

The Witches of Eriadne: Interlude Four X - Part 2: Secrets and Revelations

by The Space Witches



Like father...

Chapter 1

1st May 2276

It was early morning and I stood out on the deck, sipping some tea and watching the early morning joggers passing by. The sun was barely up and the sky was still tinted pink, orange and purple. The air was crisp but not cold. It was going to be a beautiful Californian day.

These were the kind of days that Michael had loved. He would be up at the crack of dawn, out jogging or swimming. A smile curved my lips as I remembered. Michael would return to the house waking me with kisses and coffee. Often times the coffee went cold as the kisses turned to passionate, tender lovemaking.

Those mornings I missed with an ache in my heart. I sighed, feeling myself growing melancholy as my thoughts turned to my dead husband. I hated thinking the word 'dead', but he was.

Eleven months had passed since that terrible day when my happy ever after had been abruptly and horribly destroyed. but it still wasn't any easier accepting that Michael, my beloved, wonderful husband, was gone. It didn't lessen the pain in my heart. It didn't make me miss him any less. And at moments like this, when I remembered things as if they had happened yesterday, it hurt.

I shuddered and could feel myself close to tears and in danger of plunging into a mire of depression, and I couldn't let that happen. I had promised myself that I would not go down that path, because Michael wouldn't have been happy with me if I had.

Michael had been about life and happiness. He wouldn't want me to be unhappy and he would have wanted me to get on with my life. Well, that may be, but it was difficult, especially when all I wanted was to have my husband back at my side, right here, right now with his arms around me, kissing me.

[Stop it!] I scolded myself. It was doing me no good, thinking those thoughts. With a conscious effort I decided that being on my own was not good. As the anniversary of Michael's death grew closer, the more down I became and it wasn't the best time to be on my own.

I was between films and I decided that I would call my sister and brother-in-law in England and see if they would mind a visitor for a while. I didn't want to be alone. I wanted to be with family.

My decision made, I was about to go inside when I heard my name.

"Angel?"

I turned in surprise to face the person who was climbing the stairs to the deck. I was taken aback a little as I watched him approach me. I had forgotten just how beautiful he was, and how much his dark, chocolate eyes reminded me of Michael.

My voice seemed to have disappeared and I was unable to respond, at first, as he stopped beside me and smile tentatively. "I hope you don't mind me stopping by, I was just passing and..." his voice faltered a fraction before he continued, "I was thinking of him and I just..." He stopped again, his soft voice drifting off into silence.

I could see he was unsure, and reaching out my hand, I took hold of his and smiled gently, saying softly, "It's good to see you, Will."

April 2275

"You have a what?" I asked, sitting bolt up in bed and staring with a wide-open mouth at my husband.

We had been spending a quiet Sunday morning in bed, getting to know each other better. I know that sounds odd, needing to get to know your husband, but that was how it was. After all, Michael and I had known each other for only a short while-- literally weeks--before we fell in love and got married, and there was still a lot to find out about each other. Now my husband had just dropped a bombshell of a revelation on me, and I couldn't help but be completely bowled over.

"A son," answered Michael, sitting up against the headboard, watching me closely.

"A son?" I repeated. Somewhat dumbly, I might add.

I tried to digest this bit of news. My husband had a son, a child. Did that make me a stepmother? I know I had said to him that we had a lot to reveal about ourselves, but I had been thinking along the lines of his favorite color, song, food, and so on. Instead, my gorgeous husband says, "I have a son." I'm sure anyone would understand that I was a little overwhelmed by his news. I mean, it was an important bit of news, something I have to admit to thinking my husband maybe should have mentioned long before we got married.

We had talked before our romance revealed itself and we got married. I had even met his sister and her daughter. So, why had the fact he had a son never come up?

"Are you OK?"

My husband's gentle voice probed into my train of thoughts and I turned to look at him. He was watching, his brown eyes tender, his expression concerned.

"I'm a little shocked here," I answered honestly.

Michael reached out to me. I didn't resist as he pulled me against his chest. "I'm sorry, I know I should have told you a lot sooner than this," said Michael, kissing my forehead.

I extracted myself from his arms so I could look at him. "Why didn't you?" I asked, curiously. I needed to know why that particular important fact had remained secret until now.

My husband sighed, "I don't know, it just never seemed to be the right time to tell you."

I was torn between understanding and not. I sat back, resting against Michael. I know he hadn't intentionally kept his son a secret from me, so I couldn't be angry. I was just confused and curious. "So tell me about him," I said, encouraging him.

