



# Waiting For Psamathe (Jinx Paranormal Dating Agency)

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**Category:** Fantasy

**Description:** Can a Greek goddess find love for a second time?

Psamathe believes she's already had the love of her life, no matter what other people tell her. But when a Jinx event comes to her hotel, she finds herself on the end of Aphrodite's meddling, and the love goddess is determined to find her a match.

Seal shifter Zale has always admired Sama from afar, but believes she's out of his reach as a goddess of sand and sea.

When the tides finally turn, they realise that they could have something special between them, all they have to do is follow their hearts.

Waiting For Psamathe is a mythology-inspired paranormal m/f romance and part of the Jinx Paranormal Dating Agency series. It features a Greek goddess who believes she won't love again, and the seal shifter who captures her heart.

**Total Pages (Source):** 10

# Page 1

*Source Creation Date: August 6, 2025, 3:12 am*

## PSAMATHE

The early morning sun shone off the crystal blue surface of the sea, and the sound of waves whispering across the sand was music to my ears. There was something so peaceful about this time of day on the beach. The tourists were yet to arrive and it was impossible to tell what century it was.

At moments like this, the world felt truly timeless.

I leaned my forearms against the railing of the terrace of The Phoke . A light breeze ruffled through my hair, bringing with it the salty scent of the sea.

Many of the other gods preferred city life, but that wasn't for me. The beach was where I belonged, the perfect combination of the land and sea.

Without meaning to, my gaze slipped to the other side of the cove where the first checks of the day were happening at the seal sanctuary. A figure emerged from one of the huts, and even from this distance, I could see that it was Zale going about his rounds, checking on the various seals under his care. I shouldn't be able to tell who he was from this distance, but over the years, I'd come to know the various workers at the sanctuary.

He turned in my direction and raised a hand in greeting.

I waved back, just like I did every time we were out here at the same time in the morning. Neither of us said anything about it, but it was also something we always did, and it always brightened my day, even if there was no real reason for that.

Footsteps against the wooden boards drew my attention, taking me somewhat by surprise. Only a few members of staff were around right now, and they were all inside setting up the resort for the morning rush.

"Hello, Psamathe, I was told I'd find you out here."

"Aphrodite," I said without turning around. "I didn't see your name in our booking system." Which raised a lot of questions about what she was doing here.

"I came via the god realm," she responded. "Though the views are beautiful, perhaps I should book a suite."

"I'm sure all of our rooms would be booked the day after with people trying to catch your attention." It wouldn't be the worst thing.

"Then I'd have to disappoint them, I have a boyfriend."

I finally looked at the beautiful blonde goddess, somewhat surprised. As far as I knew, it had been years since she'd seriously dated anyone. "What are you doing here?"

"I came to ask for a favour," she said, coming to stand beside me and flipping her perfectly curled blonde hair over her shoulder. Even on the beach in the early morning, every inch of her was perfect. And infuriating as a result.

"I wasn't aware I owed you one."

"You don't," she responded. "But I'm hoping the offer is enticing enough as it is."

I had to admit to being intrigued. The only thing she could possibly want from me was the resort, and I supposed it really wouldn't be that bad to have her name on a

testimonial. "All right, what's the favour?"

"We'd like to hold a Jinx Dating Agency event at your resort."

I raised an eyebrow. "A Jinx event?"

"Yes, it's the dating agency set up by Aine, she's a Celtic love goddess."

"I know who she is, and what Jinx is." I lived in a Greek beach resort, not under a rock. I knew all about the dating agency set up by love gods from around the world.

"Why here?"

"Because it's a beautiful venue," Aphrodite said. "And La Sirene could easily make a stop here."

"The cruise ship?"

She nodded. "It would only be for one night. And we'll pay handsomely. You can vet the guest list if you want to. We wouldn't let anyone through the door that you don't want to be in your hotel."

"Hmm." I looked out across the cove and considered the benefits. I knew there were a lot of advantages to saying yes to her. The resort was doing fine, but it could always do better, and having several major gods come for an event would appeal to the clientele I wanted.

On the other hand, it was Aphrodite, she wasn't exactly known for her generosity.

"If I say yes, half of the ticket price has to be donated to charity," I said.

"All right," Aphrodite responded.

I did a double-take. "You're not going to argue with me on that one?"

"Of course not. For one, I don't actually work for Jinx, I'm an independent contractor. And one of the stipulations I have is that I only organise events that also raise money for charity. If you have one in mind, then that makes my job easier."

"Oh." I looked over to where the seals were lounging in the early morning sun. Zale was no longer anywhere to be seen, but that was to be expected with how much I knew they needed to do with their day. "I'm sure I can think of something."

She nodded. "That would be great. If it's something that benefits the island, that's even better."

"When did you have in mind for the event?"

"Next Tuesday."

I took a deep breath. "That's not giving me much time to prepare."

"You don't have to," Aphrodite assured me. "Put me in contact with someone at the charity you want, and I'll do the rest. We can bring outside caterers in if we need to."

"That shouldn't be necessary, I have enough staff to handle it." I'd need to green-light some extra shifts, but that wouldn't be a problem.

"Then it sounds like we're in agreement." She held out her hand for me to shake.

Tentatively, I reached out and took it.

"I look forward to working with you, Psamathe."

"Most people call me Sama these days."

"Sama it is," she responded, dropping my hand and looking out over the sea. "It's very romantic here."

"Presumably why you want to have a dating event at my hotel," I said.

"One of the reasons. We want events all around the world so everyone gets a chance at love."

I raised an eyebrow. "And a Greek island is your next destination?"

"Greece has brought many people love."

I snorted. "Of course it has." I wasn't sure stories of love featuring the goddess beside me counted as tales of romance.

"You could use it as a chance to find someone yourself," Aphrodite suggested, not seeming to share my disbelief.

I rolled my eyes. "Is that all you love goddesses can think about?"

"You can't say anything, you're a beach goddess who runs a resort," she responded, waving her hand towards the pristine beach in front of us.

"Mmm."

"But you could. There'll be plenty of people coming, it's a good chance to see if you hit it off with someone."

"What's the point when I already met the love of my life?" I asked.

"Proteus? That was thousands of years ago, Sama."

I shrugged and looked out to the sea.

"Why didn't you make him immortal if you didn't want to lose him?"

"I wasn't a goddess yet," I responded, looking out at the sea and remembering the man from Egypt I'd loved with all my heart. It might have been thousands of years, but I wasn't sure how I could possibly replace him. Even at the suggestion of a love goddess.

"But you are now. I'm sure he wouldn't want you to be alone."

"I'm not alone." One of the seals slipped off a rock and disappeared into the sea, oblivious to my watching.

"If you insist." Something in her tone said she didn't believe me, but I knew there was no arguing with her. Aphrodite's stubborn streak was almost as strong as her jealous one. "Well, I should get started on the plans. If you wouldn't mind getting me the contact details for the charity, I'd appreciate it. And if it's for animals, I might even be able to get Horus to leave his sanctuary in order to come, I heard he has a new girlfriend who might like a romantic getaway."

"That would be something." I didn't know the Egyptian god very well, but that was mostly because he kept to himself.

"I'll see you soon, Sama." She waved and headed back into the hotel, presumably so she could make her way over to the god realm portal on the other side of the island.

I sighed and looked out at the calming waves of the ocean. I hoped I wasn't about to regret agreeing to her proposition.

## Page 2

*Source Creation Date: August 6, 2025, 3:12 am*

### PSAMATHE

My feet sank into the sand as I made my way to the precise section where the sea met the beach. The setting sun reflected off the waves and the sky was an unbelievable shade of pinky-orange. No wonder Aphrodite wanted to have a Jinx event here, it truly was the epitome of a romantic setting.

