Chapter 2

Sam POV

2 years later…

I’m cold. As a supernatural being, I don’t usually feel the cold, but Silas has had his sorceress enchant the anklet once again so that I feel the cold. He also had her add a little extra treat for me; he made sure that any pain he inflicts upon me; I feel it 10 times worse.

He makes sure he comes down into the shíthole every day to punish me. I ruined his only chance of getting to Amelia. Now, mum has used the power of the gypsies to protect her, so he can’t find her no matter how much magic he uses. He beats the shít out of me most days, leaving me on death's door and once he’s satisfied I’m half dead, he leaves me alone writhing in agony, but all the pain is worth it knowing my daughter is safe.

I’m no longer kept in the small damp-filled room in England but at the bottom of his cold and drafty castle somewhere in Europe. Sometimes he is gone for months at a time. He has to leave because of the hunter. I have heard some of the members of his blood-sucking coven talking about him. Apparently, he is driven by his fury and will not stop until Silas is dead. I’m obviously rooting for this hunter. In truth, I pray for his victory every night.

I enjoy the peace that I get when he is gone. My body has time to heal from his daily attacks, but I’m left to starve. I have to feed on the rats that scurry around in the darkness. It can be quite a challenge as well since I’m chained to the wall with the help of his fücking sorceress and her enchanted fücking chains. I swear I’m going to rip her throat out the first chance I get. She enjoys my misery. I can see it in her eyes when she comes down here to inflict some vex upon me. When hunting for the rats, I have to lie as still as possible and slow my breathing down. The rats think I’m dead because I smell like shít and that is when I strike, as they're about to take a nibble on my flesh.

I can hear his minions moving above me. The sounds of their footsteps echo down here but they are not allowed to enter here. He wants me to go mad from the solitude, but I crave it. When I’m left alone, I close my eyes and picture my family. I try to think what they would be doing at that moment in time and wonder if they are happy.

I have given up hope of ever seeing them again. He will kill me before that happens. I know that, but it doesn’t stop me from dreaming of them. I open my eyes as the room turns colder. A shudder runs down my body as I wrap my arms around myself to warm myself. My hair starts to whip around my face as a strong wind consumes me.

“So you're the vampire's daughter?”

A beautiful woman with long raven hair says as she steps toward me. I step back into the wall. I can feel her power filling the room. It’s suffocating.

“Who are you?”

My voice is hoarse from lack of fluids and sounds strange to my ears.

“I am Eris, goddess of strife and discord. And you, my dear, are coming with me. The vampire seems to have a soft spot for you, so I am going to keep you safe until I need you.”

Her eyes gleam and make my breath catch in my throat. Rich purple orbs glow in the darkness as her hand runs down my face, picking up a strand of my greasy and filthy hair and dropping it as if disgusted by the feel of it.

"I won't keep you locked up, but you will abide by my rules. I want you ready to fight in my war so you will train with my brother Moros. We can't have anyone knowing you are here though, so I'm afraid you will be banished to the underworld. Moros will accompany you and when it's time, I will come for you."

"Wait, what war?" The goddess laughed, sending chills down my spine.

"The war that will give me the rule of all the gods."

Her arms rose in the air and she created a large circle, making the wind pick up and whip around me again. She placed her hand on my shoulder and I was no longer standing shackled to the wall in the cold, dark room at the bottom of Silas's castle. I was standing in some sort of cave. It was hot and stuffy. The complete opposite of where I just was. My wrists felt lighter. I looked down to see the raw flesh where the chains had bit into my skin. I'm used to pain now, so it doesn't bother me anymore. At least I can thank Silas for one thing, his daily beatings taught me how to tolerate pain.

The goddess held her hand in front of her and a bright orb formed above her palm. It floated into the air and hovered above us for a second before exploding, the small pieces flew out in every direction. The walls of the cave were white. This wasn't a normal cave though. It was a tunnel that had been carved right into the stone. The light orb the goddess created had spread down the tunnel, lighting the way for us. The stone walls had niches carved out, and each one along the path glowed with the goddess's light. It was actually cozy and a massive improvement from the shíthole I was just taken from.