Michael was silent for a moment then he slowly began telling me about his son. "His name is Will, he's twenty-six and currently he's a struggling actor, doing odd jobs until he gets his big break."

I was surprised about the news that his son was an actor, but didn't dwell on it, as in California at least 90% of the population were actors slash something else. What I did dwell on was the note of sadness I had detected in Michael's voice as he spoke of Will. "You don't sound happy about that?"

He smiled sadly, "It's complicated."

"You don't like him being an actor?" I asked. Did my husband disapprove of the profession? I couldn't really believe it, considering he was married to an actress.

Michael shook his head, "I didn't like it at first, but not any more."

"I don't understand," I admitted.

"After high school, Will went to law school. I was so proud of the fact that my son wanted to be a lawyer. A much better profession than a bodyguard," Michael gave me a wry smile before continuing, "Then he met this girl, who was majoring in drama and he got bitten by the acting bug. He dropped out of law school and decided to become an actor."

"You weren't happy." It was more a statement than a question.

Michael nodded. "I was disappointed. I know how tough the entertainment industry can be. I didn't want him to be disappointed or hurt. It didn't go over well with Will when I voiced my doubts and concerns about his choice."

"What happened when you told him that?"

Sighing, my husband explained, "We argued. You have to understand; ever since Will was a kid, we've had a strained relationship. My obvious disapproval of his decision to act didn't go over well at all and for a long time we didn't talk,"

I had many questions and wanted to know more. "And what about now?"

"We see each other occasionally. Ours isn't a perfect relationship, but he's my son so once I'd come to grips with things, I told him that whatever he wanted to do, I'd support him. Of course, it doesn't mean we don't argue, because we do. But, at least we talk now."

We fell into silence, then I had to ask the question that had been burning in the back of my mind, "What about Will's mother?" I needed to know about her. Had Michael been married to her?

Michael smiled, seeming to read my mind. "We met while I was on a job. We were attracted to each other, but not in love. A few months after being together, she fell pregnant. I wanted to do the right thing, but she said she didn't love me and didn't want to marry me. I gave her all the support I could and shared custody of Will.

"For a long time things worked out fine. But, due to work, I was never really able to spend as much time with Will as I would have liked or should have done. As Will got older, we grew further apart. We never really saw eye to eye on many things. I still wonder if it's because I wasn't there for him as much as I should have been," admitted Michael sadly.

I snuggled against him and kissed his shoulder, "I'm no expert on children, but parents and kids don't always get on. I'm sure you did your best."

Michael hugged me against him, "I just wish things could have been different. I hate the fact that there always seems to be tension between us."

"Maybe things will get better. You said you see each other now, maybe that's the start to a better relationship," I said softly.

I felt a finger under my chin and I found my head drawn up until Michael's lips found mine and he gave me a tender kiss, "Thank you for not being angry about me neglecting to tell you sooner."

"I could never be angry with you, Michael. I was surprised, yes. But you've told me now and that's what counts." I said, before kissing him again.

We lay together for a while, then Michael asked, "Do you want to meet him?"

I sat up and smiled at my husband. I had been wondering while we lay in silence when I would get the chance to meet Will. "Of course I do," I said, smiling.

"I'll arrange a meeting. I know he'd love to meet you," said Michael.

Michael's words made me wonder about something, "Does he know you're married?"

Michael laughed softly, "Yes, he knows. He's a fan of yours, and before you ask, he knew I was your bodyguard and I told him when I was going to marry you."

I looked at my husband sternly. "Michael Healy, here your son has known about me for some time and I only learn about him now?"

"I know, I'm sorry," began Michael, looking guilty.

I smiled, "I'll forgive you, this time, but only because I love you and because you're going to let me punish you for having waited so long to tell me this."

Michael's eyebrows shot up, "Punish me?"

Saying nothing I turned round and opened the bedside drawer, pulling out some silk scarves. I turned back to face my husband, grinning as his eyes fixed on the scarves. "Yes, punish you," I said wickedly.

Michael faked a heavy sigh, "Well, I guess I deserve it."

Without instruction, Michael assumed the position and I tied his wrists above his head, before straddling his hips. "Don't worry. I'll be gentle--mostly."

I gave my husband a wicked grin before I lowered my head and claimed his mouth in a bruising kiss. My desire for him replaced any thoughts and further curiosity, for the moment, about his son.

"Are you sure I look all right?" I asked, turning to face my husband.

Michael smiled and rose from the sofa. He walked up to me and took me in his arms, his lips claiming mine in a tender, reassuring kiss. "You look fantastic."