Without meaning to, I found my thoughts wandering and turning over some of what she'd said. She was right, it had been a long time since Proteus died, and even since I'd managed to forgive myself for not having graduated from immortal to goddess in time to keep him with me. Not that I thought he'd agree to that. He'd loved life, but he'd also been the kind of man who saw it as something to be enjoyed until it ended.

Would he truly be okay with me moving on?

I looked out over the waves, jumping slightly as they parted and the head of a seal emerged. I let out a small laugh. It wasn't the first time I'd been spooked by one of them, I thought they enjoyed the mischief.

The seal disappeared in a moment, replaced by a familiar figure. I tried not to stare at Zale's toned chest where it rose from the water, but it was hard not to.

"I didn't expect you here, Sama," he said.

"I came out for a walk," I said needlessly. "I needed to think."

"Same, that's why I came for a swim." He pointed to a towel a few feet over.



I nodded and turned my back so he could get out of the water without me staring at him more, even if that was kind of what I wanted to do. It wasn't appropriate though. We were friends.

The water sloshed as he made his way onto the sand, and I strained to hear what was going on so I knew when it was safe to turn around.

"How are things at the sanctuary?" I asked.

"Pretty much the same as normal," he responded. "We have a new seal."

"What's their name?"

"Persi," he said. "It's safe to turn around."

I laughed and faced him. "Haven't you run out of Greek gods to name seals after?" I asked, more amused than anything else.

"Well, remind me how many sisters you have?" He rubbed a towel over his face and hair, but it was still damp from the sea.

"Fifty," I murmured, conceding his point. "All either fathered or turned immortal by Poseidon."

"Which are you?" he asked curiously.

"No idea. He's not exactly the fatherly type, so I never asked. I'm not sure he'd be able to tell me even if I did."

"I'd have thought he'd have calmed down by now," Zale said.

"Oh, he has. But that doesn't mean he can remember what he was doing nearly three thousand years ago. Fifty daughters, remember. And that's just the nereids, there are others too." It was best not to dwell on any of that. Anyway, Persephone would love that you named a seal after her. She adores animals of all kinds."

"I'll remember that if I ever meet her," Zale responded.

"You should, it doesn't hurt to be in the Queen of the Underworld's good books."

He chuckled. "Fair point."

We stood in silence as we both tried to work out what we should be doing next. "Do you want to come up to the bar for a drink?" I asked.

"I don't have a shirt."

"It's lucky you're friends with the owner, then," I joked. "And you can tell me all about Persi."

He nodded and the two of us headed up to the terrace of my hotel. I didn't want to go inside and face the scrutiny of my staff and customers, but out here was nice and safe.

We made ourselves comfortable and I gestured for one of the servers to bring us our drinks.

"You should come by the sanctuary sometime and see the seals again," Zale said.

"I'd like that."

"Maybe if you do it really publically, we'd be able to get more donations," he half-joked.

"You don't have enough?" This was the first I was hearing about it. "I can free up some funds..."

"No, Sama." He reached out and put his hand over mine, sending tingles through me in response. "You can't spend your own money on the sanctuary, it would be never-ending."

I opened my mouth to protest but shut it again, an idea starting to form.

"But if you visit, some of the other islanders might decide to donate again," he continued.

"So they can donate and I can't?"

"You can donate, just within reason," he reminded me. "I know you love the seals, but you can't give everything you've got to them."

"I do need to keep the hotel running," I agreed.

The bartender returned and put our drinks down in front of us. I smiled at them and made a note of their name so I could make sure to add a tip to their wage packet.

I picked up my wine and swilled it around. "What if I had another way of getting donations for the sanctuary?" I asked.

"Another way?"

I nodded. "There's an opportunity that's come up for me where I can pick a charity, perhaps I could suggest the sanctuary."

"What kind of opportunity?"

I bit my bottom lip, noticing his gaze linger a little more on the gesture than it should, though I found I liked it. "I'd rather not say. Let me make a call tomorrow morning, and then I'll come to the sanctuary and let you know if it's a go or not. Though I'm guessing I'll still need to check with the director?"

He nodded. "I doubt she'll say no."

"Good." I took a sip of wine, pleased and surprised that a walk on the beach had brought me good company, and clarity on what charity I should pitch to Aphrodite.

Which made me feel a whole lot better about the impending party.

## Page 3

*Source Creation Date: August 6, 2025, 3:12 am*

ZALE

I finished writing my report and clicked enter, sending it into the system for the other sanctuary workers to be able to access. Not that there was much that needed adding. There were no new pups, and none of the seals I'd been able to check on this morning had been showing any sign of sickness.

"Hey, Zale," Aimee called as she strode up to the front desk.

"Morning," I responded cheerily, leaning back in my seat.

"I have a massive favour to ask you," she said.

I chuckled. "Let's guess, you want me to switch shifts with you tomorrow so you don't have to take the early one?"

"Would you?" She asked sweetly.

"Sure."

"You're the best."

I shrugged. "I like the early shift."

"Eurgh, I have no idea why. I hate waking up at five."

"I like the view." Particularly because it meant I could wave to Sama. I wasn't sure

what it was about the ritual that made the day better, but I preferred the days when we got to say good morning with a wave. She always looked so at peace when she was standing there watching the waves, and despite the fact she'd seen things I could only read about.

"Well, I'm not complaining," Aimee said. "Are you okay to put it in the system?"

I nodded. "I'm still logged on." I pulled up the schedule and made the change right then and there.

"Thanks, you're the best." She smiled and headed back into one of the sick bays to check on the seals there.

The automatic doors at the front of the sanctuary building slid open and I sucked in a breath at the familiar figure making her way inside. Even though she said she was coming over today, I was still taken aback by her appearance. I always was.

Her long dark brown hair flowed down to her waist, not seeming tangled despite the sea air, and her olive skin radiated the easy beauty she had about her. She was breathtaking.

And unbelievably off-limits. Everyone on the island knew better than to mess with the gods, especially Greek ones.

And yet there was a part of me that wanted to.

I cleared my throat. "Hi."

"Hey," she said, her voice light and airy. "Do you have a minute?"

"I'm all yours," I responded. "Did you want to see how Po-lo is doing?" Using her

favourite seal to get more time with her might be a sneaky move, but it always worked.

Her whole face lit up. "Yes. Though I came because of what we were talking about last night."

I nodded and got to my feet, gesturing for her to follow me. I stuck my head around the sick bay door. "Aimee, can you watch the reception desk for a bit?" I called.

"Be right there!"

I turned back to Sama and led her down the corridor to the rehabilitation pool where the seal with a torn flipper was learning to swim with his new disability.

"Hey, Po-lo," she said.

As if he heard her, the seal clumsily poked his head out of the water.

Sama leaned over the edge, a carefree smile on her face as she leaned over to stroke his head. I'd never known anyone else to be as good with seals as this. They were almost as at ease with her as they were with me, and they considered me one of them thanks to my shifting ability.

"How is he doing?" she asked.

"Well. He's not ready to be released, but he's stronger than he was."

"I'm glad." She ruffled the seal's head and stepped back. "You do good work here."

"I like to think so."

She nodded, looking as if she wanted to say something, but not knowing how. "So I need to talk to your director today."

I raised an eyebrow. "For the fundraising opportunity?"

"Yes."

"I'm sure they'll appreciate it," I said. "But you know you don't have to do this sort of thing for us, right?"

"I want to. An opportunity has come up that meant I needed to nominate a charity, it's only right that I pick the one outside my front door."

