

Chapter 28

Final Chapter

It was a dark and quiet night at the Palace.

The moon was high in the sky, bright and white. The beautiful light was reflected on the surface of the wide, quiet Lake, and nearby, a magnificent Black Dragon lay, its scales shining in the moonlight too. It seemed to be sleeping, its head peacefully resting on its front paws. The dragon had been still there for a very long time, this was only one night of many others that it had been inside that garden. On the surface of the Lake, dozens of flowers were gently floating, as pure and as white as the moon. Water Lilies. A little ripple appeared in the middle of the lake, causing the flowers to drift slowly away.

It could have been a little gust of wind blowing over the surface of the Lake, or a fish tempted by a potential meal. It might have even been one of the delicate fireflies that had made a home there, and yet the Black Dragon raised its head. Its ruby eyes glowing in the dark of night, as it scanned over the surface, looking for something. And for a few seconds, nothing happened. It slowly stood up, moving closer to the water, and gently sniffed, a bit unsure. And then, its tail started swaying through the air gently.

More ripples appeared, over and over, and at the center of those ripples, some brown curls started appearing at the surface. Slowly, a woman emerged from the water, gasping for air, her pink lips shivering. The Black Dragon jumped into the water, throwing its surroundings into chaos as it ran to her. She welcomed it with open arms as soon as it arrived.

“There, there... You missed me, didn't you?”

The Black Dragon growled softly, rubbing its head against her beautiful white skin. She smiled, feeling her heart warming up again as she brushed against its warm scales. She found the dragon's favorite spot underneath its jaw and scratched it. The dragon growled softly, almost like a cat would purr.

“I missed you too... I missed you all.”

The Black Dragon kept growling happily and stayed right by her side as she slowly stepped out of the Lake. If it had any colors before, her dress had now lost them all and turned a beautiful white, with all the pink beads shining like little diamonds under the moonlight. With her pale skin and thin body, she almost looked like a ghost, albeit a beautiful one, coming out of the water. Leaning on the Black Dragon for support, she stepped barefoot onto the grass and looked around.

“Everything is so quiet. I wonder how long it has been...”

Even though it couldn't answer, she smiled at the dragon as if it had. It was rubbing its head continuously against her, completely overjoyed, moving and more alive than it had been in months. She chuckled.

“Alright, alright... Shall we go now?”

The dragon growled softly, and she easily climbed up on its back. Krai barely waited until she was properly seated to take off. She felt the familiar thrill in her stomach as they got higher in the sky. It was a clear night, so clear she could see all the streets below. It ought to be late for everything to be so quiet in the Capital.

The time to observe the City was limited though. The dragon was in a hurry and flew high and fast through the sky. The beautiful woman on its back took a deep breath in. She didn't feel the cold anymore, she just felt the fresh air filling her lungs, making her shudder. It was so nice to be able to breathe again. She closed her eyes, letting her senses overtake her. It felt amazing to be able to come back to this. She could feel the wind dancing on her skin and blowing her curls gently.

She didn't even realize how long the trip really was. When Krai started descending, she just smiled happily. She recognized the lonely Shadelands so easily. Few things had changed - a few more trees sprouting and the snow was fresh. Was it winter here already? She could only imagine so. It felt strange to witness this all from above.

Just like the Palace, everything was quiet here under the darkness of night. Even as the Black Dragon gently landed in the snow, nothing else moved. Yet, her heartbeat was going crazy from anticipation. She wanted to run upstairs, to rush to them. Yet, she was feeling a bit shy as she got down from the dragon. Cassandra gently caressed Krai's scales, thanking the dragon silently. The Black Dragon had always been the first to come to her. Krai was reluctant to part from her, but it just growled softly when she walked inside.

It felt like she hadn't been here in years, but everything was just as she remembered. Slowly walking up the stairs, Cassandra slid her fingertips against the cold black stone

of the Onyx Castle. She liked this place, so lonely, just a quiet little corner of the world. She felt her heart flutter with delight as she took one step after another.

Suddenly, as she reached another floor, something silver jumped into her arms.

“Kian!”

The little dragon was growling softly, and completely snuggling against her, rolling its long body around her neck and shoulders, rubbing its head against her chin. Cassandra smiled, caressing it as she kept walking. Kian had grown so big already! The young dragon probably had no idea but it was twice the size of what she remembered, and was quite heavy on her shoulders. Cassandra petted it while she kept going. She could hear the giggles now, and sure enough, she found him in the little room.

Her face lit up as her eyes found the little boy standing in his bed, his little hands holding on to the rail and smiling wildly at her. Kassian was giggling and jumping, absolutely excited. Cassandra felt her heart fill upon seeing her son’s face again. He had grown so much already! She felt a couple of tears run down her cheeks as she ran to him.

“Oh, my baby...Kassian...”