He left me in no doubt that the red sweater and black jeans looked good, as he pushed me away to give me a long, appreciative look. I grinned up at him, "I know I'm just being silly, but I want to look good for my first meeting with your son."

My husband--yes three months after our wedding, I still don't get tired of saying those words. My husband laughed softly and kissed my forehead, saying, "Sweetness, Will is coming to meet you, not what you're wearing."

I watched as my husband then paused, a wicked grin on his face. "Although if my son is anything like me, he'd prefer if you wore nothing," said Michael, raking his eyes over me hungrily.

I snorted. "Honey, the only man in your family who gets to see me naked is you," I responded, by pressing my body against his, causing him to breathe in deeply as I ground my hips into his crotch.

Michael laughed, "So stop worrying about what you look like. You'd look fine even dressed in a raggedy old potato sack."

"Thank you. I told you I was being silly," I said with a grin.

"Yeah, but I love you anyway," said my husband, hugging me against him.

God, how I loved the feel of his arms around me. I glanced behind him at the clock on the mantel and wondered if we had enough time for me to show him how much I loved him before Will arrived. I was extremely disappointed to find that I didn't. It was 2 p.m. and any second now, Will would be knocking on the door.

As if to prove my point, the door chime went. OK, so it wasn't a knock, but you get the point. Michael extracted himself from my arms, smiling at me as he said. "I'll get it."

I watched my husband walk out of the living room. I glanced at my reflection in the mirror above the fireplace, checking one last time that I looked presentable, and then I turned to face the door as I waited for my husband to bring in his son.

Michael came through the door first, a broad smile lighting his face, and as always I felt a warm glow inside as I watched the smile reach his eyes. No one's smile could affect me as Michael's did. He kissed me quickly, obscuring my view of the figure coming in behind him. Then he stepped back and said warmly, "Angelique, I'd like you to meet my son, Will."

The smile and words of welcome I had ready froze on my face as Will stepped forward.

I couldn't believe my eyes. It was Troy, the waiter from the Slave Market, the restaurant where Demon had taken me in England shortly after Michael and I returned from our honeymoon. Here, standing before me, was the beautiful 'slave' who had briefly enchanted and tantalized me. I wanted to believe I was imagining things, that it couldn't be him. I know Michael had told me that Will had recently been spending some time in England, hoping to get an acting job there, because he hadn't so been successful in Hollywood, but never for one second could I have put the two together.

I just stood there and stared at Michael's son, deciding that once again the Joker--otherwise known as the Universe--had it in for me. Memories of my first encounter with Troy flashed through my mind and I remembered thinking how Troy's looks, especially his eyes, reminded me of Michael. The Universe had a sick, twisted sense of humor. And right then, I could hear it laughing its ass off at me, as I tried to pull myself together.

"Angelique, are you OK?" Michael's concerned voice cut through my thoughts, forcing me to shake off my surprise and smile at him.

"Oh gosh, yes. I'm sorry. I'm just really taken aback by how much Will looks like you," I said, making myself sound normal and not at all on the brink of panic.

Michael laughed, "I guess we do look similar."

Will said nothing, still smiling at me. Questions were burning in my head. When he had met me, he would have known who I was, yet he had flirted with me. He had even slipped a Slave Market business card into my bag without my noticing, with his name and number on the back. Why hadn't he said he knew who I was, and knew that I was married to his father?

I told myself to get my surprise in check before Michael started wondering at my odd behavior. I held out my hand to Will. He took hold of it, his hand soft and warm as I said, "It's good to finally meet you, Will."

Will smiled at me and lifted my hand to his mouth, surprising me as he kissed it and said softly with a small quirk of his eyebrows, "And it's good to finally meet you, Angelique."

Well, that was a fine start wasn't it? Both of us were pretending to have only just met for the first time. Thank God, Michael seemed oblivious to my odd reaction to his son and put his arm around me. "Let's sit."

Michael led me over to the sofa and we sat down. I wondered just what the day would bring. I hoped that I would get a chance to have a moment alone with Will. One thing was for sure, I had a lot of questions for the younger Healy. One way or another, the beautiful 'slave boy' would answer them.

I watched as Michael headed out of the room to go make some more coffee for us. We'd all been chatting for a couple of hours, allowing Will and I to get to know each other. He turned out to be interesting, charming and funny and I couldn't help but like him. And not just for his looks. However, there were a couple of things that bugged me. First, the Troy thing, and second, the way I caught Will looking at me at times when Michael wasn't looking. The boy did nothing to hide the fact that he found me attractive and several times I couldn't miss the flirting in his tone as he spoke to me.

