

Chapter 4

“What If I Never See You Again”

He barely got out the words, “Oh, my God. The Mary Celeste . . . Brad . . . It’s the Mary Celeste!”

His friend slowly turned and faced him, then looked stupefied to where Sarantos was pointing. His jaw dropped and his eyebrows elevated causing his dark brown eyes to bulge out of their sockets. Brad’s shocked look conveyed what Sarantos wanted to say, but there were no words strong enough to properly explain what their current situation appeared to be.

The two friends stood side-by-side glaring at the letters while trying to get their heads around the reality of what it was they were seeing. Finally, Brad cleared his throat and managed to stutter some words. “Thi-s isn’t our w--orld.”

Sarantos looked at his friend to see if he was okay. He didn’t like the sound of his quivering voice.



“What? Of course, it’s your world, Brad. What’s wrong with you?” The wizard blurted out hastily while looking very perplexed.

“No, it’s not.” Sarantos said rather flatly.

The wizard raised his staff and bellowed, “You’re both mad. Of course, it’s your world, because I said it is and I know these things. I’m a wizard for crying out loud!”

“No, you don’t understand, Wallis. It’s earth, but not earth as we knew it. The time period is wrong. The

Mary Celeste was found abandoned in 1872, a ghost ship.” Brad paused and Sarantos lifted his eyes to stare at his friend who was still both shocked and amazed. “Sarantos knows I speak the truth. I did a report on it years ago for school. It’s kind of creepy. Now, we know what apparently happened to Captain Briggs!”

Sarantos shook his head in disbelief. “You’ve got to be kidding me, right? The portal that was created on our new world caused this whole crew’s disappearance? Where’s the life boat? It was missing, as well, I see.”

“Of course! A portal also caused our disappearance, Sarantos, if you think about it. Wow, and the lifeboat is still here. So cool if we could row it to the island,” said Brad.

“I won’t hear of it. We’re in a hurry,” said the wizard.

Adele smiled. “Give them a break Wallis, they’ve come all this way to see their homeland only to find out they’re in the wrong time period. I think I’d love to venture over on that boat, as well.”

His voice softened as he looked upon the sparkling eyes of Adele. “Oh you would, would you? Well, I suppose it won’t hurt. I’ll take Mika, Sergio, and Stitch with me. Dwarfs aren’t fond of water, anyway. We’ll go ahead and meet you at an inn on that island in the distance. Stay on track. I’ll contact you via Sergio, Mika, or telepathy.”

“Sounds great. There’s that moaning again. We’d better check on it before we leave.” Adele grinned and ventured off below deck where the noise seemed to be transmitting from to find its source.

Sergio stood peering out toward the island, in what appeared to be a very deep-rooted manner, while Wallis followed intently behind Adele. Blayke and Stitch pulled their weapons and dropped in line.

Blayke looked at Sarantos, “The rest of you wait here.”

“I’m going below to find the captain’s quarters, and to see if there’s anything of interest,” said Sarantos sharply back in response.

Brad grinned at his friend and said, "I'm coming too."



The captain's quarters held an ominous tone. The feeling in the atmosphere was gloomy and the stench unbearable.

"This is awesome. I think I'll grab the compass and a few other things we might need to get to the island."

Brad was flipping through a book. He looked up at Sarantos and lowered his voice, almost in reverence. "I always found it very strange that Briggs left without his log books, much less his pipe and boots. Look at all these clothes he left behind."

"Yes. It's plainly bizarre and a mystery when you have no concept of what happened, but when you start to understand the true story as we now see it, things become much clearer."

"They do indeed. He had no idea they wouldn't be coming back and now this portal will have to be closed. Maybe, some day we might run into him and his family in our new world? The unknown is amazing - if that makes any sense?"

He chuckled at his friend's wisecrack.

He faced Brad and enjoyed the expression of adventure his friend had written all over a silly grin, as they rowed the lifeboat to the nearest island. Blayke was quite a strong rower and he was glad the rugged warrior was part of their team.

“Leigh, you and Adele look beautiful against the backdrop of the sea. Your skin is glowing,” he commented while inhaling the fresh sea air.

Brad piped in, “Adele tell me again about the Flacens. I’m sorry I missed seeing them. I would’ve enjoyed meeting yet, another species.”