"What kind of event?" I had to admit to being intrigued, she'd been a little cagey about it last night, but that was to be expected when she couldn't promise anything.

"It's for Jinx."

My heart constricted. "Jinx? The dating app?"

"Well, the agency that runs it," she responded. "They do more than just the app, there are also a lot of parties from what I can gather. I've never been to one."

"I didn't even realise they did those." I tried not to be too relieved about the fact she hadn't been to one before.

"I was asked, and it'll be good for the hotel. Though I think it's also Aphrodite plotting."

"Aphrodite as in..."



"That's the one," she responded as if she hadn't just name-dropped the infamous love goddess. "She's seeing someone at the moment. If you're still around in another five hundred years, she might be single and ready to date again."

"That might be a bit beyond the life expectancy of a seal shifter," I murmured.

Sama gave me a small smile. "Probably. Five hundred years doesn't seem that long to get over someone though." A haunted expression came over her that I wanted to chase away, no matter what it took.

But I didn't know how she'd respond to that.

Thankfully, Po-lo decided to take it upon himself to make a big splash, bringing a smile to her face and chasing away whatever thoughts were plaguing her.

"You should come," she said.

"To the Jinx event?"

She nodded. "I don't imagine there'll be any problem getting some tickets set aside for the sanctuary staff."

"I'll have to talk to the director to make sure she's okay with me taking the night off."

"I'm sure if you tell her you'll be able to schmooze a load of very rich gods and paranormals, she'll be all over it. Just avoid telling any of the Greek deities that you've named seals after them.

"Not even Persephone?" I checked.

She laughed. "She's not likely to be there, but if she is then yes, you can tell her. But

trust me, Apollo won't be pleased to hear you named Po-lo after him."

I laughed. "It's a compliment."

"It's your funeral," she responded, a teasing note in her voice.

"So what would happen if I named the next one Sama?"

"You've already done that," she pointed out. "It was how you learned who I was."

I gave an awkward chuckle, remembering the conversation and how much my colleagues had been laughing at me. "I didn't realise who I was talking to."

Something about her smile made me feel as if she was thinking of a fond memory. "It was just after you came to the island, you had no way of knowing I was an actual goddess."

"There were rumours, I just didn't believe them. Not many gods go by their real identities."

"You'd be surprised," she responded, watching Po-lo as he swam lopsidedly through the tank. "Most of us only have human names because we have to for paperwork, but in our day-to-day lives, we still go by our real names."

"What's your human name?" I didn't think she'd ever told me it.

"Samantha."

"It doesn't suit you," I blurted out.

She laughed. "No, it never felt right. But it's easy to explain why people call me

Sama. But I don't need it very often. The enchantments placed on this island long ago mean that only paranormals and gods come here anyway."

"I don't understand how they really work." Though it was one of the things that had attracted me to the island in the first place. It meant that I didn't have to hide that part of myself, whereas in many other situations, I would have. Here, if I felt the need to shift and go for a swim, I could do just that.

"No one does. The spells are so old that there isn't a soul alive who remembers how they came to be. Gods included." She swished her hand through the top of the water, bringing the boisterous seal to her.

The seals always seemed to be their most playful when she was around.

"Anyway, I would like it if you came to the party," she said. "I'm sure Aphrodite has a guest list longer than her arm already, it would be nice if there was someone there that I like to talk to." She met my gaze, her dark blue eyes sparkling like the very depths of the sea.

"I'd like that," I said.

"Great." Her smile lit up her face, making her seem even more beautiful than normal. "And if you could get me the director's number so I can pass it on to Aphrodite, that would be great."

"I can do that for you now," I said, gesturing for us to hear back to the office, though part of me wanted to prolong her being here, even if it was just so that I could talk to her more.

But that was selfish. I was at work, which meant my focus should be on the seals, and she was clearly organising her event.

A party where there would be lots of eligible people who'd be vying for her attention.

An uneasy feeling settled within me. I wasn't sure what to make of that, or why it was making me so uneasy even if I knew there was no competing against gods she'd known for hundreds or even thousands of years.

And yet, there was a part of me that still wanted to try.

## Page 4

*Source Creation Date: August 6, 2025, 3:12 am*

PSAMATHE

I'd held events at The Phoke before, but none on this scale. And none that had meant so little of my involvement. My event space had been turned into what felt like a giant pink bubble, with plenty of glittering hearts and streamers hanging from the ceiling. Though it didn't escape my notice that most of the decorations were paper. I appreciated Aphrodite's attention to detail and not wanting to pollute the beach or ocean, probably because there was a part of her that remembered she was also a sea goddess, and didn't want to damage it.

I looked around the room, trying to work out what I should do with myself, only to breathe a sigh of relief when I saw Zale heading inside wearing a casual shirt and swim shorts. From the dampness in his hair, it seemed as if he'd just come from the sea itself.

Without meaning to, I raised my hand and waved him over, making his whole face light up when he saw me.

"I didn't realise you were coming this early," I said, regretting it as soon as it left my mouth. I wanted to spend time with him, why would I imply that I didn't?

"I wasn't going to, but the director needed someone to come across to set up the feeds of the seals, and so I volunteered."

My heart skipped a beat but I squashed any feelings down. He'd probably just come so he got to meet Aphrodite and not so he could see me.

"Come on, I'll introduce you," I said.

He nodded and followed me into the event space where the blonde goddess was talking with one of her crew members. She looked up when she sensed me approaching and smiled. "Is everything all right, Sama?"

"I wanted to introduce Zale to you," I said, gesturing to the dark-haired man beside me. "He's from the sanctuary."

"Ah, excellent, that will be for the feeds."

"Zale, this is Aphrodite," I said, gesturing to her needlessly. He knew she was going to be here, and that I wasn't likely to be introducing him to anyone else.

"Do you think the seals will be very active later?" she asked him.

"It's hard to say," Zale responded. "They don't tend to be very active at night, so the director sent over a memory card with footage from the last couple of days in case you preferred that."

"Great," she said. "We just want to make sure we showcase the seals. Sama negotiated that you get half the ticket cost, but there's no reason we shouldn't be able to get some extra donations as well. There are several sea gods in attendance tonight."

"Sama negotiated?" Zale looked at me, and embarrassment flooded to my cheeks.

Aphrodite gave me an intrigued look. "Didn't she tell you?"

"She said she needed to pick a charity."

"Oh, well I suppose that's true," Aphrodite responded. "But she didn't know that when

she asked."

The intensity of Zale's gaze was almost too much to take, especially when added to the knowing look on the love goddess' face.

"Interesting," she said, nodding to herself.

"Aphie," the man beside her said in what seemed like a warning tone.

She gave him a doting look. "I don't think I've introduced you all properly yet. This is Damien, my other half, and one of the event managers at Jinx."

"Good to meet you," he said, holding out his hand.

"This is Psamathe, goddess of the beach and a nereid," Aphrodite continued.

"Most people call me Sama," I said, taking the hand of the man who had captured Aphrodite's heart. He wasn't what I expected, but then it was hard to guess who the gods would fall for, and Aphrodite wasn't exactly known for having a type beyond pretty .

"Pleased to meet you Sama, I hope Aphie isn't just outing you as a goddess."

I laughed. "Don't worry about it, everyone on the island knows."

"I found out on the day we met," Zale added. "Though she had a lot of fun with it."

"I didn't," I countered. "I just didn't realise you didn't know. I thought you were making fun of me for naming the seal pup Sama."

"Never," he promised, meeting my gaze. "I named her after you because her mum

had a difficult labour and she'd already been through something like that, making her strong. Like you."