Don't get me wrong; I was flattered and not totally unaffected. After all, I had found him rather attractive when I'd first met him and had even toyed with the idea of enjoying him had I not been married, but that's beside the point. He was doing it with his father present and that was wrong.

Once I was sure Michael was in the kitchen and out of hearing range, I turned to Will, who I found watching me intently. There was no time to beat about the bush. I had questions. "So - Will," I emphasized the name, paused then went on, "What kind of game were you playing back in England?"

Will's eyebrows shot up and he looked at me innocently, "I don't know what you're talking about."

"Don't play that game with me. You know exactly what I'm talking about. The Slave Market. Why didn't you tell me who you were? You knew who I was and, more importantly, you knew I was married to your father." I whispered fiercely.

"I didn't say anything because I knew my Dad hadn't said anything to you about me. I didn't want to spring that bit of news on you when we had just met. Besides, it was my father's place to tell you about me, not mine," said Will softly.

"But why on earth did you behave toward me as you did? Flirting with me, leaving the business card with your number and fake name in my bag?"

I watched Will closely as he answered, "All the waiters assume 'stage' names when working at the Slave Market; names that fit the character, so to speak," he said, explaining the name. "My behavior toward you was part of my job. It's expected of staff to flirt with customers."

I have to admit that answered was plausible. I also have to admit to suddenly feeling rather let down at the thought that he'd only been flirting with me because it was his job. "OK, I'll buy that," I said softly, trying not to pout.

"You sound disappointed," said Will.

It unnerved me that he seemed to have the same ability to read me as his father did. I laughed, covering up my nervousness. "Don't be silly. Why would I be disappointed?" I glanced quickly down at my chest, to make sure that by this point my nipples weren't standing out like tent pegs. The damned things had a will of their own when it came to attractive men. I was relieved to find they were behaving themselves, at least for the minute. Just to be on the safe side, I folded my arms across my chest and turned my attention back to Will.

Will shifted forward on the sofa opposite me, his dark chocolate eyes fixing on my face. "Maybe because you enjoyed the thought of a younger man finding you undeniably attractive and flirting with you? You liked the idea that I wanted to be with you."

OK, the boy freaked me out at that point, because he was hitting way too close to home. I shifted nervously, wishing my husband would return so I didn't have to have this conversation with his son. "Don't say things like that!" I said sharply.

"Why not?" questioned Will.

"Because I'm married to your father," I answered quickly.

"So what?" asked Will. "It may have been my job to play up to the ladies, but I wasn't flirting with you just because it was expected of me. I was flirting with you because I wanted to, because I found you beautiful and because I wanted you." He spoke quietly, his voice low and sexy.

As I tried to get over the fact that I was feeling hot and flustered, trying to tell myself I wasn't attracted to this beautiful young son of my husband, Will went on, "You want to know something? I was jealous and almost hated my father when I found out he was married to you. When I saw you at the Slave Market, all I could think was that I wanted to steal you away from him, that he didn't deserve you."

I stood abruptly. This definitely wasn't a conversation we should be having. "Stop this, Will!"

"Why?" He asked, also rising.

"Because you shouldn't be saying these things," I scolded him. Had Will's behavior toward me been about getting revenge on his Dad? I hoped to God that wasn't the case. Will and Michael's relationship was strained enough, without me being the cause of more friction.

"No, I shouldn't, but it's the truth, and seeing you again, I feel the same way. But don't worry, I won't try anything or reveal that we've met before. My father and I may not always get along, but I wouldn't try and come between you two. I'm not a bastard. Besides," he paused to give me a warm smile, the seductive look I had seen in his eyes a moment before fading a little. "I can see how much my father loves you and how much you love him. I'm a romantic. I'd never get in the way of true love and happiness," said Will softly.

Before I could react he gave me a wicked grin and continued, "Anyway, my father would more than likely beat the crap out of me if he caught me trying to push my luck with you. So don't worry, I'll be on my best behavior."

I felt relief washing over me. "I'm glad to hear that, because I do love him, Will. I would never do anything to hurt Michael, and I wouldn't let anyone else do anything to hurt him, either," I warned pointedly.

"Fair enough. But just know one thing. If you weren't married to my father, Angel, nothing would stop me from trying to win your affections," said Will, a sexy, flirtatious smile on his face.

I started to laugh. "Will, if I weren't married to Michael, believe me, you wouldn't have to try very hard, Slave Boy." I know I shouldn't have admitted that much to Will, but I didn't see any harm in it.