The baby was excited to see her and kept hopping until she finally got a hold of him. Kian jumped down, leaving her some space to take her son into her arms. Cassandra couldn’t believe it. He was already able to stand up, and smile, and even grab her hair in his tiny fingers. He was so small the last time she had seen him. Kassian hadn’t forgotten her though, or maybe his dragon’s instincts were kicking in. He snuggled into his mother’s arms, happily holding on to her. Cassandra was happy to see him looking so well. He was already starting to take on some of his father’s features, and some of hers too. He had dark brown hair, but his green eyes were the same as hers. She liked his smell too. Her baby’s smell. She hugged him for a very long time, kissing his little face until he squealed from being tickled that way.

“Da... dadaaa...”

“It’s Mama, love. Your Mama is back.”

“Mama...” repeated Kassian, looking at her curls in his hands with a cute frown that mimicked his father’s.

“Your dad took good care of you, didn’t he?” She smiled.

“Dada!” exclaimed Kassian.

“That’s right, Kassian, your dad...”

Cassandra smiled, but she could see her son was tired. It was the middle of the night after all, and he was too young to be up this late. Kian had probably woken him up as he felt her arrival, but now, the little Silver Dragon was curled up on one end of the toddler’s bed, and Kassian was struggling to keep his eyes open, too. She kissed his forehead and put him back down as he started to fall asleep. Her heart couldn’t bear to part with him so soon, so she stayed a little while longer to watch him sleep. He did look like a happy boy. She felt relieved. He wasn’t too old yet, and had grown beautifully so far. Cassandra glanced around. His bedroom wasn’t too big, and it was filled with toys of all kinds. He had a little castle and a big dragon plushie. Cassandra smiled, recognizing the little one in his bed. That forgotten treasure she had clumsily stitched back into shape a long time ago... So this old thing had really made its way to him.

After a while, she just couldn’t bear it anymore. She turned to leave the room, letting Kassian sleep and following her heart elsewhere. The few steps to the next bedroom were enough to have her heart racing again. She stayed a second on the doorstep. The door had been removed, surely so he could be closer to Kassian...Cassandra’s heart started burning.

The retired War God was sleeping there, alone in the large bed and half-naked, his face tilted towards the window. Seeing Kairen again left her breathless. He was frowning slightly, even in his sleep, as if he was having a bad dream. She wanted to run to him, and yet, some strange shyness was keeping her from it. Cassandra’s heart was on the verge of bursting, almost pouring out. It was too much. To see him again, after all this time.

She stepped forward, so nervous she felt dizzy. She wanted to run to him, but her legs suddenly felt heavy. Cassandra walked slowly instead, surprised he wasn’t waking up. Or was it because it was her?

“Don’t.”

Cassandra froze. His eyes were still closed, but he had very clearly spoken, making her heart skip a beat. She opened her lips a bit, unsure of what to say.

“Don’t torment me again. Not tonight.”

Cassandra's expression relaxed a little. She stepped forward with a little smile on her lips.

"I said, please..."

Her smile grew wider as she reached the bed, her heart so full it might explode. She extended her fingers, gently touching his hand. She saw him flinch, but he finally opened his eyes. The darkness there made her shiver. He glanced at her and frowned.

"You look different tonight," he whispered.

"Do I?" she gently answered.

He frowned again and kept his eyes on her as she came closer. It was like he was observing a dangerous, wild beast; he was almost... scared. Cassandra slid her fingers up his arm until she reached his biceps, and then moved down to his exposed torso. His warm skin... She had missed it and wanted to touch it more. She climbed on the bed, coming over him, and noticed his confused expression. She could see it in his eyes. He was scrutinizing her, a little wrinkle forming between his brows.

She couldn't even express how much she loved this man. How much she had missed him. How much she wanted him... As Kairen remained frozen with a confused expression, she slowly brought one leg over, straddling his waist, and put both her hands on his chest. She could tell he was afraid to trust this vision. His black eyes were fixated on her, looking at the young woman as if she was some illusion.

Cassandra gently leaned over to kiss him. It was a very soft kiss on his lips, but it sent shivers down the depths of his being. He gasped and suddenly sat up, grabbing her face between his hands. His eyes were wide open, completely shocked, his breathing intense. It took a full minute for him to realize, to accept it. It really was her. She was real this time. None of his nightmares or dreams had been able to replicate her face so perfectly, so beautifully, even down to her imperfections. The color of her green eyes, the curves of her lips, the delicacy of her nose.

Just then, she broke down crying. Cassandra couldn't hold it in anymore. She put her hands on his neck too, her tears rolling down her cheeks uncontrollably.

"I missed you..." she cried. "I really missed you..."

Before she could add another word, he suddenly kissed her, taking all of her in. It was a desperate, savage kiss that they both needed. She felt the warmth spread inside like a wildfire, driving her crazy. All of her being was invaded by this hurricane of desire.

They had been apart for too long. If this was another treacherous dream, it was the most realistic one he'd had so far, and he was not ready to let it go.