“Well, we found them roaming around the cargo area. It was quite easy to persuade them to follow us up to the deck where Leigh and I proceeded to feed them the plant we’d gathered from around the pool. Once they went back through the portal it was quickly sealed by Wallis. Nothing too exciting I’m afraid.”

“I guess, but I still would have enjoyed the moment anyway.”

“What upsets me, Brad is our lack of trying to re-visit our world. We could have done that anytime we wanted. We didn’t need a portal. Wallis could have sent us back whenever we felt the urge. Why didn’t we? Why didn’t we ever go back??”



Leigh put her hand on his knee and said, “It’s all good, Sarantos. Your heart was there in your new home. You wanted to discover your hidden spirit and it led you there, to our world. There’s been so much on the agenda. How could you have wanted to return when faced with vampires, love, and adventures to other worlds? You found me and I love you. If you left, my thoughts would run wild with worry.”

“You’re right beautiful lady. After you were taken, I thought, what if I never see you again? Every night I would go searching for your immortal shadow. Sometimes it mysteriously appeared to me, that I know for sure. All I can say now is

that I'm glad I know you're in a safer place, here beside me."

"We changed, Sarantos," said Brad. "It's fine by me. Life will keep us changing and evolving into hopefully a better version of ourselves and we must follow the path that lays at our feet. Now, Adele what did the Flacens actually look like?"

Blayke laughed. "Sarantos, your friend is relentless."

"Each Flacens carried itself quite differently from the next, but they were rather slimy creatures. If I had to guess, I'd say about three feet tall, no more. They had beautiful bright blue squinty eyes with large mouths. No lips, just slits."

"Cute," said Sarantos.

"You know, Sarantos I forgot to mention to Wallis about the date. Since the portal is closed, it doesn't matter now, but they'll find the Mary Celeste on December 4th."

"No one would believe us if we told them about rowing to the Azores Islands on the missing lifeboat belonging to the Mary Celeste. Oh, good grief Brad, we took the boat!"

His buddy's belly laugh rode upon the waves as the small boat rocked its way to the closest island belonging to the Azores - the island of Santa Maria.

"Not only did we take the boat, but you decided to take some of the items missing according to historical accounts of the ship's inventory after it was found. I didn't say anything, because I found it very humorous."

"Very funny, Brad."

Leigh joined them in a round of laughter, before shouting, "We're here and look at this blue and green water. It's glorious. The white sands along the coast look so inviting."

"Yes, they do, but something I didn't think about until this moment was how we're dressed. Jeans and tee shirts. Doesn't seem appropriate."

Before he even blinked an eye, Brad suddenly sat in front of him dressed in a white shirt with a red scarf wrapped around his neck. He had pants on that came up right below his knees with a dark pair of trouser high socks that were pulled up under them. He wore a very nice dark-brown jacket that had buttons down both sides.



Brad laughed and pointed at him. He lifted his hands to his face and felt a heavy beard with chops and noticed he had the same type of clothing as his companion. Adele and Leigh wore rather plain white cotton dresses adorned with simple embroidery. The attire hung down to their ankles and they wore dark brown scarfs around their hair with a lightweight brown cloak. Blayke on the other hand had dark trousers on with long socks, but had on a nice short sleeve blue cotton shirt showing off his muscular body. A pirate style scarf was tied around his head pulling his long hair away

from his face.

“Compliments of the house,” said Adele.

“Cool,” Sarantos and Brad said at the same time!

As the small boat got closer to shore, several stone houses could be seen along the plush landscape and a building that was utilized as a dock house sat peering at the incoming passengers.

Once inside the quiet dock house a small man with a dark complexion asked them their business in a broken English accent. His words were heavy in Portuguese.

“Did you bring any goods aboard that large ship you left at sea?”

Sarantos and Adele approached the counter where the man stood writing in a ledger of some sort. Adele spoke first.

“My name is Mrs. Framton. We’ve brought many goods for your island, but we have business to attend to first. It’s been a long journey. Do you have a place for weary travelers to acquire a nice meal?”

“Yes, we have one local inn. Follow the road about a half-mile past the sugar cane field. You can’t miss it. It’s called The Coral Reef. I’ll need all of you to give me your names and the name of your ship, then you can carry on.”