Will broke into a smile, and my word, did that boy have a smile on him. "I knew you were attracted to me that night," he said happily.

I laughed and shook my head before asking another question, "Just one more thing. Michael found your card in my bag and didn't recognize the name. He hasn't a clue you were working at the Slave Market under another name, does he?" I asked, diverting the subject away from our mutual attraction for each other, as I thought it best we just walk away from that particular subject and never look back at it.

To my surprise Will's expression darkened a little before he answered, "No. Dad has never really approved of my decision to try and become an actor. When things didn't pan out in England, the only way to pay the bills was to take the job at the Slave Market. It's not exactly something I want him to know about."

I could hear the disappointment in Will's voice and I felt sorry for him. It helped me to understand that whatever difficulties he and Michael had, it took two to tango. I decided that if I could help I would, and already a thought was forming in my head. Michael wanted Will to be successful and not to be hurt or disappointed. Will wanted to make it as an actor, to prove to his father that he hadn't made a mistake.

"Acting is important to you, isn't it?" I asked softly.

Will's eyes lit up as he nodded, "It is. I just wish that I could get a break. I've had some small bit parts, but nothing significant."

I chewed my lip before smiling at him. "Maybe I can do something to help," I offered quickly.

Will's brown eyes widened in surprise. For a moment, his eyes lit up eagerly, then the light flickered out and he shook his head. "Thanks. I appreciate you wanting to help, but I don't want my father's famous wife to pull strings for me. If I'm going to break in, I'm going to do it on my own."

I had to admire his independence, but I knew that in this industry, sometimes the only break you got was a helping hand. "Will, I can understand that. I'm not saying I'm going to pull strings to get you a part. All I'm offering is to introduce you to people who could help. Maybe get you an audition. A friend of mine, Pierre Johnson, is about to start casting for a remake of Lord of the Rings. Let me get you an audition with him. If you get a part, it will be because you're a good actor and one that PJ thinks should be in his movie. Not because I pulled any strings to get you a role."

I let Will mull over my offer before asking, "What do you say?"

"I'd be stupid not to accept that offer, wouldn't I?" he asked, a grin on his face.

I nodded, "Yes, you would and I get the feeling you're a lot brighter than you look," I said teasingly.

Will laughed, then nodded. "All right, I accept." He paused, then added meaningfully, "Thank you."

"You're welcome and good luck," I said with a wink. I don't know why, call it female intuition, but I had a good feeling that once Johnson got a look at Will, he'd be begging him to take a role in his movie. With Will's fine, beautiful features and his lean, athletic body, he'd make a great Elf.

"Good luck for what?"

I turned at the sound of my husband's voice as he returned with the coffee. I grinned at him, "I'm going to speak to Pierre Johnson about giving Will an audition for a part in his new movie," I explained.

Michael smiled from me to his son as he put the coffee on the table. "That's wonderful."

I watched Will's reaction to his father's words and was happy to see the boy blush with pleasure. Hopefully their differences about Will's job choice would be lessened if he made it as an actor. Conversation remained on the movie industry for awhile before it turned to other things. As the day went on, I grew fonder of Will. Did I regret not having met him first? Hell no, not for second. After all, I was married to Michael, a man I loved with all my heart and who was giving me my happy ever after. While Will was beautiful and attractive, I doubted he could make me as happy as his father did.

I looked at my husband as he sat next to me, his arm around me, and I snuggled closer against him. I soon found myself threatening both him and his cheeky son as they teased me about now being Will's stepmother. When Will actually called me 'Mom', I told him I was too young to be his mother, but old enough to give him a spanking if he wasn't a good boy.

If ever asked, I will vehemently deny that I actually enjoyed the thought of spanking him. The boy looked like he had a nice firm, spankable butt. I quickly dragged my thoughts away from that direction as I felt my nipples doing their tent peg impersonation, again. I once again folded my arms across my chest to hide the evidence.

Then my husband chirped in with a wicked grin to Will, "See? I told you she was kinky," I leaned in close and whispered so that only he could hear, warning him that if he didn't quit it, I'd show him just how kinky I could be. I told him I would take photographs of him tied and naked to my bed, a little bow around his erect cock, and send it out to all our friends and family as a Christmas card. Funny how quickly he shut up and told Will that on pain of death he was never to call me 'Mom'.

The rest of the day went on with lots of teasing, talking and banter between the three of us, and I found that I loved the feeling I got when I watched Michael and Will. While Will wasn't my own flesh

and blood, he and Michael were now my family, and nothing could have made me happier. Well, except having a child of my own with Michael. I smiled at the thought, knowing with all the practice Michael and I got, we'd soon be having a child of our own.