He wanted her, to carve his being into her, to touch and taste her body. They kissed desperately, so eager their lips couldn't bear to part for a second. They just wanted each other, their other halves. It was a reaction that nothing else could provoke but a wild, carnal desire. Something as old as time itself, buried in their flesh.

His hands were wandering all over her, touching and grabbing every inch of Cassandra's skin as if to keep her there, to make every second of it reality. Kairen couldn't understand, but he wanted this. He was like a mad man begging for a dream to last forever. He couldn't stop. Cassandra was just as eager as him. His warmth - that warmth that came from his core was driving her insane. She felt sensations she hadn't felt in a very long time. When he put his hands on her legs, under her skirt, she shivered with desire. Her hands were all over him, caressing his torso, his neck, his back, all of his hot skin. She wanted him.

They didn't have time for anything else, their desire was burning like a hot flame and erasing all restraint. He took off his pants in a matter of seconds and ripped the piece of clothing that was separating them, and after some other clumsy moves, their bodies reunited in one movement.

Cassandra cried out under the brutal invasion. She felt him filling her, completing her in a wave of pleasure. She bit her lower lip, but it only made him want to kiss those lips more. They exchanged a long, gentle kiss. Kairen wanted to lose himself in the taste of her lips. It was gentle, yet a bit savage. They just couldn't express their love and desire enough. He started moving, making her breathe louder. They had their eyes locked on each other, completely lost in the moment, as if they were alone in the world. His movements made her moan and cry for more. The sensations waking up in her were stronger than she had remembered, and he wasn't slowing down to let her catch up.

The War God just couldn't get enough of her. He kept pounding, not stopping, not slowing down. He just wanted all of her. He had craved that skin, that gentle taste, the sound of her voice in his ear, echoing in the room. He needed to make sure she was real, that she was really there with him. He had his arms wrapped around her, keeping her close. Grabbing every inch of her skin that he could, feeling her, confirming this was real. Kairen was so desperate as he kept moving inside her, almost crying at how good it was to have her there. Cassandra kissed his eyes, his tears, repeatedly running her fingers through his hair. Their bodies moving together so perfectly was causing things to burn up, fast and hard. They just needed this, this beastly passion between them. They couldn't hold it in anymore. After just a few minutes, he thrust with a

few wild movements, making her jump and cry out for him. Cassandra couldn't restrain her voice, the pleasure was breaking down walls and making her lose control. All her extremities were burning, sweating from the intensity. She cried out in pleasure when he finished inside her, exhausted.

They were both left panting in the same position they had started in. It had probably been their wildest and shortest love-making ever. She chuckled, still trembling a bit from the pleasure, and came to kiss him gently. He willingly responded to everything her lips desired, caressing her skin restlessly. The previously cold room had gotten very hot in a very short time, their heat melting them together.

As he kept caressing her skin, he finally figured out what had been bothering him from earlier. Cassandra's skin was perfectly white and smooth, not an ounce of imperfection, not even the tiniest scar. He frowned, confused by this new revelation, and raised his eyes towards her once again.

"How?" he whispered, caressing her hair without stopping.

Cassandra smiled gently.

"The Water God," she simply said. "I guess he wanted to save his last daughter... before he passed on."

Kairen let out a long sigh, and buried his face in her neck, closing his eyes and breathing deeply. Whoever he had to thank for this miracle, he was grateful to no end. He didn't care to know how or why. He could only imagine why the Creature had decided to take Cassandra away from him, from their world. But eventually, he sent her back again... That was all he needed to know.

Cassandra felt a bit sad. She still didn't know why the Water God had decided to trade its life for hers... No one could tell what such a magnificent Creature was thinking at a time like that. She took a deep breath and kissed her man again. She changed positions to get off and lie against him. Kairen was unwilling to let go and tightly wrapped her in his arms. She liked being trapped in his embrace.

"It's good to be alive," she whispered. "I'm glad Kassian is fine... Did you decide to raise him here alone?"

He nodded. Cassandra smiled. She would have all the time in the world to catch up with what she had missed... With her sister too. She hoped Missandra was happy. Lady Kareen and Shareen, too. She wondered what they were up to now. Who had taken the Golden Throne? Opheus or Anour? Kairen obviously had no intention of

sitting there... For now, she was just happy to be away from all those questions. It was like they were hiding in a private little corner of the world. She chuckled.

“What is it?”

“I think... I’ll get to live my dream after all.”

The memory of a conversation they had many months ago slowly came back to him. He nodded.

“We’ll do it all. Everything you wanted... Change it all.”

“What about you?” she asked gently. “You never told me what dream you had in mind.”

The War God smiled.

“It’s fine. Mine has already come true anyway.”

Cassandra was about to ask what it was, but she decided it didn’t really matter. This happiness was enough. She was in a good place right now, a place where she was safe and happy... Where she could be free.

In the Onyx Castle, lost in the forgotten lands, the two of them fell asleep, side by side.

The silent War God, and the slave girl who had changed his world. He was born to kill. She was destined to die. As two worlds collided, destiny had changed.