My lips parted as I stared at him. "You've never told me that before." I reached up to tuck a strand of hair behind my ear, only realising as I did that he was following my every move.

"I didn't realise," he said softly. "But that's why I called her Sama. I've been in awe of you since the very first time I heard your story."

I sucked in a sharp breath, forgetting about everything and everyone as the words settled in.

Aphrodite cleared her throat, reminding me that we weren't alone.

"Why don't I show you where the feed is meant to go," Damien said.

Zale managed to tear his attention away from me for long enough to nod.

"No meddling," Damien murmured to Aphrodite as he led the seal shifter away.

The blonde goddess studied me intently. "Well that explains one thing," she said.

"Oh?"

"Why you like the seal sanctuary so much."

"I don't know what you mean," I murmured.

"You were watching it when I first visited you here," she pointed out.



"I have an affinity for seals."

"Mmhmm."

I rolled my eyes. "It's nothing."

"I'll let you keep believing that for now," she said. "But maybe you could give us some input into our cocktails. We've got four we're serving tonight, all with non-alcoholic versions."

"Do you really want my input?"

"You know what people like to drink while they're at a beach resort," she pointed out. "I get stuck after Sex on the Beach."

"That's always popular," I responded.

"Only to those who have never tried it," she joked.

I let out a light laugh. "All right, what else have you got?"

"I was going to go with the classics, a Pina Colada, maybe a Tequila Sunrise, but something doesn't feel right about either."

"Good choices, but they're not what we get a lot of orders for," I said, gesturing her over to the bar and slipping behind it. "We're not a party island, people come here for the traditional taste of Greece."

"Mmm, I see your point."

I grabbed a bottle of tsipouro and added some of the spirit to a cocktail shaker before

adding cinnamon syrup and a squeeze of fresh lemon. I gave it a shake while Aphrodite watched me intently. I flipped over a champagne glass and emptied the shaker into it, topping it up with some sparkling rosé.

"Try this," I said, sliding it across the bar to her.

"What is it?"

"A Greek mimosa."

She picked up the glass and took a sip. "Oh yes, that tastes of home."

"It's very popular," I said.

"I can see why. We should do that one. What else would you suggest?" she asked.

"How do you think people will feel about ouzo?"

"I can think of a few gods who would love it," she responded.

"Then an ouzo lemonade should do the trick. I can make one up, if you want?"

She shook her head. "Unnecessary, I can imagine what that would taste like."

"And if you want an alternative to your Tequila Sunrise, then I'd suggest a Santorini Sunrise instead."

"Ah, perfect," she responded. "Though the Sex on the Beach stays, I can imagine a few gods who might be disappointed if it isn't on the menu."

"Of course." I stack the shaker I used into the glass dishwasher. "I'd also suggest

olives along the bar."

"Absolutely. Are you really in Greece if there are no olives to nibble on?" she asked.

I gave her a surprisingly friendly smile.

"I do miss it here, I can see why you stay," Aphrodite said.

I couldn't stop the surprise from showing on my face. "Then why don't you?"

"Too many memories, I suppose. And I have a reason to be somewhere different now." She looked over to where Damien was talking with Zale.

"How did you meet?" I poured myself a drink and leaned on the bar, feeling better that it was between me and the formidable love goddess.

"At a Jinx event, I was just there out of curiosity, he was there working, and something just clicked. You know how it is."

"I really don't." I took a sip of my mocktail.

"You can keep saying that, but I'm not going to believe you," she responded.

"Mmm." I didn't know what she was talking about.

Or rather, I didn't want to think about what she was getting at, because it was far better for me to remain in the dark and respect the memory of my late husband. Even if a part of me wondered if she was right and that a couple of thousand years of mourning was enough.

## Page 5

*Source Creation Date: August 6, 2025, 3:12 am*

PSAMATHE

Nerves filled me as I made my way to the front of the hotel where the guests were starting to arrive. The event might technically be hosted by Jinx, but I knew I had to be here if I wanted to make the most of it for the hotel.

Aphrodite was greeting people in a stunning dress of sea green that matched her perfectly. It certainly made me feel out of place in my pale blue dress. I knew most people considered me beautiful, but that was because I wasn't usually standing next to a literal goddess of beauty.

She flashed me a friendly smile as I approached, but didn't break from her conversation. I was somewhat surprised at how easy she actually was to work with, I'd expected much worse from a goddess of her reputation. But that wasn't fair, I hadn't seen her in a long time, and I shouldn't judge her based on the past when people had the capacity for change.

Even gods.

My heart skips a beat at the sight of the handsome seal shifter heading towards me. I normally saw Zale in much more casual attire, but he wore the tux with comfortable ease, clearly not worrying that he was out of place, even if he was in a room full of gods.

His gaze met mine and he smiled. "You look beautiful, Sama."

"Thank you," I responded, brushing my hair out of my face.

"And like a Greek goddess," he joked.

"Well, I do have news for you. I am a Greek goddess."

"And the most beautiful one in the room," he said.

I let out a loud laugh. "I'm sorry, but that's flattery that no one's going to believe when we have Aphie as our host." I gestured towards Aphrodite.

His gaze flicked over to her, but it didn't linger. Instead, he returned his focus to me. "I stand by what I said."

My heart flip-flopped inside me, but I squashed it down. "I'll see you inside?" I checked.

He nodded. "I look forward to it." He headed inside and I watched him leave, trying not to think about how I'd rather go into the room to talk with him more instead of greeting everyone else.

Several people passed, each of them saying a polite hello and then moving past to talk to more interesting people. This might be my hotel, but I was a minor goddess. No one actually cared about me.

A man with sandy brown hair and a swimmer's body approached and I immediately felt myself go on edge. Neptune . His followers had hunted the seals around here almost to extinction and he'd not done a thing to stop them. I wasn't foolish enough to think he actually had the power to do that, but it didn't stop me from being wary of him.

"Psamathe," he said with a solemn nod.

"Neptune," I responded.

He moved past me, and I saw several of the other Greek gods tense the same way. No matter how much time passed, there was still an enmity between us and the Roman gods thanks to the history we'd all been involved with, and I doubted it was going to go anywhere any time soon.

"Sama!"

I turned at the sound of my name, a smile coming to my face at the sight of my sister and her wife approaching.

"Hi, Thetis," I said as I pulled her into a hug.

"I can't believe you're actually throwing a Jinx party," she said.

"I'm not throwing it, I'm just the location," I said as I hugged Eurynome too.  
"Aphrodite is the one throwing it."

Both of them reacted instantly, and I resisted the urge to roll my eyes. I couldn't believe they were still annoyed about this. It had been a long time since Aphrodite's failed marriage with their adoptive son, it was time for them to put it in the past.

"So, if you're being the location for a Jinx event, does that mean you're finally ready to do more than just watch life from the sidelines?" my sister asked.

Eurynome chuckled affectionately. "I don't think she's ever going to stop that."

"I'm not looking for love," I said.

"You should, it's great," Thetis responded, reaching out and putting her arm around

her wife's waist.

"It is, but you're not going to be able to use us to convince her, The, she's known us for a long time," Eurynome said.

"I don't need convincing of anything," I assured my sister-in-law.

"That means you've already found someone." The glee in Thetis' voice was impossible to ignore.

Her wife laughed. "All right, well I'm going to go find some drinks while you try and get the truth out of her," she said, already heading away and leaving us to talk.

"There's no truth to get," I muttered.

"Seriously, Sama, you should consider it. You're at a dating event, what's the harm in seeing if you're compatible with someone?"

