

# Forever in the Past and Forever in the Future

Chapter 212



## Chapter 80

"Why can't you go with me, again?" I ask Bronx while I smooth out the dress I changed into for the trip to the botanical gardens.

"I haven't been in the office for over a week. I'm drowning in work and we have a dinner party tonight that I can't skip out on to work late. If I don't go in for a few hours, I won't be able to catch up," he wraps his arms around my waist and looks at me through the mirror. "Baby, you have nothing to worry about. They're excited to meet you. They are your sisters, they already love you."

I give a nervous sigh and fix my hair one last time. Bronx gives me a kiss and turns me around, leading me out of the closet room. He whispers words of encouragement to me the whole time, until we get to the door. He opens it to find Tyree on the other side, looking dapper in a black suit with a white shirt and black tie.

"Luna, are you ready? Marco is waiting in the car," he gestures for me to join him.

"He's right you know," Lex says in a soothing voice as we walk, Tm not saying you don't need to watch your back around them but underneath it all, they love you."

"Lex, I love you to pieces, but it feels you're playing both sides of the fence right now and it's kind of frustrating," I huff at her.

"Sorry, Kas," she whimpers, "I'm in a bit of a rock and a hard place on this whole thing. I want you to get to know them because they are your family, but it's true, they could be dangerous."

I purse my lips as we get to the sedan. Tyree opens the door for me. From inside, a tall woman with sky-blue eyes peeks out.

"Bonjour, Luna!" Delilah's voice trills.

"Delilah? What are you doing here?" I hop into the back of the car with her, squeezing my hand in hers.

"Do you think I would let you go into this alone? Besides, it gives me an opportunity to pick up fresh ingredients," she looks at me like I must be crazy for thinking I would go alone with my guards. She has been working with the lead botanist to grow rare and potentially dangerous plants for her potions in an area Bronx donated money to have built.

"And until you have more control over your abilities, I'm your backup protection for the things Marco and Tyree cannot defend," she says proudly.

"Delilah, is that safe? I don't want you to put you or Alexander in danger," I feel my head shaking back and forth while I speak.

"Don't worry, Luna lokaste. The protection I am providing is only in the form of wards and barriers. I won't be putting myself in harm's way," she pats my hand gently.

I smile gratefully at her.

"Marco, can you please put the glass up while I do this? I don't want it to distract you while you drive," Delilah asks in her sweetest voice.

"Sure thing, Delilah," he nods, then pushes a button on the dashboard. A dark piece of glass slides up and separates Delilah and I from Marco and Tyree.

"Okay, time to learn how to do this yourself, Luna Regent, Goddess lokaste Mason," Delilah says. She uses my full title and name to prepare using magic on me. I watch as her eyes turn a shade of midnight blue.

Over the next twenty minutes, Delilah teaches me how to place simple protective wards over myself. She tells me I am an excellent student, and seem a natural. She recites a more complex incantation and slides her hands down my body, hovering an inch over my skin. A cooling sensation washes over me just as we pull into the parking lot of the botanical gardens.

The curator and head botanist meet US at the entrance with warm smiles on their faces. We trade pleasantries as we make our way inside. When we get to the atrium, they open the door for US. I take a deep breath as the humid air spills out and envelops US.

"You got this, Kas," Lex urges me on, "It's like you told Hannah, a lot of new things are scary. Once you see that there is nothing to fear, then it's fun." As I walk up the pathway, I see three of the most beautiful women I have ever seen mulling around looking at plants and flowers. Tessa, Amari, and another woman with light blonde hair that cascades down her back. From this angle, I can see she has very light grey eyes. So light, they almost look silver. Around them are fifteen other women talking and laughing with each other. Their features are like the three women.

"Excuse me, ma'am, are you with the Santoro group?" I hear Marco ask someone from behind me.

"I am Persephone," she confirms in a thick Greek accent, "I am here to meet my sister for the first time, again."

The sound of her voice feels like home. I have heard it thousands of times before in moments I can no longer remember the details of. A voice that has been by my side through millennia. Sharing in celebration, calming me in moments of anger, soothing me in my last moments of multiple lives. I gasp as I turn around, bringing my hands to my mouth.

The statuesque woman standing next to Marco is almost six feet tall. She looks young but her skin has the most beautiful weathered sepia tone as if she spends most of her time outdoors. Her long brown hair has been fashioned into dreadlocks, which are pulled back into a loose, corded hair tie. She has on a simple dark brown dress with a leather jacket and sandals. When she turns her head to look at me, I see her thin, wide set scarlet eyes recognize and admire me. A smile spreads across her face and her body relaxes. 1

I'm rooted to the spot as I stare at her. She is the woman who let me drink from the cup when I was kidnapped. She is one of my sisters, not a prisoner. I should feel irate and overwhelmed with anger, but I don't. All I feel is desperate. Desperate to be close to her and to be comforted by her.

"C-Cora?" I stammer. I don't know how I know to call her that when she just told Marco her name is Persephone. It just comes out of my mouth. She opens her arms to me and I can't help but fall into them. As she closes me into a strong embrace, I feel a sob escape my chest. Cora rocks me gently, leaning her head on top of mine and quietly shushing me as she lets me cry against her.

"Eímai edó mazi sastóra. [I am here with you now.]," she whispers, "Eímai edó, agapiméni mou adelfi. [I am here, my darling sister.]"

I don't know how I can understand her words, but I do. How is that possible?

I hear murmuring behind US and sense people approaching. Soon there are other people joining in our hug. I can hear snuffles and sobs. I can feel a combination of sorrow, fear, relief, and love coming from the women surrounding me.

I feel like I am where I am supposed to be, but there is one nagging thing missing. What more I could need in this moment?

I search my mind as the women comfort and soothe me. What is missing? The answer becomes apparent: the Mavri Magea.