

PROLOGUE

A Dark Secret

AS FAR AS THEY were concerned, the sea was theirs to explore. They were so young, so wild, and so free. The two siblings were inseparable; nothing could compare to the love between Triton and his dear sister, Ursula. They had a bond they thought could never be broken. They lived in a kingdom in the vast sea right outside of Sapphire City limits.

The name of their kingdom was Atlantis.

They both shared a love for their home in Atlantis; they took much pride in being their home's youngest residents. They knew that no matter what happened, they would always be safe.

Atlantis was the only home they had ever known. Their home was roaring with bustling sea life. The houses were lavish and made from sand, blown into glass and seashells as decoration. Atlantis had streets paved with sea stones and signs that told the merpeople what street they were on. Garland, made of seaweed and seashells, hung from the main buildings

downtown. Atlantis was the safest place to live.

Though they loved their home, the two young merchildren loved to sneak out of Atlantis and explore. They had a tunnel dug out at the edge of town that they could squeeze into unnoticed. The guards would hunt them down and drag them home, kicking and screaming if they caught them. They were royal, so everyone kept a watchful eye on them. *But* it was impossible to keep an eye on them at all times. These were the times they would sneak out to play.

The siblings explored multiple sunken boats, found crabs to befriend, and even dared to venture close to the surface. Close enough that they could see where the light that brought daylight to the ocean came from—the *sun*.

Wherever they ventured to, Triton would always keep his little sister safe. Nothing meant more to him than her. They didn't know their parents; they were all each other had.

Triton was a trim-built young merboy; he was agile, strong, and the most charming of any merpeople in Atlantis. His skin was tan, and his teeth glistened when he smiled. Ursula was different from everyone else. Though young, she always had a darker way of thinking; her appearance was more Gothic than girly. She had a stunning black iridescent tail that shone brighter than any others. Her face wasn't as picturesque as her fellow mermaids, making her the group's black sheep. She was bullied

when Triton was not at her side; this dampened her attitude. Yet, there was something special to Ursula. Her brain made up for her looks. She was wise beyond her years, and she was full of tenacity.

The young merlady idolized her older brother. Triton was never far from Ursula. They did everything together besides bathing. He would kill to keep his little sister safe. There is nothing he wouldn't do to see her smile.

Amongst the laughter and fun, they had their petty arguments. It never lasted long, and they were back to the same happy, playful children they always were.

The two of them grew, as all life does. Each one envied the changes in the other. Ursula's lavender-colored skin set her apart from their species. She had craters in her skin from barnacles attaching to her, whereas Triton had flawless, beautiful skin. Where Triton had muscle, Ursula just had a bigger boned build. Where Triton's hair flowed just below his shoulders, Ursula's hair was wiry and black. Her hair took up the length of her entire height. They were worlds apart, night and day. You would only guess that they were related if you knew them personally. Ursula felt that Triton had received his looks from the better side of the gene pool. She didn't know where she came from, but the young merlady felt she hit every branch on the way down the ugly tree.

Triton envied his sister's wit and cunning nature. Her mind was her most favored attribute. She could out-wit anyone who crossed her path. She often tricked Triton into doing things they weren't supposed to. She enjoyed seeing him confused; it was funny to her. Triton's intellect paled in comparison to Ursula's. Triton hated this. There was no life under the sea as intelligent as Ursula. This made Triton feel inferior.

Little did his Ursula know, this insecurity ate him alive. Inferiority fanned the flames of rage inside of him. Although, he was a master at hiding how he truly felt. Triton's love for his sister always balanced his anger.

Ursula had always secretly resented Triton. She felt he was always favored as a child, and even now, she could see it. He had the looks, the power, and the attention of their friends and all the sea life around them. He was to be king, but who was she?

She felt like nothing compared to her brother. This ate at her heart, leaving her to feel less than enough.

Ursula was also special in a way Triton didn't know, she was able to visit the land above, she could shift into a human. She spent many days walking the wondrous Sapphire City. This usually took her mind off of the stresses of the sea. But she always had to return home...no one could know this secret.

When she returned home, her negative thoughts came rushing back. Ursula always felt like the ugly step-child. She was spurned by all sea life that crossed her path, but Triton always made her feel special. Until now. "What have I done to be tossed aside?" Ursula cried. "Why am I made to be nothing while you have EVERYTHING," Ursula spat.

"Look at you, Ursula. You're acting a fool. You let your insecurities eat you alive." Triton laughed almost nervously. He shot her a look of pure pity. The kind of pity he felt for his shortcomings. Ursula hated it when he looked at her in this way. She thought he was mocking her emotions like they meant nothing to him. She swam up close to him until they were nose to nose.

"What makes you better than me, brother?" she ground her teeth as she spoke. "NOTHING!" she yelled in his face. "WE ARE EQUAL; now get that through your thick, air-headed skull!"

The glint in Triton's eye struck fear in Ursula's heart. She went to back away, but not before she was forced to the ground by the brute force of her older brother. "STOP, WHAT ARE YOU..."

