

## CHAPTER 16

I gulped as I looked at myself in the mirror. I had a smokey eye with a little bit of blush and red lip stick. I took a deep breath. I could already hear the party was in full swing. The music was booming across the whole castle.

I was nervous. I've never been to such a big event before. My parents would never let me go. Except for this one time Xavier, Kieth and Milo had snuck me out when we were around seventeen. We had driven away and went to the beach at one in the morning. That was the first time I tasted alcohol. I had accidentally gotten drunk since I didn't I was such a lightweight.

The boys got a big telling off, by my uncle, the Alpha, who is also Xavier's father. Sucks for him. I made sure I was completely ready before going out. I checked over my outfit. It was cute. It fit me like a glove. My head piece was a so band decorated by diamonds and beads. The side of my head had a beautiful diamond encrusted crest with white feathers so ly spilling out of it.

I'm ready. I stepped out of my room and walked down the hallway. I stopped at the top of the stairs to see two double doors at the end of the hall. It was Zeus's room. He still had not come. I don't think he is.

I went down the stairs and my eyes widen at what was in front of me. It was glorious. Colourful lights were flashing everywhere. There were performers on the roof, doing artistic movements while holding sheets of material, wrapping their bodies around it.

Down below, people were everywhere. All wearing the most fancy suits and the most expensive dresses. I suddenly felt inadequate when I saw so many beautiful girls wearing such beautiful dresses.

There were more performers wearing giant and colourful feathers, dancing up on little pedestals. Giant balloons were hung up, floating everywhere. Floating lights were hovering over everyone, illuminating their beautiful attire. There were also giant, but then trees everywhere with white light fairy lights. Everything was extraordinary. Sozin really did go all out for his birthday.

I was nervous because I didn't know anyone here. Who knew that Sozin had so many friends. I finally got to the bottom of the stairs. I pushed my way through the crowd till I find myself at the built in bar. Ozai was sitting there, sipping his drink. I was relieved to see a familiar face.

I approached him and his eyes widen slightly at the sight of me. I smile shyly at him, "Hey, Ozai."

He nods towards me and o ers his usual polite grin.

"Is it always like this on his birthday?" I asked Ozai over the music.

He nods his head, "Yes. His birthday is always the party of the year."

"How does he know so many people?"

He shook his head, "He doesn't know most of them. Some of them he does. All is invited to Sozin's parties."

Wow. I never knew such events existed. I lean toward Ozai and asked, "Which one is Sozin?" I have not seen him yet.

Ozai points to one of the pedestals that elevated. He is dancing by himself with a drink in hand. I laughed. He is just how I pictured him. He was definitely uncommonly good-looking. I'm sure many women would swoon. But me, he's still just Sozin.

He had sandy blonde hair. His sides were very short, where the top of his hair was very long. It was styled into a mohawk. He had high cheek bones and tanned skin with a piercing in his brow and lip as well as one earring in his le ear. He looked like the ultimate bad boy.

His eyes locked with mine and his smile widened. He pointed to me and began to sing. I felt my cheeks blush and I looked away grinning.

Sozin danced through the crowd and came to give me giant hug. "I'm so glad you're here, Lily!"

STORY CONTINUES BELOW

I laughed and hugged him back, "Yeah, well I couldn't miss your birthday." I said while looking at him. I noticed that his eyes was a glowing yellow colour. Interesting.

He started to look at me funny. His brows pulled together as he said, "Whoa, your eyes are like right on mine. Weird."

I giggled, "It's because I can see!"

Sozin's eyes widen and his mouth fell open in shock, "Holy Shit! You can see!" He shouts in joy.

"Sozin, Language!" Ozai growled.

Sozin ignored him and picks me up o the ground and twirled me around just as Donny did, "My little Lily can see!" He shouts out to the crowd, but the music was so loud that no one could even hear.

I laugh and patted his shoulder. He puts me down and beams down at me, "I'm happy you get to experience this."

"Happy Birthday, Sozin."

Sozin goes o into the crowd and dances. Someone taps me on the shoulder. I turn around and saw Ozai, he motions for me to come closer.

"There are a lot of randoms here, okay? So stick close to one of us. People won't question you if you're with one of us."

I nodded my head in understanding.

"But," He continues, "If anyone asked, say that your name is Freya and you're Sozin's cousin."

"But he's hundreds of years old. How would I be his cousin?" I asked.

Ozai waves his hand dismissingly, "That doesn't matter. People will be too drunk to notice."

"Okay."

Donny comes out of the crowd with a big smile, but it even got bigger when he saw me, "Come and dance with me, Lil!"

I ran toward Donny nervously. He grabs my hand and guides me through the dancing bodies until we find a space.

We both danced and laughed with each other. I lean and said, "By the way, my name is Freya, okay?"

He looks at me confused and I laughed, "Code name!"

He smiles and nods. He got it. He twirled me around and turned to grip onto his shoulders. I was getting tired and as fun as this is, I need a break. I told Donny that I was going to go and he was good with it.

I pushed my way through the crowd and wanted to go up the stairs. At the top, there were a section where fancy tables were set, overlooking the whole dancing crowd. It was beautifully set up. As I climbed up the stairs, there was another stair case on the other side of the room the led to the same place. People were on it and were chatting and mingling. However, behind the talking crowd of people, there was shadow. My pace going up the stairs slowed down as I stared.

If I looked hard enough, in the shadow, someone was standing. They turned their head, and there is was. In the darkness was a glowing set of bright green eyes that were staring right at me. Zeus. He was here.

I quickly ran up the stairs, wanting to get away. I wasn't ready to see him just yet. People were sitting on random table everywhere. I stood next to a Japanese painting and pretended to be interested in so that people wouldn't disturb me. However that was not the case.