"That way."

I turned around and saw stairs leading down. As I moved, I could feel the dirt beneath my feet. It was rough and lumpy, like I was walking through grit. As I walked down the narrow steps, the tunnel started to become tighter.

"Humans used to be smaller. Don't worry, you'll fit."

I looked back over my shoulder at her and nodded my head. The steps led to a chamber with 5 tunnels leading in different directions. I stood in the center and waited for the goddess to tell me where to go. There was no use trying to escape. She was a goddess and Silas had beaten all the hope out of me when I saved Amelia.

"You tell me which way. I'm curious to see if you know."

I looked back at the goddess, who just smiled at me. Her smile was sinful, and I felt a shiver run down my spine. I closed my eyes and took a deep breath. All the tunnels felt dead. No air flowed through them apart from one.

"Only a pure soul can take the right path. I've only known of one human pick the right tunnel." She continued to say.

I closed my eyes again, my ear twitched as the soft sound of water flowing came from the tunnel I could feel the air.

"That one."

I pointed to the second tunnel to the right of myself. Her mouth twitched at the corner.

"Interesting. Did you just guess?"

"No, I can feel the air coming through that tunnel, also I can hear water running. You said I'm going to the underworld, which means we need to go to the river Styx."

"Hmm."

She pushed past me and walked down the tunnel I had chosen. This one got tighter and smaller the further down we walked. I had to turn to my side so I would fit.

"Almost there."

She didn't seem to be struggling with this. She moved through the tunnel like it was just a stroll in the park. I wasn't sure I would be able to go any further. It was getting harder with every step I took forward. My breathing was becoming more shallowed and my thoughts turned dark. I was going to get stuck and die in some tunnel deep under the surface of the earth and no one will ever know because they think I'm already dead. My chest began to hurt as my heart beat ferociously in my chest, my lungs burned trying to suck the oxygen in. No matter how much I was trying to remain calm, I was failing miserably. I took some struggled breaths and closed my eyes. I saw Mason smiling at me. He had Zak, Milo, and Amelia in his big, strong arms. They all laughed and I felt myself relax. My breathing became easier, so I quickly moved forward before I started to freak out again. The tunnel seemed to open up a little. I felt my mind relax. I didn't want to continue though. If I went any further down this tunnel, I wouldn't be able to get back. At least I know I can fit through this part.

"If you stop now, I will go and get one of your beautiful kids and bring them down here to train with my brother instead. Maybe that girl everyone is so keen on."

"Stay away from my children." I hissed, making her chuckle.

"I like you. But next time you snarl at me, I will rip your heart out of your chest and feed it to that pretty little girl."

I snapped my mouth shut. I didn't doubt her for a minute. I couldn't let my children get dragged into this. I had to do what she was asking so I could keep them safe.

"I'm sorry," I mumbled.

"Oh Sammy, I'm disappointed that you apologized. I was just starting to get some respect for you."

She turned back and continued walking effortlessly through the tunnel. My heart was calm now. The tunnel was getting wider and bigger, opening up more so I could stand up straight, stretching my back out. More steps led down. They seemed smaller than the last set I had to navigate before. My foot wouldn't fit on the step, so I had to walk down at a sideways angle. A small hole in the wall looked down onto the water below. I could smell the stagnant water. We were close.

"Charon, are you ready, my love?" I heard the goddess say.

Charon was the boatman of the underworld. He was the one who ferried the souls of the dead into the underworld. I stepped out of the tunnel and saw a towering man. He looked lanky and hunched over a large pole. A long black hooded cloak covered him with two yellow glowing eyes peering out of the black hole where his face should be. His hands looked frail, and his skin had a blue tinge to it.

"This is the last time I am doing this, Eris. You know the price."