I can't tell you how much I looked forward to that day, because looking at the way Michael behaved with Will, I knew that he would make a wonderful father to our child.

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I sighed softly as my thoughts returned to the present. My hopes and dreams of having a child with Michael were never realized. A sniper's bullet had put an end to them. I felt myself shiver and I forced myself, as hard as it was, to focus my thoughts on something else.

I looked over at Will, as he stood staring out at the ocean. From the sad, far away expression on his face, I knew what he was thinking. We had tried for the afternoon to distract each other by talking about anything but Michael and how much we missed him. Like how filming for the Lord of the Rings was going. How Will was enjoying working with Pierre Johnson and the rest of the cast. But neither of us really succeeded. Michael's memory was ever present and we'd often drift off into silence as we remembered him.

I reached for Will's hand and as he looked at me I smiled gently. "How about we go inside? I can make us something to eat."

"That sounds good," said Will softly.

Letting go of his hand I turned and walked inside with Will following close behind. Knowing he was vegetarian, I got together some things for a vegetable pasta salad. In silence, Will helped me prepare everything. Just like his father, he was good in the kitchen. So while I prepared the vegetables, he got started on some garlic bread. We chatted as we worked and for the first time our mood lightened, as Will told some funny stories of things that had happened on the set of his movie. I laughed as he revealed how there was constant competition and insults traded good naturedly between the cast who played elves, humans and hobbits. Everyone enjoyed teasing him about being a pretty boy elf, but Will would soon shut the others up by pointedly telling him that he may be pretty, but as an elf he would get to live forever, unlike them.

I don't know how it happened, maybe it was Will talking about immortality, but instead of my mood remaining light and happy, it turned against me. As I watched and listened to Will, pain cut through my heart. The sound of his laughter and how it reached the depths of his eyes, reminded me so much of Michael that I froze. Forgetting the vegetables I just stared at him, as my throat burned and tears began to well up in my eyes.

Sensing my sudden silence Will turned to me, the smile and laughter fading when he saw my face. Then he moved toward me and I found myself being taken into his arms. Like a drowning woman I clung to him as sobs tore through me. At first he said nothing; he just held me and let me cry. Then I heard him whisper, his own voice husky with pain, "I miss him, too."

That broke my heart. For a moment, lost in my own pain and grief, I had selfishly forgotten that he too had lost Michael. I pulled away so I could look at him, my heart tearing a little more at the sadness darkening the deep brown of his eyes. I reach out and cupped one side of his face as we stared at each other in silence. No words were needed to communicate how we felt and how we wished we could each make it easier for the other, even though only time could do that.

I'm not even sure how it happened or who made the first move but suddenly our lips met. Will's strong arms held me tightly against his chest as his tongue plunged into my mouth. The kiss was anything but gentle. Born from heartbreak and loneliness, it was fierce and passionate.

Finally, some semblance of sanity filtered into my mind, as I found my body heating in response to Will's kiss and touch. I pulled myself roughly from his embrace, our breathing ragged as we stared at each other, both equally surprised at what had just happened.

My voice was gruff as I whispered, "I'm sorry, that shouldn't have happened. It's wrong." For some reason, I didn't really believe my own words. For the first time since Michael's death, while in Will's arms I had felt something other than pain. I had felt warmth and love, a familiarity in Will, which for a moment had somehow brought Michael closer to me than he had been since he'd been killed.

I suddenly felt guilty for that and I tried to turn away from Will, but a hand reached out, gently grasping my arm and forcing me to turn back to him. His tone was quietly desperate as he spoke, "Why is it wrong, Angel?"

"Because I was married to your father. I still love him and I miss him." My voice faltered, as a lump caught in my throat.

"I know you do. But didn't you feel it, Angel? Just for a moment while we kissed, there was no pain. It didn't hurt any more. How can it be wrong to feel something again? Something other than your heart breaking?" asked Will gently, as he searched my face.

I had no answer to that. For so long I had longed to feel again. Not pain but happiness, love and warmth. Not the coldness in my heart and soul that I had been feeling since I'd lost Michael. Will had been right. When we kissed, I had felt something again. I wanted more of it, but I didn't want to feel as if I was using Will to get it.

I wasn't sure that this was the right thing to do. Then a little voice reminded me of a time when being with Luke had helped me get through a difficult and painful time. I remembered how close physical contact with a person could help heal some wounds, show how love could be found in many places and could help heal a broken heart.