Adele said, “Of course.” Then she did a quick incantation that caught the man off guard. He stood staring off into space. Adele looked at the book and waved her hand over it. “There that’s taken care of. Now follow me. That spell won’t last forever.” She smiled and led them out of the dock house. They moved quickly up the road and over a beefy hill before spotting the inn.

“Everything is sectioned off and neatly laid out for crowing crops,” said Brad, as he appeared to admire the surrounding landscape of an organized farming community.

“Yes, it is,” replied Leigh.

“Well, I don’t know about you my friends, but being with an experienced magic user that handles people so efficiently interferes with my ability to practice my swordsmanship.”

“Shame on you, Blayke,” laughed Adele. “I thought you might consider this a nice vacation. After all, look around you. It’s a perfect vacation spot. Why don’t you relax for once?”

“I suppose that you’re right. I’ll enjoy the splendor for now, because I’m sure I might get an opportunity to wield my talents, later.”



Sarantos enjoyed Blayke when he used his humor to release tension. Additionally, when the muscular fighter used his sarcasm in a laid back manner, somehow it made you beam even more.

Blayke moved to the front of the group and carefully proceeded inside the white stone building.

The place was empty. Clearly, this small island didn't have much traffic. A woman of Spanish descent greeted them at the door and led them to a small table by a large window overlooking the hilly countryside. Sarantos knew he wasn't the only one who couldn't discern the woman's accent. Adele was very language adept and possibly even Leigh was genuinely proficient. Maybe they understood what she was saying.

The place was brightly lit with sconces and large windows bringing in the leftover sunlight as the day gradually diminished.

Adele looked over the menu that was scribbled across a large chalkboard. "I'll order for all of us," she stated emphatically.

No one argued. They allowed her to place their orders while they relaxed in the small but charming inn.

"I'm glad this place is empty."

"Me too, Sarantos. It's rather romantic, don't you think?"

He took Leigh's hand and whispered, "Yes, it is, my beautiful lady, but I have to confess – to be with you anywhere is romantic in and of itself."



Before she could reply, the food was brought out and planted in front of them. It smelled fascinating.

There was a broth with seafood in it. A large basket of homemade bread was sitting in the middle of the table, as an accompaniment to the meal. A delicate shiny wine was poured into colorful pottery style cups. Brad and Blayke immediately dove into the tempting meal.

“Wow. What is this,” Brad asked?

Adele said, “It’s called Caldeirada de Peixe, meaning a seafood in broth with bread.”

At that moment the woman brought another dish and

placed it on their table. The small patties resembled miniature cakes. Sarantos looked quizzically at Adele.

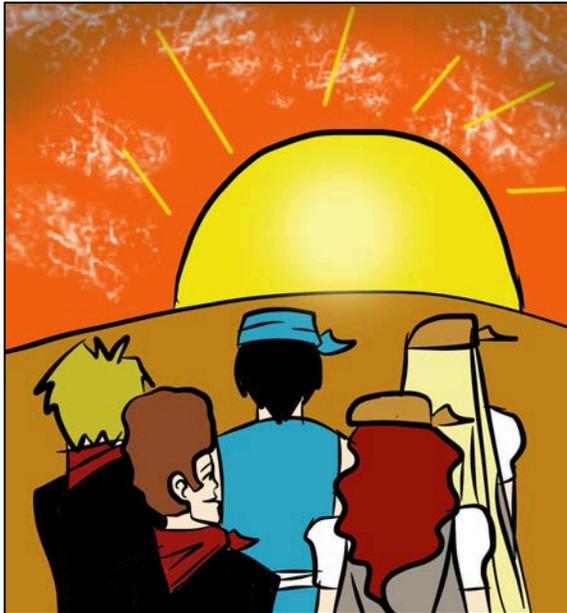
“Melindres, or honey cakes,” she smiled. “Enjoy.”

“Lovely, Adele.”

“I’m glad you’re relishing it. Have you tried the Licorde Amoral, yet, Leigh? I thought we all needed something refreshing and wildly tasty. It’s a mulberry liqueur. I strongly recommend it.”

“No, but I will now. I love mulberries.” She picked up her cup and sipped the sweet, savory drink afterwards running her tongue along her moist lips. “Um . . . delightful.”

Brad and Blayke never came up for air, as they devoured their meal and drink with no hesitation or discussion.



Sarantos smiled at his friends but secretly wished it was his tongue gliding over Leigh’s sweetened lips.