Eris held her palm out and a coin appeared in it. Charon's long and boney fingers reached for the coin. As soon as his fingertip touched the coin, the large cavern we were in lit up. A large boat emerged from beneath the water. It had a large curved hull that swirled down with a lantern hanging in the center. The water that splashed against it looked dark and murky. The large cavern had long banks that ran the full length of the river for as far as I could see. Black forms moved on each side with what looked like dead trees that jutted up from the earth and the sound of scrėams filled with torment and misery seemed to echo around us. They weren't loud scrėams, though. It was more like they were in my head, inflicting their wretchedness upon me. Deep within the cavern where the river seemed to end was what looked like the fires of hell. The orange glow cast its light across the surface of the water, making the water look like a river of lava.

"Moros will train you. Do as he says or else I will kill all of your children. Do you understand me?"

I nodded my head, struggling with the scrėams in my mind. It was getting louder and louder.

“Charon, my love. Make sure no one finds her. Apparently, her mate is insistent on getting revenge on everyone who had a part in her death. I fear if he hears of her existence, then he will come for her, and we know how Selene likes to meddle. She must not know about her. Do you understand?”

My head snapped up upon hearing her words. Mason was after Silas. He was the one he was so afraid of and that everyone spoke about. The hunter was Mason.

I had a feeling it was him, I could smell him close by that day at the cemetery, but Silas had convinced me that was all in my mind, a cruel trick of my subconscious.

“I will keep her hidden, but I want to be free from this sister. When you win the war, I want my freedom.”

“And I will give you that freedom, I promise. She is the key to us winning, so keep her safe?”

“How am I the key to winning?” I asked.

The goddess glared at me before smiling. Her smile was wicked and made me feel cold.

“Because when I reunite you with your daughter, she will do whatever I say to make sure you don’t die. She will open up all of the portals to the gods' realms and Silas will lead my army into Ephion and kill everyone who stood against me and you will do this because if you don’t I will kill Zak, Milo, Amelia, and Mason along with every single member of that pack you once belonged to. Do you understand?”

“Yes!” I snarled.

The goddess raised her hand up, hitting me hard across my face and knocking me into the water. She hit me with such force I flew across the river like a rag doll. As I emerged from the dark, I heard Charon calling her a fool before a hand grabbed at my foot, pulling me under. I swallowed a mouth full of the disgusting water as I was pulled down. I tried to swim up, but I could feel hands clawing at me in the dark water. I tried to fight my way out, but I just kept getting pulled deeper and deeper into the black abysm. I felt a strong grip on my back and a sudden and forceful pull. As I ascended the darkness and resurfaced, my eyes landed on a thick bulky man. He was colossal in size, making me feel minuscule compared to him. He wore a large brown leather hooded coat, the hood hung down over his face, hiding it from view. His hands were covered by gloves, but they looked like the glove from a metal suit of armor. His coat went to his knees and I could see his leather boots, which looked like the boots of a soldier. I sucked in as much air as I could whilst I looked up at the three gods looking down at me.

“Well, I guess we will have to work around that,” Eris mumbled.

I hunched over, coughing up the dirty stinking water of the river. As my eyes cast down I saw my hands begin to fade. Not in the way you're thinking. I mean, they glowed, and the light was beginning to fade like my body was absorbing the light.

“Let’s go!” The bulking man boomed.

I watched as he climbed onto the boat. It didn’t even rock. Eris looked at me, waiting, so I followed the man. I sat down, looking into the water I had just been plucked from, and saw something swimming within it. I looked closer, not sure what it was when a person floated above the moving shape I was trying to get a closer look at, their face was twisted in pain, I could see pure anguish in their eyes and hear their scrėams of woe in my mind.

“It’s the damned souls.” The man’s voice was thunderous, but I suppose a man of his size would have to have a voice so loud it would be comical if he didn’t.

“This is their purgatory. You will get used to the screams.”

I didn’t know what to say, so I just sat in the boat silently. Charon stood at the front of the boat leading the way, and I sat cradling myself. Not knowing what was going to happen next was making my mind run wild. I couldn’t help but look at the towering man in front of me. I couldn’t tell if he was looking at me, but I was curious about him. Something was different and I couldn’t tell what yet.

