

SHAWN
LANE

SORCERER'S
LOVER II

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SORCERER'S LOVER II

BY

SHAWN LANE

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SORCERER'S LOVER II
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CHAPTER 1

The coming night unsettled Benedict.

The day had been a strange one. He'd felt anxious and uncertain.

Benedict drew back the window covering and stared out at the dusk covered courtyard. His half-brother's knights and other soldiers milled around, armed and ready for any conflict.

Try as he might, Benedict could not make the gnawing emptiness go away. He'd been parted from the sorcerer, Warin, a fortnight now. His half-brother, the heir to the kingdom's throne, made sure he was watched carefully, his every move scrutinized.

"I cannot trust you, Benedict," his brother had told him. "You have already attempted to reunite with this sorcerer once."

They'd nearly made good their escape together from the village

SORCERER'S LOVER II

Lowith on their way to York. Benedict had chosen an inn he knew had a secret passage. Once they'd departed the passage, though, Benedict's brother had had men waiting. He hadn't counted on that.

They'd seized Benedict. He was grateful Warin had fled them, though with a small wound, blinding them with bright light before disappearing in a thick mist. The soldiers had searched, of course, but in vain.

Now here, Benedict was kept prisoner by his own flesh and blood in this small room with only a bed, a wardrobe and two chairs. He could not go outside the castle without someone shadowing him, guarding him as though he were some helpless maiden.

He did not know how being held captive by his family had been any better than being held for ransom by the sorcerer. In fact, he had wanted to stay with Warin at the end.

Benedict clenched his fist and turned away from the sight of the soldiers. Somehow he had to escape this. Find Warin again.

Alas, he was no magical sort himself and his knightly skills were no match for twenty soldiers. Some he could take out, but not all. And there appeared to be no one here on his side.

He went to the door and twisted the handle, peering out into the hall. A heavily armed soldier appeared at the door immediately.

"I beg your pardon, my lord Benedict, but your brother has ordered that you are to stay in for the rest of the night," the man, who had several years and muscles on Benedict, said with an apologetic smile.

Benedict tried to push aside his annoyance, but it was difficult. He would dearly love to strangle his elder brother just now. "What if I am wishing some sustenance from the kitchens?"

SORCERER'S LOVER II

“You have but to command me and I will see to it. Is there something you wish me to have fetched?”

“No. No, there is nothing. What is your name?”

“Gerard, my lord Benedict. I have been given the position of your personal guard.” The older man straightened, trying to look authoritative.

“Ah, so that is the way of things is it. You are to follow me around like a lap dog, Gerard?”

Gerard cleared his throat and nervously fingered his graying moustache. “I would not say that, my lord. I am just not to leave your side for the near future.”

Benedict nodded. “The very definition of a lap dog. Very well, Gerard, I will retire for the night.”

“As you wish. If there is anything you do need, just come out and tell me. I will be here.”

Benedict gritted his teeth and closed the door of his chamber.

He moved restlessly to the window again, looking out. Thick clouds hung in the sky, some reaching low to the ground to form mist. The air was heavy and damp.

The tiny hairs on his neck rose suddenly. He turned sharply to face the room. His heartbeat flipped, then sped up. “Who’s there?”

At first no answer followed his question, yet he felt a presence.

“Hush, your highness,” a familiar voice whispered next to his ear.

“Warin?”

Lips pressed the pulse at his throat; teeth nipped. Benedict shook with instant, fiery need. His now-hard cock pressed uncomfortably against his braies and hose.

“Warin, say something, please.”

“Shh, Benedict. It is I.”

SORCERER'S LOVER II

Invisible arms enwrapped him, pulling his body tight against a muscled torso. He felt Warin's erection against his ass. Though he could not deny Warin's magical powers frightened him, Benedict closed his eyes and gave himself up to his lover's caress.

"You must be very quiet, your highness. You do not wish to cause Gerard to come bursting in to your rescue."

Benedict nodded. "How is it you are here? How long have you been in the room?"

"I am no ghost, Benedict, I cannot walk through walls. I entered when you opened the door to speak to yon guard. Your timing was fortuitous." Warin kissed Benedict's ear. "I arrived at your brother's contemptible fortress this afternoon. I have been seeking a way to see you since."

"I prayed you were safe."

"Shh, I do not wish to waste our limited time together on words."