"For one, I've known most of the people in the room for at least centuries," I pointed out. "And for two, I'm not like you. I don't find someone and decide they're going to be my wife for thousands of years."

"Hey, we had that brief break around the time they built Hadrian's Wall."

I snorted. "I don't think it counts as a break, you both spent six months pining after each other and being miserable. And for some reason, both of you decided to make me the ear you were going to whine to about it."

"I don't remember being that bad."

"That's because you didn't have to listen to yourself," I muttered.

Thetis flashed me a smile. "Well when it's your turn, I'll be there to listen with all ears. Maybe we can find you that special person tonight," she said. "There are plenty of eligible people to choose from, even some you don't know yet."

"I'm not interested, Thetis."

She gave me a knowing look. "Why?"

"Because I'm not."

"Okay, I'm not buying it. The last time you were like this it was because you were already half in love with that king of yours."

"Proteus," I said firmly.

"That's the one." She studied me intently. "So, who are they? I'm guessing it's a man, you've never seemed particularly interested in women."

"I'm not interested in anyone." Even as I said it, I realised I wasn't sounding very convincing, even to myself.

"All right, all right, I'll stop asking you about it, but let the record show that I don't believe you at all, and I'm going to be watching you with everyone in there until I work out who it is."

I rolled my eyes. She was completely wrong about this, and there was nothing for her to discover. And yet, I felt like there was something I needed to hide.



## Page 6

*Source Creation Date: August 6, 2025, 3:12 am*

ZALE

I leaned against the bar, surveying the room and seeing if I could work out which god was which just from the way they were appearing in front of me. It was harder said than done, especially when I had no idea who was in attendance or even which pantheons were represented.

Without meaning to, my gaze slipped back to Sama and the woman she was talking to. They seemed alike, not just in appearance, but in mannerisms as well, making me think that it was one of her sisters, though which one was going to remain a mystery unless she thought to introduce us.

"You could just go talk to her, you know."

I turned at the sound of a woman's voice to find Aphrodite taking a seat beside me.

"I don't know what you're talking about," I murmured, taking a sip from my drink and trying not to be intimidated by her. If I kept telling myself she was a normal woman and not the formidable goddess of legend, then I could just have a conversation.

She signalled to the bartender to bring her a drink. "You know, Sama said much the same thing," she mused. "I don't know what it is that makes people think they can lie to a love goddess, but they always do."

"I'm not lying."

She raised an eyebrow. "So if I told you that there's an eligible sea god here tonight

who I want to introduce to Sama because they'd be the perfect match, you wouldn't feel jealous at all?"

Something churned within me in response to her words. "No."

"There you go again. There really is no use in lying, I've spent years dealing with people in love, I know how to spot it." She slid a glass over to me. "Sama's drink is empty, why don't you take this to her."

I eyed it warily.

Aphrodite chuckled. "It's just a drink. I can't magically make people fall in love. Or you can leave it there and I'll go find that sea god."

The words spurred me on and I reached out to take the glass.

"Thought as much." She turned to the bartender to get herself another drink, leaving me to either choose to listen to her advice, or to ignore it.

I supposed there was no real harm in taking the drink over, even if it was just so that Sama had one.

She turned just as I approached and a smile spread over her face, making her seem even more beautiful than usual.

"I brought you a drink," I said, feeling as if I'd lost all ability to talk to her properly.

"Thank you." She reached out to take it, her fingers brushing against mine as she did and leaving fire in the wake of her touch.

I met her gaze, the air feeling heavier between us. It was as if the rest of the world no

longer existed, and the only thing I could possibly focus on was Sama.

The woman next to us cleared her throat. "Are you going to introduce me?"

Sama blinked a few times, clearly taken aback by the interruption. "Sorry," she mumbled. "This is Zale, he works for the seal sanctuary across the cove. And this is my sister, Thetis."

"Nice to meet you," I said, holding out my hand.

Thetis shook it while studying me intently. "The seal sanctuary?"

I nodded. "Everyone's very excited about Sama choosing us as her charity for tonight."

"It's a very deserving charity," Sama said, looking down and studying her drink.

"She does have a soft spot for seals," Thetis said, eyeing her sister with interest.

"And the seals have one for her, they're always happy to see her when she comes to the sanctuary," I said.

"Mmhmm." Thetis looked between us, an intrigued expression on her face. "You know, I think I see Eury waving at me. I'll be back." She didn't linger any longer, leaving me alone with Sama.

"I'm sorry about her," she said. "She's annoying in the way only a big sister can be."

I laughed. "I wouldn't know, I only have brothers."

"You're lucky." She took a sip of her drink. "How did you know what drink to get

me?"

"Aphrodite gave it to me," I admitted. "And encouraged me to come over."

"Well for that, I'm grateful. There's a reason I live here, and it's not because I like to go to parties surrounded by rowdy gods."

A loud screech sounded and we both looked in the direction of the stage where a blond man with a mischievous grin was grabbing the microphone. "How about some karaoke?" he called out.

Sama groaned. "That's our cue to get out of here."

I raised an eyebrow. "The party includes karaoke?"

"Not if Aphie can help it, but Loki will likely find a way. And trust me, you don't want to hear him sing."

I looked back at the man on stage, trying to reconcile myself to the knowledge that he was a Norse god. I'd just about gotten used to the fact I was surrounded by Greek ones, it was strange to think there were representatives of many of the other pantheons here too.

"We could go for a walk on the beach?" I offered.

Her whole face lit up at the suggestion. "I'd like that."

I held out my arm to her and she took it, popping her half-full drink on the tray of a passing waiter. We made our way through the crowd and to the terrace doors that led down to the beach.

"Wait," Sama said as we got to the end of the wooden walkway.

I paused, hoping she wasn't about to tell me that she wanted to go back.

Instead, she bent down and pulled off her shoes, setting them down on the low wall between the hotel and the beach. "I want to feel the sand between my toes," she said.

"That does sound good." I untied my shoes and pulled off my socks, leaving them beside hers. Hopefully, no one would try and steal them while we were walking.

Sama let out a contented sigh as she stepped onto the sand, and I could see from the expression on her face that she was far happier out here than in the crowded party room.

I joined her, enjoying the way my feet sank into the warm sand. It felt like a strange juxtaposition to the fancy clothes we were wearing, but great for it.

She set off down the beach, a light wind lifting her hair and pushing her dress against her body, revealing the curves beneath in a way that I was trying not to think of as enticing.

"I love being on the beach at this time," she said.

"Your favourite time of the day?" I guessed.

"No. That's sunrise."

My heart constricted. "Sunrise?"

"Mmm. Sunrise is beautiful, and peaceful. The world is just waking up and different colours paint the sky."

"Is that why you stand on the terrace every morning?" I asked.

A smile twisted at the corners of her lips. "Yes. I like to watch the seals."

"Ah, the seals."

She turned her head as we walked, and it seemed like she wanted to say something else, but didn't.

Instead, she continued down the beach, leaving me only able to guess what she was thinking, even though I'd very much like to know.

## Page 7

*Source Creation Date: August 6, 2025, 3:12 am*

PSAMATHE

The waves rushed against the sand, creating a peaceful noise that only made me long to go in and take a swim. It had been a long time since I'd had the chance, and the night seemed perfect for it.

My gaze slipped to Zale. He'd undone his bow tie and it was hanging open around the neck of his shirt, giving him a casually elegant look which suited him almost as much as his normal just come in from the beach attire.

"Do you want to go for a swim?" I blurted out.

He raised an eyebrow. "A swim?"

I nodded. "There's a nice lagoon not far from here, we could go."

"What about the party?"