They watched the sunset for a while and chatted. They had absolutely no care in the world.

“Leigh, lets go for a walk. It’s a wonderful evening!”

“Sure, Sarantos, that would be so nice. I could use the night breeze pressing on my face and whirling in my lungs.”

“You’re not going anywhere without me,” said Blayke as he stood up and headed toward the door.

“I didn’t think so,” yelled Sarantos from across the room.

“Sarantos, I’m going to get us a couple of rooms for the night. I haven’t heard from Wallis and he’s blocked. So he must be busy. We can’t always communicate if the other one is blocked. Hold on while I get our rooms and I’ll let Leigh and you know where that’ll be. She’ll have to stay with me tonight though. Sorry.”

“No worries.”



They all walked over to an elderly woman who looked at them from behind wire-rimmed glasses and stood by a lengthy wooden desk. Adele haggled with her for two rooms, until the lady finally relented and gave into her price.

“Let’s find our rooms before you go.” She moved toward a long dark hallway and located their rooms right at the front of the main entrance.

The doors to the individual rooms were brightly painted. They entered and found them small but with several comfortable straw mattresses.

“I’ve got some studying to do. Magic stuff, you know. Don’t be too long but have a great time.”

“Will do.”

The night air was gentle but cool. The sounds of strange exotic birds and animals lifted their spirits and caused them to focus on other things for once besides unusual creatures and dark caves.

This was a peaceful place far away from the real struggles of the normal earth at this particular time period. Indeed it felt like a timeless vacation as the sea air washed over the hilly terrain.

Leigh moved closer to him under the starry sky and snuggled right under his chin. “Sarantos, being with you has instilled in me a sense of purpose and destiny. Thank you, my love.”

He pulled her closer putting his arm around her while softly kissing her lips.

“Okay, enough you two,” said Blayke. I’m not watching this through the eyes of a child, you know. It only tortures me feeding on my own desires for a special lady I know and miss.”

“What? You?”

“Don’t act so surprised, Sarantos. I have those types of needs, as well. I’m human too, you know, in case you forgot.”

“No, I didn’t forget. But, sometimes you do seem super human. Just sayin.”

“Point well taken. I’m really awesome. I know you wish you were just like me Sarantos!”

Leigh chuckled, “Not to mention you’re shy and no way would I consider you the slightest bit conceited. You’re so humble my big burly friend.”

Blayke stepped in between the two of them and threw his arms around both of them, as they started heading back to the inn. “Well, I’m glad you understand me as a person,” Blayke said and smirked enthusiastically.



Sarantos was listening to his friend’s snore and thought about what Blayke said earlier about being a child. He missed his parents and knew they’d helped him and sheltered him as a child. His mind was so young and free back then, not to mention vulnerable. Yet, there were times he felt more exposed now without them around. The night closed in on him as he drifted off into several restless dreams.

Sarantos was racing up a hill as the ocean was spiraling after him chasing him with the heads of a five-headed hydra creature. This wasn't just water, it was a water brute that wanted him dead.

“Run!”

The voice shouted at him from across the world, but he couldn't tell where it came from. What did it look like he was doing anyway? Going for a stroll in the park? He was running as fast as he could!

“Quit shouting and save me,” he bellowed back as loud as he could voice without slowing down his pace.

The water hydra reared one of its giant heads, opened its mouth allowing fire to spew out. The angry flames came flying toward him ready to ignite his entire body. He ran hard and wondered how he could turn the flames back at the water to put out the raging inferno.

He felt extremely warm as the fire hit the rocks exactly behind him. He didn't want to end up a shish-kebab. *Run for God's sake, run.*

His heart was pounding in his ears and the next thing he knew Leigh was running beside him. She reached out her hand, but as he tried to grab her one of the massive heads reached down and seized her in its horrendous mouth. Her mouth was locked in a grotesque grin.

“No!” He screamed out and wept the whole time he trudged up the rocks.



He started to lose his balance and began teetering on the edge of a large rock formation. The hydra laughed and roared. It was hideous. He tried to regain his footing when suddenly out of the strange mists rode thirty stallions and in the middle was his wizard friend, Wallis. He rode right toward the hydra and removed several bottles of water from his pouch.

“What’re you doing?” Sarantos screamed while his foot suddenly slid on the slippery, unstable rock surface causing him to fall magnificently.