Warin pushed Benedict's shirt up to under his arms, and his fingers stroked Benedict's abdomen. He took the hint and removed the offending garment, tossing it on a small table beside the bed.

"We are alone now," Benedict whispered. "Can I not see you?"

Warin's mouth found his, a warm tongue parting Benedict's lips, slipping between them. He moaned low. He felt himself being pushed toward the bed until his legs against it stopped further movement.

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SORCERER'S LOVER II

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When the discomfort had passed, Benedict pushed up and out, thrusting back against his invisible lover. The need was fierce, the wait for this too long. He couldn't hold back a ragged moan. Warin pounded into him, slamming harder with each pump. If it hurt just a bit, Benedict didn't mind. The slight pain was worth the overwhelming pleasure. He already felt the tingling in his balls and he had not yet touched his cock.

His wrists were ensnared in tight grips, held above his head, pushing his face farther into the bed. With his wrists restrained, Benedict could not stroke his cock, but the friction of it hitting and rubbing against the bed while Warin took him was enough.

His release hit him, his cock pouring out, his body quaking with it. Fingers dug into his hips, nails piercing there, but he didn't mind. Warin's thrusts had reached frantic pace. He knew his lover would empty within him soon.

“Benedict,” Warin murmured hoarsely in his ear as he tensed and slammed into him a few more times. Then, Warin stilled,

SORCERER'S LOVER II

withdrawing from him.

Benedict felt himself being turned and laid out on the bed fully, then drawn into two strong arms. Warin kissed him and he returned the kiss, fiercely. He knew Warin would leave soon and it pained him greatly. He did not want to weep like a maiden for her lover.

“There, your highness, it will be all right soon. You will see,” Warin soothed, his lips brushing Benedict’s jaw.

“I do not want you to leave.”

“I must. But I will be back. For you. Always for you. Never fear. Only death can keep me away.”

Benedict swallowed. “Do not speak of such things. It frightens me.”

A loud rapping on the door startled Benedict. He sat up, his heart pounding rapidly.

“What is it?” he asked.

“It is Henry, brother. I wish to speak to you.”

“One moment.” Benedict rose from the bed and grabbed up his clothing. He quickly dressed. He sensed, but dared not ask, that Warin had done the same and crossed the room to stand near the door.

“Benedict?” His brother’s voice was deep and stern.

“Yes, I am coming.” Benedict went to the heavy wooden door, unlatched it and opened it wide anticipating Warin fleeing through it.

Henry, a good number of years older and no doubt wiser than himself, stood on the other side of the door gazing at him. His dark eyes were hooded and assessing.

“Come in,” Benedict said, standing aside.

Henry entered his chamber and shut the door. He turned to Benedict, fingering his neatly trimmed beard, his gaze darting

SORCERER'S LOVER II

around the room as though seeking something.

Benedict's stomach fluttered. "What is it, your highness?"

"We are meeting privately, Benedict. There is no need to address me thusly."

Benedict bowed his head respectfully. "As you wish."

Henry moved around the room until he reached a small table and two chairs. "Come sit with me. I wish to speak to you."

"Aye." Benedict sat in the chair opposite his half-brother.

"You are comfortable enough here?"

Benedict nodded. "It is a spacious room and the bed quite comfortable."

"Good, I would wish it so. I do not seek your discomfort. Nor your misery."

"Yet," Benedict said, lowering his eyes, "you do seek to imprison me."

Henry's lips curved. "I do not see it that way. That is why I have come to speak with you. I know you think I am trying to punish you."

"And you are not?"

"Nay. I have had a long conversation with the king about your situation, Benedict. He agrees with me that for the time being your safety is of high concern."

"My safety? Is that how you justify it?"

Henry stared coolly at Benedict in silence for a moment. "Careful, young one." He spoke in low, measured tones, but it chilled him nonetheless.

Benedict swallowed and bowed his head. "I am sorry, Henry."

Henry lifted Benedict's chin and smiled. "I know you are, Benedict. You are a good, obedient brother. You have been unduly influenced by evil of late and harmed during your captivity."

SORCERER'S LOVER II

Benedict opened his mouth to protest this, but the coldness in his brother's gaze caused him to clamp it shut.

"Both the king and I are intent on keeping you safe from further turmoil. It caused great pain to your father when you were abducted. He is quite fond of you, as am I."

"Aye, Henry."