I shrugged. "What about it? Aphie has it covered." And it was her party rather than mine anyway, it didn't matter much that I wasn't there.

"I don't have anything to wear to swim in."

"You can shift into a seal," I pointed out. "As can I."

"All right, but if I have to go back up to the party naked, then you're going to have to explain it to everyone."

I chuckled. "That's not going to be an issue, we can leave our clothes in one of the beach huts." I gestured to where one of them was standing not far away. "No one's going to even think to check one at this time of night." Even without waiting for his response, I started heading towards it.

Zale followed me, stepping inside the small hut. "This is fancier than I expected. Why is there a bed in here?"

"It's a sun lounger, it can be taken outside," I said. "But it's also a good way for people to take a rest from the sun."

"Ah."

"There's also a bathroom through there." I pointed to a door.

"Useful," Zale responded. He shrugged off his jacket and folded it, placing it on one of the chairs.

I started considering how I was going to get undressed myself, only to remember that I'd needed help with the zip. I cleared my throat. "Will you unzip me?" I asked, turning my back to Zale.

"Sure." He stepped closer, brushing my hair over my shoulder so it was out of the way. My eyes fluttered closed as I realised how close we were standing and how good it felt to have him there.

His fingers found the zip and he drew it down slowly. My breathing hitched at the intimacy of his touch. I hadn't thought this through. I'd only wanted for the two of us to go for a swim, I hadn't intended it to be more than that.

And yet right now, I was considering saying that we should stay right here and put



the sun lounge to use in a way it wasn't intended for.

"There you go," he whispered, his voice surprisingly hoarse.

"Thank you." I shrugged off my dress and let it fall to the floor, knowing it would expose me, but feeling all the more powerful because of it.

Zale cleared his throat. "Maybe I should meet you by the water."

I nodded. "Good idea."

He headed into the bathroom and closed the door, leaving me alone. I stripped off my underwear and folded everything up neatly, placing my clothing next to his on the chair.

"I'm leaving," I called as I slipped out of the door.

The water called to me, stronger than I'd felt it in a while and I made my way down to it. The cool sea tickled my toes as I entered, sending a tingle of magic through my whole body. I didn't stop walking until I was waist-deep and waited until I heard the swish of water that indicated Zale had joined me.

"You said there was a lagoon," he said from behind me, his tone sending a shiver down my spine.

I nodded, only realising after I did that he probably couldn't see me. "Yes. Follow me."

I didn't wait for him to respond and gave into the power of the magic within me, changing form instantly until I was in that of a monk seal. I dove down into the water, enjoying the way it rushed past my streamlined body. It had been too long since I'd

taken this form, or any other, and I relished the freedom it gave me.

A larger seal appeared beside me with the tell-tale white patch on his belly that told me he was male. Not that I needed any other indication that it was Zale, it was rare for the other seals to appear on this part of the beach at this time of night.

I set off through the water, only breaching the surface to take a breath and led him further offshore until we reached the peaceful lagoon I knew was there. The water warmed as we passed into it, and became much stiller than it had been in the sea outside. I twisted my body around a few times until I reached a ledge and shifted back into my human form, hoping he'd do the same. There was no point in us being somewhere like this if we couldn't actually talk to one another.

Zale broke the surface, changing back into his human form as he did. His dark hair stuck to his face, making him look surprisingly dorky.

I laughed despite myself and reached out to brush it out of his face.

The gesture brought us surprisingly close together and my heart raced in response. It wouldn't take much for me to kiss him right now. If anything, it would be easy.

And there was a part of me that wanted that very much.

I was about to pull myself away when Zale reached out and touched my waist, making me gasp in response.

"Kiss me." The words slipped out unbidden. "Please."

He searched my face, probably wanting to be certain that I wanted this. Whatever he saw there, he seemed to decide I did and he pushed some of my wet hair out of my face almost tenderly as he leaned in.

The moment his lips brushed against mine, a tempest erupted within me that I could have sworn was long since gone.

I wrapped my arms around his neck and pulled him closer, relishing the feeling of my body against his as he deepened the kiss. My whole body tingled and it was all I could do to keep my thoughts focused and not go further than was sensible when we were in the middle of the sea.

He pulled back, and I felt flushed despite the cool air above the water of the lagoon.

"I've wanted to do that for a long time," he murmured.

"Why didn't you?" I asked.

"I know your story. I didn't want to push you into anything you didn't want to do."

I reached up and touched his face. "That's sweet."

"And I didn't want to risk you feeling the same as you did then."

"Zale..." I took a deep breath and gestured for us to sit on the ledge under the surface of the lagoon. I looked down into the water and thought about the best way to explain what happened to him. I didn't need to ask to know what he was referring to, he'd made it very clear that he knew of my history, at least the parts that made it into the legends.

"You don't have to say anything you don't want to," he said.

"I know that," I responded. "And trust me, if I didn't want to be here talking to you, then I wouldn't be. I'm stronger than I used to be."

"You were strong then too," he assured me.

I nodded and took a shaky breath. "What Aeacus did to me was horrible, and it left me in a bad place. But it was also a long time ago. And it gave me something wonderful too."

"Your son?"

I nodded. "I felt broken for a long time after what Aeacus did, but I found my joy again in Phocus." A bittersweet joy filled me at the memory of my son's smile, still etched there perfectly after thousands of years ago. "I've had time to come to terms with all of it, and help. Even the gods go to therapy sometimes."

He snorted. "Sorry, not an appropriate response."

"It's fine," I assured him, looking out over the sea. "I miss Phocus every day, just like I miss all my children. And my husband." I bit my lip, trying to reconcile what I'd just been doing with how I felt about Proteus.

"I'm sorry," Zale said softly. "I can't imagine what that must be like."

"It's as if someone stole a part of my heart that I can never get back. I think I've always felt like I'd never be able to feel anything for anyone because it was missing. Or maybe that I shouldn't. I loved Proteus, he was a kind man and a good king. The day he died, it felt like a part of me did too. But I was already immortal by that point, and I should have known better than to fall for a mortal. And yet..." I trailed off, realising what I was about to say wasn't something I'd even accepted myself.

After that kiss, I wasn't convinced there was any denying it.

"And yet?" he prompted.

"Here I am." I gestured to myself. "It's as if I can't help myself."

"Why didn't you make Proteus immortal?" he asked.

"I couldn't. Only gods have that power and I wasn't a goddess yet. I suppose I could have asked someone else to, but I was living away from most of the Greek pantheon and most of the Egyptian gods were still sulking about the loss of their empire."

"I can't imagine gods sulking."

"Then you've clearly never seen Poseidon when he realises someone has a bigger boat than he does," I quipped.

"That sounds like such a euphemism."

I snorted. "So it does. Either works, to be honest. Though the boats cause bigger tantrums."

"Remind me to stay away from Posiedon," he murmured.

"Why? Do you have a big boat?"

He chuckled. "Maybe I should invite you to find out?"

I groaned. "I walked into that one."

"A little bit." He leaned back against the rocks and looked up at the stars shimmering above us. "I'm sorry you lost your husband."

"Me too." I swished my hands through the water. "People keep telling me that it's okay to move on, and I guess I'm starting to feel like they might be right."

"You're the only person who can decide that."

"I'm just scared," I admitted softly. "What if I let myself love someone and I lose them again?"

"What if you don't?" he asked.

"It's inevitable if the other person isn't a god." Maybe I shouldn't even be having this conversation with someone who was mortal. Especially after I'd just kissed them.

"Except that's not true. You said you weren't able to make Proteus immortal because you weren't a god yet?"