I stepped forward, and lifting my hands I drew his head down toward mine. As my lips found his, his arms came around my shoulders, holding me tightly. This time the kiss was slow and tender. Finally, I broke the kiss and wordlessly I led Will toward my bedroom.

When we reached the bedroom, we turned to each other. A silent look of desperation passed between us. Then we were upon each other. Clothes were removed in between a frenzy of breath-taking kisses. Hands touched, stroked and fondled, as we fell naked on the bed. Legs and arms entwined, as we explored each other's bodies, touching and tasting each other, until we could wait no longer for Will to be inside me.

I held my breath as Will pushed himself into me. I hadn't had sex in the eleven months since Michael's death and at first I felt myself stretching painfully to accommodate Will's cock. Aware of my discomfort, Will stopped moving and looked down at me. Cupping my face, he kissed me, his tongue tracing the outline of my lips before slipping inside the open haven of my mouth. When he pulled back, he searched my face, his gentle eyes looking deeply into mine. I smiled at him, knowing he was looking to me to tell him when to move again.

I lifted my hips in silent instruction and he moved forward again until finally he was buried inside me.

For a moment, it was as if time had frozen and I was floating outside my body. Warmth surged through me and my heart began to beat with life for the first time in months. My arms came around Will's shoulders and I pulled him closer to me, my mouth claiming his in a rough, hungry kiss.

I gasped against Will's mouth as he pulled himself out of me then drove himself down again, hitting the pleasure spot deep within. I met every one of his thrusts with my hips, taking him as deep as possible. I could hear my own moans mixing with his as he drove himself harder and faster into me. Our love making was neither gentle nor slow. It was a desperate reaffirmation of life in the wake of death. It built like a raging fire with our need to feel again--to feel something other than heartache and loss. And as Will's lips devoured mine and his hands moved over my breasts, he moved faster inside me, driving us both closer and closer to release.

My moans of pleasure grew louder as I felt the slow burn of intense pleasure building within me. I felt my walls tighten around Will's cock, squeezing him and drawing him in deeper. I heard myself crying out his name and clinging to him as he drove me over the edge and the slow burn turned into a raging fire that spread from my center and engulfed me, setting me alight with intense waves of pleasure that took my breath away. I was still gasping for breath as Will continued to move inside me and another orgasm tore through me. This time, as my walls tightened around Will's hard shaft, I felt him shudder and gasp as we came together, forcing him over the edge with me.

Will remained inside me until he was completely spent. Only then with a soft sigh did he pull himself out of me and lay down beside me. I could feel him shaking as he pulled me into his arms and our lips locked in a tired, gentle kiss. When I pulled back to look at him, I saw he was about to speak. I lifted my hand to his mouth, silencing him.

"Don't speak. Just lie here with me and hold me," I said, my voice shaking.

He nodded and once again pulled me against him. I rested my head on his smooth chest listening to the sound of his heartbeat. I tried to tell myself that there was nothing wrong with the fact that our coming together had helped me feel safe, warm and--yes--loved, for the first time since a bullet had ended my happy ever after. Even my ever present conscience said gently that there was nothing to feel guilty about. That we had needed to feel again, and we had achieved that. I closed my eyes and snuggled closer against Will, savoring the warmth of his body against mine.

I heard Will sigh softly and suddenly my doubts surfaced again. I wondered what Will was feeling. Did he regret what had just happened? Was he worrying that it had been a mistake? I lifted my head and looked at him. "Will?"

Before I could continue he shook his head slightly. "Shh," he whispered, before tenderly kissing my forehead.

"But..." I continued.

"Everything's OK, Angel. We both needed something and I know we got it. We felt it. There are no regrets," he said soothingly. Once again, so like his father, he had somehow known what was going on in my head.

The guilt that had been building up inside me was washed away with relief. I smiled, then kissed his shoulder before settling beside him. And just for that moment, I was happy again.

I stood beside the bed and watched Will as he slept. He looked so peaceful, the hint of a smile curving his lips.

He had spent the night with me, not making love, but just being with me. We had talked through the night, sharing fond memories of Michael for awhile, until we finally fell asleep. It had been the first good night's sleep I had had in a long time. A peaceful sleep not marred by bad dreams.

I had woken as the sun was rising and lay there just enjoying Will's silent, sleeping presence, until finally, without disturbing him, I got up.

I let him sleep until late morning, but eventually it was time to wake him. The night before Will had told me that he was due to return to New Zealand to continue filming the following day. I tried not to feel sad at the realization that he had to leave so soon. I liked having him around--I'm not talking about having him in my bed, because that had been a one time only affair. A moment of sharing to relieve the pain--No, I'm talking about his company.