Henry patted his hand. "Do not fear that you will be guarded for a long time. It will not be. Only until I am certain you are safe. Gerard has told me that you have not eaten this eve. Is that true?"

"I was not hungry when the meal was brought up earlier."

"You must eat, Benedict. You must retain your strength. I will have food brought up when I leave. You are to eat every bite."

Benedict merely nodded.

Henry rose and so did Benedict.

"I will check on you frequently as duties allow, brother," Henry promised. He walked to the door and opened it. He gestured to Gerard.

"Aye, your highness?"

"I wish a meal of mutton, soup, bread and a tart brought to my brother at once."

"I will see to it." Gerard turned and walked away.

"Henry?"

"Hmm?"

"When will you determine I am safe?" Benedict made himself ask.

Henry smiled. "When the sorcerer, Warin, is caught and executed, of course."

CHAPTER 2

Warin cleared the forest and came out the other side before he allowed the spell of invisibility to dissipate. It took all his strength to maintain it as long as he did, but it had been necessary in order to be with Benedict, his beautiful blond prince. Even now Benedict's sky blue eyes haunted him. He wished he could have stayed longer, but he dared not take too many chances with Henry nearby.

Jonas had waited for him. Relief showed on his craggy face. "At last. I feared the worst."

Warin nodded and sagged against the older man for a moment. "'Twas very nearly. The damn man came even as I was with Benedict."

"Prince Henry?"

SORCERER'S LOVER II

“Aye.”

Jonas put his arm under Warin and helped him to the trunk of an old dead tree to rest. “You take too many chances, Warin.”

“I think you are right, but there is naught I can do to change that. Benedict is there.”

“Leave him there,” Jonas said, sitting next to him on the downed tree. “I am afraid the heir is out for blood. Yours.”

“I know.” Warin closed his eyes, trying to get his strength back. His limbs still felt wobbly. “It would be wise to go as far from here as possible.”

“Indeed it would.”

“Alas, I never claimed to be particularly wise.” Warin grinned.

Jonas sighed. “I knew you would say that.”

“I cannot leave Benedict there, Jonas. I love him.”

“Love is an accursed thing.” Jonas shook his head. “Prince Benedict is not in harm’s way, sorcerer. His brother holds him in as much affection as his father does.”

“Truly I am too exhausted to have this same argument with you, old man. Have you never loved?”

“You know I worshiped your lady mother.”

Warin grimaced and rubbed his left knee. It was sore today as the night wore on. The dampness in the air affected it. “Then why be at cross purposes? Whether my love for Benedict was destined or helped along by the bonding goblet we both drank from I cannot say. I only know that the damage is done.”

“And he feels the same?”

“I believe so. He has not said.” He yawned. “I could sleep for three days straight and still it would not be enough. I am weary of this, Jonas.”

“Do not talk so. You must remain strong both in body and in

SORCERER'S LOVER II

spirit to compete with Henry.” Jonas reached into a sack by his side and pulled out a hunk of bread. He ripped a piece and forced it into Warin’s hand. “Rumors are rife that the king weakens. It won’t be long before his passing and then Henry will be king.”

“And if that happens I will never get Benedict away.” Warin chewed a bit of the bread. “Somehow I must get him away from his brother so we can flee together as we planned. But he is too well guarded.”

“I would expect nothing less from the heir.” Jonas stood and wrapped his hand around Warin’s arm. “Come, I have shelter for us where you can rest undisturbed. You need your sleep.”

Warin stood, but he swayed on his still unsteady feet.

“You did push it too far this time, Warin,” Jonas said, frowning. “Should anyone come upon us you will be too weak to defend against them.”

“Nay,” Warin insisted. “Even if my magic cannot handle them, I still have a sword.”

“And you are hardly strong enough to wield it.”

“I am no weakling, Jonas. Do not coddle me.” Warin pulled away from the old man, his hand going to the sword at his side. “I will be good as new soon.”

“Let us hurry to the shelter. I will feel better then. I ask that you rest for a couple of days before you seek out Benedict again.”

Warin shook his head and followed after Jonas, who headed through a group of trees. “You ask the impossible.”

When they reached the small cave Jonas had chosen for their shelter, Warin hesitated. He’d slept in caves before. They were damp, dark and cramped places. He did not relish the notion. Still it would be risky to stay at an inn or a village near Henry’s holding.