Triton forced his tongue into her mouth with no sign of holding back. His tongue explored every nook and cranny in her mouth. There was no part of her mouth that he hadn't caressed with his tongue.

Ursula's heart began to race, and panic filled her soul. She could feel his hands rubbing up and down each of her stunning black scales, and she felt disgusting and violated. Triton was forceful. HE easily overpowered her. She was pinned to the sea floor. Her hair was now full of sand.

Ursula was typically never the type to push back. The young Merlady had no idea how to respond. If there were any time to fight back, it would be now. Ursula started to beat her brother with her puny fists. He didn't seem to feel it. She pushed and shoved at her brother as hard as she could. He was too strong.

The more she pushed her brother away, the more he forced his way onto her. The overpowering merman on top of her flipped her onto her stomach.

Her face was nearly buried in the sea floor below her. He ground himself into her, groaning as he took advantage of the sister he would once kill for. The more garbled sobs he heard, the more turned on her brother seemed to get. Triton's hands were everywhere; one was ripping away her seashell-shaped brassiere to expose the fleshy breasts beneath. She could feel the slight sting of her brother tugging at her nipples with his fingers. This was an invigorating yet confusing experience. No one had ever touched her in this way before. She never dreamed her brother would poison her mind and body this way.

One hand slid expertly up her tail toward her vagina and grazed the most sensitive parts of her. When Triton's fingertips swept across her clitoris, it was as if every nerve fiber in her body came to life. She was sickened by the fear and arousal rising inside her.

His fingers expertly explored her now impure private areas as her mouth fell open into a slight moan.

"Why are you..doing this to me?" she moaned in his ear.

"You..." he began to trail soft kisses down her chest to her tail,"are," he breathed, "MINE."
"Damn it, you are beautiful, Ursula. Why can't you see that?"

He positioned himself so he was mounted on top of her. Ursula felt his sheathed penis slide into her. He slammed into her time and time again. The sensation she felt was somewhere between pleasure and pain. He cried out in pure ecstasy. She felt his parts attach to hers in a way she didn't understand. In that moment, they were one. She would never be clean again. Her stomach turned over; she felt sick. Ursula screamed out in discomfort and ecstasy as they climaxed together. She was mortified and elated at the same time. The mind-blowing orgasm she experienced had her melted into the ground, yet she couldn't stop shaking. She hated Triton, but somehow, she was also in love with her brother. Ursula was driven mad by conflicting emotions.

The young merlady felt her body begin to shift and change. Triton looked at her fearfully. Ursula grew a set of tentacles where there was once a shiny, stunning black tail. Her body structure had changed entirely. She was now a large-built Octopus instead of the mermaid she once was.

“What just happened?” Triton shuddered.

Ursula’s beautiful body had turned hideous to protect her from being violated again. Ursula swam away as fast as she could to find a place to hide and gather her thoughts.

The young sea-witch discovered a cave deep in the outskirts of Atlantis. The cave was dark and musty, as disgusting as Ursula felt. She scrubbed herself endlessly, failing to wash away the torment that plagued her heart and mind.

The sea-witch didn’t take long to turn this cave into her new home. This place was her safe haven, even with unexplored parts. She never wanted to leave; Ursula was hurt and angry. Her anatomy had changed from the mermaid she once was to what she considered a hideous monster. She spent countless days completely disoriented. The ability to shift into a human had vanished.

Infinite tears had formed rivers on her cheeks. The tears she had cried left permanent marks on her face. Nothing is as it once was. There was no going back to who she was. There was

no returning to the place she once called home. Yet, something was changing inside of her. She didn't know yet what it was, but she would soon figure it out.

No one saw Ursula for months.

When the young sea witch came to grips with what she had survived, another terrifying and amazing thing happened inside her.

Could it be?

Was a child growing inside of the young sea witch?

Ursula was filled with myriad emotions.

The sea which was already in love with her child in a way that any mother would be. She imagined how her baby would look and envisioned their times together as she raised her beloved child. She emerged from the cave very pregnant and very proud. It wasn't long before Triton got a whiff of her pheromones, and he rushed to her side.

"Ursula... could it be?" Triton's jaw dropped. "This... is MY child," he roared.

Ursula started to swim away as fast as she could. Triton was always twice as swift as her.

He grabbed her arm so tightly that she cried out in pain. She tried and failed to break free.

“LET ME GO, TRITON,” she cried. “You do not and never will deserve this child after defiling me like that!” Tears streamed down her face.

“I am the king of the sea, Ursula,” he roared. “And you will do as I say when I say it.”

Ursula bubbled with rage. She had so much anger and pain building inside of her from the betrayal her brother put her through. Part of her still didn’t want to think it was true. The more she buried it, the worse she felt.

Trauma is a bitch.

Triton raised his hand to his sister, and she cowered in fear. “This child is MINE.”

He said again with more force, “You will stay with me until the child is born, and we will raise our child together.”

Ursula let out a sigh of relief. At least her child would be in her life. With the seventeen months sea witches stayed pregnant, Ursula still had six months before she would meet her baby.

