with you.”