But it was time to let him go.

I called to him softly, and when he didn't stir I reached out a hand and gently shook his shoulder. Finally, a pair of beautiful brown eyes, still hazed by sleep, opened. He gave me a sleepy smile, stretched and said, "Good morning."

I smiled back, "Morning, sleepy head."

He stretched again, making a small contented sound in his throat. Then he sat up against the head board. "What time is it?"

"Just gone 10," I said, unable to keep regret from creeping into my tone.

Will's face fell, telling me he too was disappointed. Before he could say anything I said softly, "You better get up and get ready. You don't want to miss your flight."

He sighed and gave me a sad little smile, "No, I don't suppose I do."

"Well then, you'd better hop into the shower and get dressed. I'll make you something to eat before you leave," I said, forcing myself to sound upbeat.

Will nodded and began to get out of bed. I turned and quickly left the room, before he could see the tears welling up in my eyes.

Will and I stood facing each other, our hands clasped. It was time to say goodbye and let him get on his way. He still had to go back to his hotel to pack, before heading to the airport.

"So," I began. I was finding it hard to find the appropriate words after everything that had happened between us.

Will squeezed my hand reassuringly. "It's kind of hard to say goodbye, isn't it?"

I laughed softly. "Yes, it is. I feel there should be more to say, other than goodbye."

"Say about what?" asked Will. From the tone in his voice I could tell he knew what.

I answered anyway, "About us. About yesterday."

"Do we really have to say anything, Angel?" asked Will, looking deep into my eyes.

I shrugged. "I don't know."

Will gave me a tender smile. "Sometimes you don't have to say anything. I think we both know what yesterday was about, and what it did for us. There are no words for that."

I looked at Will in awe and wonder. In so many ways he was so different from his father, but in other ways, they were so alike. "You sound just like your father."

Smiling, Will asked, "And if my father had said that to you, would you have listened and believed him?"

I nodded, "Yes, I would."

"Then listen to me, now," said Will, giving me a wink.

I laughed softly. "You're right."

"Good."

Silence fell between us. Then Will leaned forward and kissed me. "I'd better get going."

I nodded and stepped away from him. Still holding hands, we went outside and as we stood by his car I found him looking at me intently. "What?" I asked with a smile.

"My Dad was a lucky man," said Will softly.

My heart caught in my throat and it took me a moment to recover. "I was the lucky one, Will." I answered, my throat tightening. "And I still am," I reached up a hand to caress his face. "Because I have you in my life. Michael may be gone, but you and I will always be family, and more importantly friends."

As my words ran down, I found myself being taken in Will's arms and he held me tightly as he spoke, "That means everything to me, Angel. Thank you."

Finally, we drew apart, and drawing in a deep breath, I pushed him towards his car. "Go on now. Be on your way before you miss your flight."

Will nodded and moved to his car. He paused and turned before climbing inside, surprisingly me with a wicked grin. "Just one more thing?"

"Yes?" I asked with a chuckle.

"It really was good seeing you again - Mom."

I gasped, "You cheeky boy!" I approached him, but he quickly jumped into the car and closed the door then sat there grinning at me.

I tell you, he was damned lucky I couldn't use my power on him or the car in public. Instead, I stood beside his vehicle and tapped on the window. I waited for him to open it a crack and for him to ask innocently. "Did I say something wrong?"

I snorted, "You are so lucky I can't make you pay for that!"

"Really? And what would you do to me if you could do something?" He asked, still grinning at me.

"You don't ever want to find out!" I warned.

He laughed. "My Dad once told me you could get pretty damn scary when you were angry."

I narrowed my eyes and leaned down to look at him fiercely. "You have no idea how scary."

I gave Will a dark look and tried to outstare him, but finally I began to shake with laughter, as did he. I straightened and shook my head. "Go on. Get going 'elf boy'. I'd hate for you to miss your 'boat' into the West," I said with a grin.

Laughing, Will started the car. When he looked back at me, his face was serious. He didn't say anything, but I knew what he was trying to communicate with his expressive eyes. I smiled and reached a hand through the window. He took it and held it for a moment before saying, "I know it seems odd, but for the first time, when I think about my Dad, it doesn't hurt to remember him. Thank you for that"

My breath caught in my throat and I squeezed his hand. "I know what you mean." I smiled and whispered, "Thank you," before gently extracting my hand from his. "Goodbye."

Will echoed my words then I stood and watched him drive away. When his car had disappeared down the road, I turned and went inside.

The Witches of Eriadne: Interlude Four X

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