She dreamed of having a baby girl, a princess to call her own. She often cooed at her pregnant stomach, talking to the growing child.

“How long will it be until our sweet child is brought into this world?”

Triton asked kindly the following day.

As he swam past, he caressed her stomach with a look of love in his eye. The kind of love a father held for his child. He turned away, focusing on a mermaid on the other side of the room.

This made Ursula seethe with anger and jealousy. She was shocked by how jealous she was of her brother's attention to another mermaid.

Ursula was moved and appalled by her brother's affection for the baby. She rolled her eyes as Triton turned away. The look on her face soured further.

"Only six months left, Triton," she said curtly.

"You should be thanking me!" he spun around, enraged. He could hear the distaste in her voice.

"If it weren't for our child, I'd banish you from Atlantis. You hardly deserve to be here with how you treat me," he spat.

Ursula came unglued. The sister he knew was officially gone.

She started to laugh maniacally at her brother.

"THANKING YOU?" she roared. "What should I be thanking you for? Oh, let me guess... FOR RAPING ME?"

Ursula shuddered where she stood. She couldn't bear the thought of that dreadful day. The poor young sea-witch relived every mo-

ment, each time the thoughts resurfaced in her mind. She thought she had put this behind her, but she was mistaken. She could feel his fingers pulling, caressing, exploring every inch of her. Ursula rebuffed.

“If anyone should be banished from our home, it should be YOU. You DISGUSTING MONSTER.” She screamed at him in pain.

Triton charged at Ursula in pure anger. Her eyes filled with fear and rage as his open palm crashed into her face.

“Never speak to me like that again, WENCH,” Triton stormed off. Ursula was left sitting there in pure stupor.

Did he just hit her?

Did this really happen?

Tears streamed down Ursula’s face once more. Where was the brother who would do anything to see her smile? Who had he turned into? What had gotten into him? She had so many unanswered questions. Questions she knew she would never find the answer to.

She looked down at her growing stomach. She could feel her child moving around inside of her. These movements filled her with pride. Soon enough, she would have her little blessing to take her mind off the abuse she had endured. She looked forward to the peaceful and magical days she would spend with her child. She would teach her child to talk, swim, sing,

and be a much better sea creature than her brother. She'd never allow her baby to act in his hideous manner.

For months, Triton kept his baby sister locked in a cell. The ground was cold and hard. There wasn't much room to move. She felt claustrophobic. The cell was locked; there was no breaking it. There was no escaping; he wouldn't let her runaway

with his child. He was taking no chances.

He acted like he treated his sister as a queen. A queen who was sleeping on a dirty prison floor, anyway. He brought her trays of food twice a day. Ursula groveled at the bars and pleaded to be freed from prison, but he wouldn't hear of it.

He did not trust the woman behind the bars. He knew letting her out would mean losing their child forever. Ursula would find a way to disappear again.

Five months rolled by quicker than either of them expected. Triton heard a scream coming from Ursula's cell.

"Triton! Let me out; something is wrong!" she cried. Shooting pains emanated from her womb. She had never felt this type of pain before. She feared for her baby's life, knowing it was still a month too soon to give birth.

Was her baby going to survive?

Was her baby healthy?

Was this her fault?

She stopped dead in her thoughts.

No, she thought, this is Triton's fault.

"Look at these disgusting quarters you have me trapped in and the stress you cause daily. You are an abusive, egotistical, pompous monster! No wonder my womb is trying to force her out now," she cried.

"YOU DID THIS!" Ursula let out a blood-curdling scream.

"It's coming! The baby is coming."

Triton opened the cell as fast as he could. Before the cell door was ajar, he saw a head full of beautiful, vibrant red hair. It was a girl.

He had a princess to call his own. He caught his baby girl as

Ursula gave her last push. Then, the unimaginable happened. Triton swam off with the baby, and Ursula had no idea where.

Hours later, the king came back empty-handed. "Wha-.... WHERE IS MY BABY?" Ursula sobbed. "You kidnapped my child. Where did you bring her, I... I .. I didn't even get to hold her!" she cried in pain.

King Triton mocked her pain; he boohooed and pretended to sob like Ursula.

"I told you, WITCH. The child IS MINE. And I will see to it that you will never set eyes on her again," he laughed.

"How could you be so stupid? You thought I would raise MY child with you by my side?" he spit on the ground beside him.

"I'd sooner lie down and die," he said darkly. He left Ursula alone in her misery. She was in pain from childbirth and beside herself from having her precious baby ripped away from her.

How would she ever come back from this?

"YOU MONSTER!" she yelled after him. "You will pay for this treachery!" she screamed. Then she blacked out. It was all too much to handle.

When she awoke, she was no longer in her cell. She was in a familiar place, but it was not where she wanted to be. There was no sign of her baby anywhere. She was outside of Atlantis's gate, and Triton stood on the inside.

"Leave here, Ursula, leave here and never return," he hollered. "You are at this moment banished from the city of Atlantis. This home is my home and will never be yours again!" he said proudly. "Now, leave with your life before I change my mind. Goodbye, dear sister," he laughed.