"Beautiful, isn't it?" A so voice asked,

I glanced to right and was shocked to see a very beautiful Japanese woman. Her hair was jet black and almost as long as her body. Her face had beautifully white skin. Her lips were red as blood and the perfect heart shape. Her almond eyes were big and beautiful. I looked down her clothes and saw she did listen to the dress-code. She had a very long and very detailed red kimono that le a long trail. It drooped over her shoulders revealing a very feminine and long neck.

She turns to me and smiles gently, "Hello, my name is Utsukushi, but you may call me Kushi."

I gulped, "My name is, Li- I mean, Freya. My name is Freya."

She bows her head, "It is very nice to meet you, Freya."

I bowed my head back as we both turned back to the painting, "I love art," She told me, "It has a way of capturing one's emotions, doesn't it?"

"It does," I agree, "What do you think this painting is about?"

Kushi smiles, but it did not reach her eyes, her eyes were sad, "It is a story about friendship."

My brows raised in curiosity, "Why would you think that?"

She looks at me so ly giggles into her hand that was covering her mouth, "Because I painted it. I created this piece over two thousand years."

My mind as finding it hard to grasp how many years this woman was alive and yet she looked better than me? "Is it normal for the people of Arcanus to live so long?"

She laughs again and shakes her head, "No. Only those who are exceptionally special live such long lives."

I tilted my head, "If it is not too rude of me to ask, but...ummm..." I didn't know how to word it.

"What am I?" She finishes my sentence with a friendly smile.

I laugh awkwardly and nodded.

She answers, "I am the goddess of Water." I thought my mind was going to explode right then and there.

"Y-You're a G-G-Goddess?" I said in shock.

She laughs into her hands politely, "Do not be so shocked, Freya."

"Why would you come to a place like this if you are a...a...goddess?"

She looks back to the painting, "I like being with the mortals. They remind that the simple things are important. A simple meeting, a simple conversation. It is so...so...simple," She said in thought, "But it holds such value. Just like you and me," She turns to me and her eyes so en, "That is why I painted this. Friendship is such a simple word, but it holds so much."

She leans in and says in her so voice, "Thank you, Freya. You see, I am one girl in this painting, and the other girl was my friend. She had died a long long time ago. But you have reminded me of what it felt like to have a friend again, thank you for giving me that."

She bows low to me then turns and leaves. I was le in shock. She was so incredibly so and kind. I just made friends with a goddess! Well this night has become very interesting.

I went toward the inside balcony to look at the crowd dancing to the music. Ozai was still sitting at the bar, Donny was going crazy on the dance floor and Sozin trying to climb the sheets hanging from the roof that the performers are using.

I needed some fresh air. I went to a random balcony that overlooked the snowy forest. It looked so beautiful. The pine trees had snow dusted upon them with icicles hanging on some of the branches. The snow and ice sparkled under the moon light.

I looked up at the moon, it was so incredibly beautiful and bright. I filled me with an other worldly energy that I couldn't explain.

"Are you not cold?" A dark and low voice came of the darkness behind me.

I looked over my shoulder and saw Zeus, standing there watching me. My heart beat against my chest. My body filled with nervous energy. "No," I said so ly.

He comes to stand next to me. He had his hands behind his back holding a random book and says, "So the moon does make you see again."

I did not say anything. And I did not look at him...at least I tried not to. He was mate, a er all. He was designed for me to be attracted to him. And let me tell you...he was gorgeous.

"You were gone for a while," I stated quietly as I kept staring at the garden.

"Yes, I was." He replies.

I placed my hands on the balcony rails and asked, "Did you find what you were looking for?"

Zeus stood up straight and he too was looking at the gardens, he slowly and lowly answered, "No," Trying to cover up his disappointment.

We stood in silence, both of us looking at the gardens and the moon.

"How is your head?" He asks me.

I was surprised that he wanted to know. I didn't think my being wounded would be any of his concern. I felt the back of my head and it still had a bump and a few stitches in, "It's okay. It's healing which is all that matters."

"You are very small. You will probably heal slower than most."

I glare at him, "Do you think I am weak?"

"You are weak physically," He turns and faces me, "But I do not think you are weak, up hear," Tapping my forehead.

I sighed, sick of walking around eggshells, "Why are you here, Zeus?"

"I've come home." He says sarcastically.

I shook my head, "No...I mean why are on this balcony...with me?"

He turns away from me and looks up at the moon, he slightly tilts his head and says, "I was...curious."

Zeus? Curious of me?

"Why would you? You hate me." I said in a hard voice.

He smirks, "I don't hate you, Lily. But I don't particularly like you either."

I roll my eyes, "That makes everything so much better," I mumble to myself. I look up

And for the first time ever I heard him release a small chuckle that not trace of darkness or maliciousness in it. I stared at him as I watched his face transform into something I was afraid of, into something I wanted to see more of.

"Donny had told me something interesting," I told him.

He sighs, "And what did the little bastard say this time."

I turn my body toward Zeus as I said, "The story, your story that my aunt had told me when I was a little girl...it wasn't true. Donny wouldn't tell me the real story,"

"So, the little bastard does know how to keep a secret."

"What is the real story?" I asked seriously.

Zeus looks at me and says, "No," firmly.

"Why not?" I asked, confused as to why I couldn't know, "If the legend is a lie, don't you think I need to know the real story? Considering I am your supposed keyto breaking the curse."

Zeus's face did not change as well as his decision, "No." He said firmly again.

Okay, this was getting annoying. I was about to open my mouth to yell, but then Zeus said, "I will tell you, but just no now."

"When?" I asked impatiently.

"Some time in the future."

I cross my arms and hu in annoyance as I turn away from him. They are keeping secrets. And I intend on finding out what.