"Yes. Though I don't think he'd have wanted to be immortal either," I responded.

"I suppose there's no getting around that. But you are a goddess now, you have the option to turn any partner immortal if you both want it. You don't have to go through the same again."

I nodded. "Except if they didn't want it."

"Except then. Do you regret loving Proteus?" he asked.

"Of course not."

"Then there's every chance you won't regret loving the next person, even if they're not forever."

I looked up and met his gaze, seeing the truth behind his eyes. He clearly believed what he was saying, and maybe that meant I could follow what I was feeling inside.

"Would you ever do it?" I asked.

"Do what?"

"Love someone you knew you might have to leave behind?"

"That's always what love is to a mortal," he pointed out. "So yes, I could love someone who I knew I could end up leaving behind."

"And would you ever choose to become immortal?"

"I honestly don't know," he responded. "I guess it would depend on the situation and who was asking me."

"I see." But where did that leave me? After our kiss, it would be difficult to go back to pretending that I didn't want something between us, but could I put myself through the emotions only to end up heartbroken at the end?

Though perhaps that was always the risk I was going to end up taking.

And Zale was right. I'd never once regretted falling in love with Proteus, he'd been a wonderful husband, and I treasured many of the memories we shared.

Maybe it was time for me to make new ones to treasure with someone else.

My gaze slipped to Zale.

And maybe I'd found the person I wanted to do that with.

## Page 8

*Source Creation Date: August 6, 2025, 3:12 am*

PSAMATHE

The evening air chilled me as I left the sea, and I was glad that the beach hut we'd left our clothing in wasn't very far from here, and that there were towels inside which meant that I'd be able to get warm and dry.

Zale followed behind me, no longer seeming as bothered by the nudity as before. Maybe it was because we'd just shifted and that was a whole different situation than stripping in the beach house.

Or maybe it was that kiss.

I opened the door and stepped inside, heading straight to the bathroom to grab a couple of towels. They weren't the best, but they also weren't scratchy. Though I'd need to remember to tell my staff that they needed replacing and washing now we'd used them.

I wrapped one around myself and reentered the room, holding one out to Zale.

"Thanks," he said, taking it from me and wrapping it around his waist.

"There's another one for your hair," I said, holding out a smaller towel.

He ran it over his hair, leaving it sticking up all over the place and causing a small laugh to break free from me.

"What?" he asked, a lopsided grin on his face.



"You just look cute like that."

"Cute?"

"Your hair, anyway," I said, realising that a lot of the tension had gone from between us with my laughter.

"And the rest of me?"

Without meaning to, I raked my gaze downwards, admiring his lean but muscled chest, and the strong arms attached. "Really hot," I said without meaning to.

He raised an eyebrow. "All the swimming helps."

"Yes." My heart raced as I tried to work out what I was supposed to do next. Or what I wanted to do.

He stepped closer. "Sama..."

"Yes?" I looked up and met his gaze, realising as soon as I did that there wasn't going to be any escaping from it.

"Be with me," he whispered.

"For tonight?"

"For more than tonight," he responded. "I know it's a risk, and I know you don't want your heart broken..."

"Yes." The word echoed around us, the meaning impossible to ignore.

He didn't need telling twice and pulled me to him, crushing his lips against mine and making me regret that I'd already put a towel on.

I let myself go into the kiss, feeling my worries slip away. I was sure they'd be back, but just for tonight, I was going to forget they'd ever existed. And in the morning, I'd start dealing with them properly.

I pulled back, breaking the kiss.

Concern crossed his face. "Is anything wrong?"

"No, not even slightly." I bit my bottom lip. "I was just thinking about the condoms that are behind the mirror in the bathroom."

He raised an eyebrow. "You expect people to have sex in here?"

I shrugged. "I've been around a long time, I'm well aware that people will have sex wherever they want to. I'd rather they did it safely. So I ask my staff to keep the beach huts stocked with condoms along with the other necessities."

"Such as?"

"Suncream, antiseptic, tampons, that kind of thing." I turned around and headed into the bathroom, leaving the door open so he could see what I was doing. I pulled open the cabinet door and took out a small box, holding it up to him.

"Are you sure you want to do this?" he asked even as he took it from me.

I nodded. "Are you?"

"Very much so."

"Good." I undid my towel and let it fall to the floor in a very deliberate move.

His gaze dipped and his eyes glazed over with desire, making me feel as if every nerve in my body was on fire all at once.

I headed over to the lounge and laid back, feeling exposed but in control at the same time. His eyes darkened even more as he stepped closer to me.

"No towels on the lounge, hotel rules," I teased.

Zale chuckled. "Well, I wouldn't want to get into trouble with the hotel's boss now, would I?" His towel fell to the ground with a soft thud, leaving him exposed to me in a way he'd never been before, even in the lagoon.

My mouth went dry as I took him in, feeling a stirring deep within me. This was a huge risk in terms of my heart, but right now, that wasn't getting much of a say.

He set the box of condoms down and came closer.

I sat up, reaching out to pull him to me. His lips caught mine almost immediately, with an intensity that made me feel as if I could combust at any second.

His hand roamed downwards, cupping my breast. He tweaked my nipple with his thumb and I let out an uncontrollable moan into our kiss.

He repeated the motion, causing more noises to fall from my lips. I tugged him closer, but he had other ideas and pulled me into position so my legs were hanging off the edge of the lounge.

I looked up, seeing my own need reflected in his eyes.

He went to his knees, and my breathing hitched as I realised exactly what he planned. He leaned in and brushed his lips against the inside of my thigh.

My breathing came fast and furious as he moved up my legs, each kiss leaving a mark on my skin that was going to be impossible to forget. I leaned back, enjoying the sensations even before he reached my centre, I couldn't imagine how it would feel once he did. The anticipation only added to the sensations growing within me and the pleasure shooting through my body.

The moment his hot breath brushed across my centre, I let out a loud cry. He took it as a good sign and leaned in further, using his tongue to trace patterns around my most sensitive spot without actually touching it. The teasing was more intense than I expected, with every touch sending the pleasure within me coiling tighter and tighter, but until he decided to use direct pressure, there wasn't going to be any way to release it.

It became too much for me, and I was balancing on the precipice of a release without being able to go over the edge. "I can't..." I murmured. "Please."

He seemed to understand my meaning and his tongue found the precise place it needed to in order to push me over the edge.

I cried out, my body shaking and stars forming behind my eyes. But Zale didn't let up. Instead, he continued to use his tongue to wind me up higher, and just as I thought my release was over, another one snuck up and crashed over me, the waves of pleasure making me forget my own name as they coursed through my body.

I collapsed back onto the sun lounger, panting for breath and almost completely spent. But ready for whatever came next.

Zale grinned at me, looking rather pleased with himself. "Are you all right?" he

asked.

"Mmm, never better," I responded. "But I think you might have something that needs tending to."

Feeling bold, I reached out to take him in my hand, watching his face as I stroked back and forth.

His eyes closed and he let out a groan. "I'm not going to last if you keep touching me."

"What would you prefer to do?" I asked.

He opened his eyes and looked down at me. "Anything you want, Sama."

I bit my bottom lip, feeling him grow harder in my hand as a response. "Then I think you should get one of the condoms and come join me."

"I think that can be arranged."

I let go of him and moved back onto the sun lounger properly, my whole body tingling with anticipation.

He grabbed the box and pulled out one of the condoms, accidentally dropping the box to the floor. He bent down to pick it up.

"Just leave it, we'll grab it when we're done," I said.

Zale chuckled and sat down on the lounger so that he could put the condom on. I didn't wait for him to move and straddled him, reaching out to steady myself on the wall.

