

## Frozen Star 128

### Chapter 128: A Past and Lights of Mana

[POV Liselotte]

The afternoon was slowly falling over Whirikai.

The sky, dyed a deep blue, began to fringe itself with golden threads. The snow of the training field reflected the last rays of the sun, and the steam of our breaths faded with every unspoken word.

It had been nearly an hour since we finished the fight.

Leah and I sat near the edge of the field, on a stone covered in frost.

Chloé slept a few meters away, her tail covering her snout, and Claire was watching from afar, sketching something in her notebook.

The silence between us was peaceful... but full of thoughts.

Finally, I turned toward Leah.

"Your magic," I said.

"It never stops surprising me. Not just the power, but the way you use it.

Today... I couldn't keep up with you."

She smiled faintly, her gaze lost on the horizon.

"It's not just power," she replied. "It's... understanding."

"Understanding?"

"Yes." She rested her hands on her knees. "Knowing what you're touching when you cast a spell. What forces you're moving.

Most mages only learn the form — the gesture, the word, the symbol — but not the reason.

I... had to learn it the hard way."

I listened in silence, noticing how her voice grew lower, more introspective.

"Before I was kidnapped," she continued, "I had already started my magical education. Not much, but enough to understand the basics: flow, affinity, energy conversion.

My mother used to say I had a natural affinity for wind and light.

But in the palace, everything was theoretical... they never taught us to feel magic. Only to control it."

She paused. The wind blew, moving a strand of her hair.

Her gaze hardened slightly.

"And then came captivity.

In that place, magic was different. Dark. Viscous.

Demons don't conjure — they mold.

They don't ask mana for permission... they force it to obey.

I saw things that..." — she stopped, taking a deep breath — "things that showed me what happens when power is used without a soul."

"Leah..." I murmured.

She smiled softly, not sadly, only calmly.

"Don't worry. I don't say it with fear. It's just... when you witness something so corrupted, you also understand what you never want to become.

That's how I began to see that magic wasn't just energy. It was intention.

Mana... responds to the heart. To what you are, not just to what you say."

Her words lingered in the air, and for a moment, the wind itself seemed to stop.

"When Kaelen trained me," she went on, "everything clicked.

He didn't teach me with spells, but with questions.

He used to say: 'Don't try to cast fire — try to understand why you want something to burn.'

And little by little... the fire became mine."

She looked at her hands, extending them under the twilight.

Small threads of mana glimmered between her fingers — blue, gold, and white, like a weave of stars.

"I learned that every kind of magic has a pulse.

Fire breathes fast, impatient.

Wind dances and escapes.

Light sings.

And ice..." — her eyes turned toward me — "ice listens.

It forms when emotion cools down enough to become clear."

I smiled, a bit fascinated.

"And yours? What does yours do?"

"My magic isn't of one single kind."

She closed her eyes. "It's a blend — fire, wind, a little light.

Not because I have more affinities... but because I learned to harmonize them.

That's what Kaelen saw in me: not strength, but balance.

That mix... the same one that saved me when I was captive."

Her voice softened.

"The demons made me understand chaos. Kaelen taught me balance.

And you... you showed me the reason to keep learning."

My chest tightened when I heard that.

I didn't know what to say.

I just looked at her as the wind played with the loose strands of her hair.

"I didn't know you had gone through so much," I said at last.

"And yet, you keep looking forward."

She gave me a calm smile.

"Because if I stop, then all of it would've been for nothing.

Every scar, every day I was afraid, only makes sense if I keep moving.

That's why I train, why I fight.

Not for power, but to make sure none of what I lived ever happens again."

Her sincerity hurt, but it also inspired.

I stayed silent for a few seconds, thinking about my own struggles.

How I had felt the ice inside me as a burden, a weight I couldn't control.

And yet, Leah saw everything as something that could be understood, even the darkest parts.

"Leah," I said with a faint smile.

"Do you think I could learn that too... that understanding of mana?"

She turned toward me with a warm look.

"Of course. In fact, you already are.



Your magic changes with your emotions, but not because it's out of control... it's because it reflects what you feel honestly.

You just have to listen to it."

"Listen to it?"

"Yes."

She leaned a little closer. "Ice doesn't obey when you shout at it.

It does when it trusts you."

I couldn't help but laugh.

"That sounds like you're talking about Chloé."

Leah laughed too, softly.

"You're not that far off."

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The sun finally disappeared.

The sky turned violet, and the first stars began to show on the horizon.

We stayed there a while longer, without speaking — only listening to the creak of the ice, the murmur of the wind, and the calm heartbeat of the magic around us.

For the first time in a long while, I felt like I understood my own power a little better.

Not as a burden... but as a voice.

A voice that, like Leah, only needed to be heard.

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Later, when we returned to the house, Leah stopped at the doorway and said to me:

"Lotte, do you know why you managed to make your ice move as if it were alive?"

"Why?"

She smiled, softly.

"Because, without realizing it, you gave it a purpose.

Ice responds to the desire to protect.

That's why it flows when you fight for someone else."

Her words stayed with me all night.

And as I lay down on my bed, staring at the ceiling lit by the faint glow of the fire, I thought that maybe... the ice sleeping inside me wasn't as cold as I once believed.

It was only a promise still learning to be heard.