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10 years later…

“Come on, little wolf. You can do better than that.” Moros laughed.

I popped my head up from behind the rock to get a quick look at what I was up against. Moros was sitting on his large metal throne with his minions surrounding him. Some of them were hell dogs from the underworld and some were the doomed souls he had collected over the years. Moros was the god of doom and destiny and everyone was terrified of him. Everyone except me. Moros was good to me, teaching me how to be strong. He has a conjure glass that allows the user to have a glimpse of the world above. He allows me to use it but I can’t use it as often as I like, it’s too difficult. I cried the first time I saw my children, and it seemed to stir something hidden deep within Moros. He became compassionate and considerate toward me, making my time in the underworld enjoyable.

Moros let me keep his conjure glass so I could watch them grow and see what amazing people they were becoming. Zak was now the beta of the pack and he was such a strong and smart man, and Milo was just as strong, but he stayed behind to care for Amelia. He was always such a loving and caring boy. And Amelia looked just like me when I was her age. All my children had grown into beautiful people and I was so proud of each of them. I would also sometimes look in on Alisa and Chloe, but I couldn’t bear the thought of checking up on Mason. Moros told me he had found a second mate and that he was happy with her. He had moved on. He abandoned our children and his thirst for revenge for this woman. He left them alone to fend for themselves, and it broke my heart. He just left them as if what we had meant nothing. I loved Mason with everything I had and our children were born from that love and as soon as I’m gone, he just dumps them like old trash. At least I know how he truly felt about me now.

I leap up over the rock and kick the head off the first doomed soul, feeling my rage ignite thinking of Mason. The rest all turn and start to charge toward me. The way they move is different; they totter forward and stumble back, but a bite from one of them is pure agony. I run forward and leap up onto one of the hell dogs, snapping its neck. As it falls to the floor, I roll and stand up, doomed souls surround me. I jerk my arms fast so my swords come down from my hooded jacket. It’s similar to Moros, only mine is black. It has hidden pockets all over so I can keep daggers, swords, or any other weapon I need hidden. I swing the swords, cutting the heads of the doomed souls surrounding me. Next, another hell dog, this one is vicious and has a tail that it uses as a whip. I can hear the sound of it cutting through the air, so I flip up and back just as it reaches me. I run up the spine of the hell dog and ram my sword down into its skull. Moros begins to clap. I turn around, panting.

“Well done, little wolf. Let’s see how you do against me.”

He charges forward. The floor vibrates with his steps. I flip back again so I can get some space and wait until he’s closer to me. I can smell the molten lava as he gets closer and I leap up just as he reaches out to grab me. I land on the ledge of the rock wall above him.

“You can’t hide, little wolf.”

“I’m not hiding. I'm working out what your disadvantage is,” I answered, making him laugh. He turns around fast, slamming his fist against the rock wall and making me fall from it. As I’m falling, I can see him getting ready to catch me. I pull my legs into my body and spin around so I can push out against the wall, propelling myself outward and away from him.

As I land, I make sure to land in a crouched position and grab my katanas from my back. They are two double-edged blades with a slight curve. Most people call them samurai swords. The tsuka or handle is made from a special metal forged right here in the underworld, they glow a fire red and you can see it through the leather binding that wraps around them, the blades are made from the same metal, when I swing them through the air it looks like I'm wielding the fire of hell. I stand up and swing them toward my target. The sound of metal clashing against metal rings out around us as Moros blocks my attack with his own broadsword.

“Very good.” Moros smiles.

His eyes glow a light purple, but I can see the little flicker of red dancing in the middle of them. I kick him in his stomach, pushing him away from me. He stumbles back slightly but corrects his posture fast. I spin and come down hard with my katanas. I can see he is finding it hard to keep up with me. Because he is so large, he finds it harder to move as fast, that's his disadvantage. His size.