He guided himself to my entrance and I sank down onto him, letting out a gasp as he filled me.

One of his hands slipped to my hips, urging me to move, while he threaded the fingers of the other through my hair, pulling me closer so he could kiss me.

I could barely focus on that for long enough to think, but luckily, Zale seemed to take over and I gave in to his guidance, already feeling another release building within me. I rested my head on his shoulder and cried out even as I fell over the edge.

Zale followed me, but I was barely able to pay attention to that with my whole body buzzing from my third release.

I came down from the high, breathing heavily and leaning on Zale even as he slumped against the wall.

"Wow," he murmured.

I chuckled and kissed him gently. "Wow is right," I murmured against his lips.

"The question is what to do now?"

"We sneak past the party and go up to my room," I murmured. "And maybe get the chef to send up a post-sex snack."

He laughed, the sound vibrating through me. "A post-sex snack?"

"Mmhmm. If we're going to keep doing this, then you should know that I get snacky post-sex."

"I'll keep that in mind and make sure there are plenty of snacks on hand."

I beamed, pleased I hadn't somehow scared him away.

He leaned in and kissed me, the gesture full of promise. And I knew in that moment that I'd made the right decision, and that I was ready to risk my heart because it was going to be worth it.

## Page 9

*Source Creation Date: August 6, 2025, 3:12 am*

ZALE

I snuck a glance at Sama as we made our way down the stairs towards the entrance to the hotel. She looked extra beautiful this morning, and I knew it had nothing to do with how she actually appeared and everything to do with how I was seeing her. She'd shown me a different side to her last night, both emotionally and physically, and I couldn't wait to find out what we could be to one another.

"Just give me a moment, I need to tell the front desk to get them they need to clean the beach hut we were in last night before opening," she said, tapping my chest gently with her hand.

"Sorry about that."

Sama met my gaze, a small smile playing at her lips. "I'm not." She slipped away before I could say anything and went over to the front desk.

I was glad she wasn't sorry, because I certainly wasn't. I had no idea if I'd ever have acted on my attraction otherwise.

She returned a moment later. "All done. Shall we go in for breakfast? Unless you want to sneak out and go home."

"I don't want to sneak out," I assured her. "Breakfast sounds good."

"Great, because I'm famished."



"That's because you turned down a snack after the shower." The memory of which was going to be seared into my brain for the rest of the day.

She laughed and flipped her hair over her shoulder. "Because I knew we were going to be able to eat soon." She guided me towards the dining hall. She nodded to the man standing at the welcome table and guided me further into the room. "I think you're going to like my normal table."

"I wouldn't have thought you came down here for breakfast often," I admitted.

"Almost every day. I could make it in my room, but why do that when I have a talented chef on staff?"

"That makes sense."

She comes to a stop by a table and I hurry around to pull out a chair for her. The way her face lit up told me I'd done the right thing. "Thank you."

"You're welcome." I sat down opposite her.

A waiter came over almost immediately, placing a pot of coffee and a koulouri down on the table between us.

"Would your guest like anything specific?" he asked Sama.

She looked at me, but I shook my head. Coffee and bread sounded perfect to me.

"That'll be all, thank you." She smiled at her member of staff and he disappeared to deal with other customers. "He'll be back soon with some yoghurt and toppings, but if you prefer anything else, I can ask him for it."

"This is good. And already fancier than anything I'd be having at home."

"What do you normally have for breakfast?" she asked as she poured the two of us some coffee, pushing one of the cups towards me.

"Depends on how late I'm running for work," I admitted. "But certainly not koulouri."

She tore off a piece of the bread and dipped it into her coffee before taking a bite.

"Our breakfast chef is excellent at them."

"If that's true, we might have to end every date here," I responded, tearing a piece off and managing to scatter sesame seeds everywhere.

"Every date?"

Was it me, or did she look hopeful? I wanted her to.

"If you want more, that is."

"I do," she said softly. "Many, many more."

"Are you free tonight?" I asked. "I've got a shift at the sanctuary later, but I could pick you up at eight and we could go for dinner?"

"I like the sound of that," she responded, dipping more of her koulouri in her coffee.

"Do you have any tasks that'll take you outside?"

I raised an eyebrow. "Thinking of coming out to watch me?"

"Absolutely. I love watching you with the seals."

A thrill travelled through me at her admission. I'd thought as much from the number of times she'd seemed to be watching me from the terrace, but it was good to have her confirm it.

Sama tensed slightly and concern filled me until a blonde woman approached. It took me a moment to recognise her as Aphrodite in her casual clothes, though she still looked beautiful.

"Morning," she said brightly.

"Morning, Aphie," Sama said. "Did you have a good night?"

"Almost as good as yours, it seems," she responded, her amusement written all over her face. "Good to see you again, Zale."

"Likewise," I said, not really knowing what else to say to her.

"Oh, is that koulouri?" she asked.

Sama nodded. "You should order some."

"I should, it's been ages since I've had some. Anyway, I'll call you later to talk about the event and book another one," Aphrodite said.

"I'm glad it was successful," she said.

"It was," the other goddess responded. "But I'll leave you to your morning after." She waved at us both and headed over to her own table.

Sama groaned. "She's going to be insufferable. She always is after her meddling works."

"Do you think she came here planning to meddle?"

"No, she just can't help it," Sama responded.

The waiter reappeared with a tray and set it down between us. Two clay pots of Greek yoghurt sat in the middle with a jar of pine honey and a selection of nuts.

"Thank you," she said to the waiter.

He nodded and disappeared.

Sama picks up one of the pots and starts to make up her breakfast. "Aphie is just like all of the other love gods. They think they see something between people and they can't help but meddle."

"Hence the stories," I mused.

"Hence Jinx. They found a way to meddle even more than they used to be able to." Her amusement was plain on her face.

"I can't say I'm complaining too much about her meddling," I said.

"Me neither."

The way she smiled at me made my heart constrict. She was so beautiful, and somehow, she wanted to be with me.

I was going to do everything in my power to be worthy of her.

PSAMATHE

A light sea breeze drifted in from the doors that opened onto the balcony, letting me know where Zale had disappeared to. I threw off the covers and grabbed his shirt from the floor, slipping it on rather than getting properly dressed.

I padded across the room and stepped out onto the balcony, finding him leaning on the railing and looking out to sea. The sun was shining off the crystal blue waves. Small dots moved amongst them, though it was impossible to tell if they were seals or dolphins at this distance.

"The view here is beautiful," he said.

"It is."

"I don't know why you go downstairs when this is outside your room."

I let out an amused laugh. "Because there isn't a good view of the sanctuary from here."

"Just how long have you been watching me for?" he asked, pulling me to him so he could wrap his arms around me from behind.

I leaned back into him, enjoying the warmth radiating from him. "I don't think I realised it was you I was hoping to see at first. I thought it was about the seals."

"Mmm, you do like seals."

"And seal shifters." I turned around in his arms and wrapped my own around his neck. "I'm particularly partial to those."

"Is that so?" he murmured.

"Yes."

"That's really fortunate, because this seal shifter has a thing for Greek sea goddesses."

I snorted. "You know there are more than just me, right?"

"I do. But you're the one I have in mind." He brushed my hair out of my face.

My eyes fluttered closed as he leaned in and pressed his lips against mine. I melted into him, giving myself over to how good it felt to be in his arms.

We broke apart, both of us smiling. Looking up at him, I knew my heart was already completely lost, but that was also okay. It was time for me to love again, and Zale was the perfect person for me to trust with that.

Thank you for reading *Waiting For Psamathe*.