

## Chapter 164

As before the air stilled, the woods surrounding the circle went silent and a ghostly figure of her grandmother appeared before her. Brinah smiled lovingly at her granddaughter. In her arms she held a beautiful shining light.

"I wish I could hug you." Aislinn couldn't help the tear that rolled down her cheek.

Brinah reached out a hand and cupped Aislinn's cheek. Cradling the light in her other arm. Aislinn thought she could almost feel her touch. But when she touched her cheek where Brinah's hand appeared to be there was nothing there. She let out a deep breath and decided that she need to move on to why she was here.

"Do I need to tell you what I've been dreaming or do you already know?" Aislinn couldn't help remember what her grandmother had said to her before her honeymoon. There was something that Brinah didn't tell her then.

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Brinah shook her head. "How are you feeling child?"

"I feel find. Rhona says that the twins are fine. Except I know I'm not fine. Tell me what's wrong."

"Aislinn," Brinah began and then stopped. She was obviously struggling with what to say and how to say it. "In all we teach the essential concept to learn is the uncompromising nature of balance. The Fates allow nothing free. If I were to attempt to return your plane of existence something would have to be given to this plane in exchange. No soul can exist on any plane out of place."

As Brinah spoke Aislinn couldn't help but stare into the brilliant light nestled in her arms. Something she had been coming to understand all along suddenly solidified in her mind and tears began to run unheeded down both her cheeks as she stared at the light. She reached for the glow and fell to her knees distraught that could not even touch it.

Aislinn began shaking her head. "No, Brennus couldn't. He doesn't know how to use the stones or alchemy or anything else."

"Brennus had nothing to do with it directly. All power begins with thought. Brennus was brought to your plane because both he and Jenna needed each other so badly at that moment and their need was stronger than the attachment of a soul to an unborn child. I do not believe they knew what they did."

"How, what can I do? Is my child lost?" Aislinn heard herself speaking but did not wish to believe what she said.

"No, it's not lost. We need to return Brennus to this side in exchange for your child."

"How? I don't know where he is. Cadifor can't find her or him or whatever they are." Panic surged through Aislinn as she contemplated how close she was to giving birth. "If it's not done before they're born," she asked slowly and quietly as to almost be a whisper.

"Honestly child I'm not sure. I don't believe the child will live without a soul. I'm surprised that Jenna's body can exist with two. That cannot be a good joining of consciousness. I believe that Jenna and her father have come to know far more than either ever wanted."

"If they die will that be enough," Aislinn tone became deadly. "Do they have to be here?"

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"If you want to bring this soul back to the child in your belly then a soul must be exchanged at this place."

"I'm frightened and furious. I was trying to help them."

"I wish I could help more."

Aislinn looked up at her grandmother. "I have very little time. Is there any more that I need to know?"

Brinah shook her head. "Nothing that I can say now."

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Aislinn didn't want to leave. She could not believe that she was standing there staring at her child's soul in the arms of her dead grandmother. She felt more tired than she had ever felt in her life. She began to think this was more than she could handle.

"I believe this is enough for now child. You're friends grow increasingly concerned. There is no more you can learn here now. I will wait for you to return. Take comfort in the knowledge that your child is not alone."

Brinah suddenly vanished from view and the clearing began to move around Aislinn again. She felt dizzy and disoriented. Leaning forward she caught herself with her hands and threw up on the ground.

Rissa ran to her side and helped her to sit back. One look into Rissa's face and Aislinn lost what little composure she had left. She buried her face against her friend's shoulder sobbing.

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