I duck and spin, kicking his leg out from beneath him. As soon as he crashes to the floor, I step over him holding the tips of both my katanas against his throat.

“Well done, my little wolf. Very well done indeed.”

I step back and hold my hand out so Moros can pull himself up. His fingers linger against my hand. I quickly lower my head, not wanting to look into his eyes. The sound of a slow and sarcastic clap fills the barren land. I spin around and see Eris sitting on the rock I was hiding behind earlier on.

“I see you have done well with her brother. Thank you.”

She waves her hand in the air and the wind begins to whip the strands of my hair that have fallen out of my braid into my face.

“What are you doing, Eris!” Moros shouts, making her stop.

The wind suddenly drops and the sand that was swirling in the air drops to the ground, creating a perfect circle around us.

“You told me I could have her!” He snarls, making me look at him, confused.

“Well, the plan has changed. Silas needs the girl and I need Silas to make sure he does as I tell him. I can't have all my plans ruined because you want to fück the vampire.”

I look at Moros, who looks like he's about to tear the underworld apart, his light purple eyes now burn red with his anger. I knew he had feelings for me and I exploited that to make my time here easier, but he never acted on his feelings. He always treated me with respect. I think deep down he was hoping I would fall for him, but my heart still beat for another. For a man who loves someone else, someone who isn't me, and that's something I have to deal with before I can even contemplate loving another. I still struggle to come to terms with it even now.

“Moros, it's fine. I will go with Eris. You have things you have to do, anyway. You haven't been seeing to your duties for far too long.”

“If you hurt her, Eris!”

“What! What will you do? She is none of your concern anymore, brother. Remember your place.”

Eris swirled her arms above her and I watched as Moros and the home I had known for the last 10 years disappeared.

I looked around and found myself in some cold and damp cave only goddess knows where.

“Put these on,” Eris said as she passed me a thin purple dress.

I took the clothing from her and began to take my clothes off, not caring that the goddess was watching, and placed all my things neatly on a rock.

“Good girl. I will be back for you soon.”

I felt myself being pushed back by unseen hands and cold metal wrapping around my ankles, waist, and wrists. I pulled against them, but they seemed to get tighter.

“Every time you pull the cuffs, tighten.” A voice came from deep within the cave. I was chained to the wall close to the entrance, so I had the sunlight warming me up. I squinted as I looked into the darkness to see who was talking. I could hear metal clinking together and a woman walked as close as possible. She was beautiful with long blonde hair that fell in soft waves framing her face, her eyes were so blue that I felt mesmerized by them and her lips looked like a juicy fruit begging to be tasted, she looked like she hadn’t eaten for the last 6 months, she had a dress like the one I had on only it hung off her body, her dress too big for her frame.

“She will be back, but only to torment us. I’m Voluptas goddess of pleasure.”

“You're a goddess?” I asked.

If a goddess couldn’t escape, then what good did I have?

“Yes, Eris is keeping me here so she can make my mother do something for her so she can win this war. Moros, her brother, has foreseen it all, and it has to work out the way he saw it, or else she will lose.”

“Moros saw how she won the war?”

“Yes, but the whispers have told me Moros is shifting sides. He fell in love and wants to prove he is worthy. We might have a chance of winning now.”

I swallowed the large lump that had formed in my throat. Moros was going to help because he thought it was the way to win my heart. But it wasn’t my heart to give, not yet.

“Shh, they are coming. Don’t fight them. It will only make it worse.”

Her words send a chill down my spine. The sound of something scurrying across the stone fills the cave. I look behind Voluptas where the sound came from and watch as a large spider crawls into the light. A sound above me makes my head snap up and I’m met with two yellow eyes of a man who’s attached to large spider legs that cling to the roof of the cave. His head tilts as his spider legs lower him to the ground. His feet don’t touch the ground, they hover just above it, his spider legs hold him up in the air.

“A new one to play with!”

He smiled, and I felt my body freeze. His eyes scanned my body as the whimpers from Voluptas drifted toward me.

“You wanna play? Let’s play!”
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