SORCERER'S LOVER II

Sighing in mental defeat, he dropped to his stomach and crawled into the small opening. He stood as soon as the cave ceiling allowed enough space.

Jonas lit a torch. "This way, sorcerer."

He nodded wearily, wishing he had enough strength to light the cave. In the morning, he would fully regain his abilities.

Jonas led him to a small bedroll. Warin collapsed there, his head resting on a pile of cloths set out to cushion his head. He closed his eyes and instantly fell asleep.

* * *

Warin woke to deep darkness. He did not know how long he slept or if the night had passed and day had come. He struggled to sit up in the shrouded cave. His heart pounded in his chest. He did not sense Jonas near.

His hand went to the hilt of his sword only to find his sword not there. "Jonas? Jonas, are you there?" Warin winced at the panic in his voice.

"Here, Warin." The light from a torch approached as Jonas came into the area where Warin slept. He set the torch in a little niche in the wall. He handed Warin a bowl of thick soup. "I was outside for a bit. Seeing what the day would bring."

"Then it is morning?" Warin sipped the soup.

"Aye, 'tis a gray one to be sure. The rain will come before long." He sat on the ground near Warin. "How do you feel?"

Warin considered. He wasn't entirely sure how he felt. A little off, he supposed, but better than when he entered the cave. "Well enough. Any sign of soldiers?"

"No, they stay near the castle today. The storm will get worse

SORCERER'S LOVER II

as the day goes on, I think. Not a day I would think the prince will want to be traveling anywhere.”

Warin sipped more soup and then decided to test his magical abilities. A simple enough trick. He waved his hand, creating several more lit torches to line the walls of the cave. Instantly the dreary darkness disappeared, leaving a much cheerier atmosphere. He relaxed a bit.

Jonas chuckled. “I wish you’d teach that one to me. It could come in handy.”

Warin smiled. “If only it would be so easy to pass off these abilities to others. In truth, sometimes they are no gift.”

“Bah, nonsense. You know well you love your power.”

“Most of the time.” Still he often wondered whether his magic came from good or truly evil as some claimed to be the case. Someday he hoped to learn more about his abilities. He finished his soup and wondered how he would get in to see Benedict today.

As though he could read minds, Jonas said, “You are not still considering going to the castle?”

“I can hardly let a storm prevent me from my purpose.” He handed the empty bowl to Jonas and rose to stretch his legs. “I will not deny it may be yet more challenging with the prince and all his soldiers near.”

“What difference will a day make? Can you not see Benedict tomorrow?”

“You said yourself the king weakens by the day. I cannot delay. In fact, if the king is especially in great despair, Henry may decide to go to the king with Benedict in tow. Then, all will be lost.”

“Have you not heard? It is said Prince Henry has already moved the bedridden king to his castle.”

SORCERER'S LOVER II

Warin sighed. It made sense considering the heavily guarded fortress. He nodded and leaned his left leg against a particularly large rock to loosen the muscles. Warin grimaced and closed his eyes against the pain.

"What is it?" Jonas asked. "You are hurt?"

Warin opened his eyes and shook his head. "Just my old knee injury acting up. 'Tis naught. The dampness affects it."

Jonas folded his arms across his chest. "You have not yet healed from the sword wound you received when you and Benedict were separated as well. I should have restrained you so that you would have to stay in today."

Warin smiled and patted the older man's shoulder. "It would do no good. Mere rope would have been easily discarded."

Jonas shrugged. "I absconded with the shackles from the last castle we stayed in."

"I'm impressed." Warin shook his head. "Nevertheless, I would not be particularly amused." He walked to a small brown sack holding his personal belongings. All that he had in the world.

"What are you looking for now? We have no coins, if that is your purpose."

It was not, but it gave Warin pause. "None?"

"I paid for the horse in the last village with what we had left. Eleanor took a number of them when she returned to her lover."

Warin heard the censure in the old man's voice. Some months ago, his sister, Eleanor, had been abducted and held for ransom by a lord in the north. Warin and Jonas had believed it to be against her will. They'd paid the ransom, getting the coins plus some extra from Benedict's father, the king. His own abduction of Benedict for the ransom to pay for his sister's release was the reason for their troubles now. Unfortunately, it turned out Eleanor and her

SORCERER'S LOVER II

lover had lied about her abduction to get needed coins to save his failing estate.

Warin waved his hand. "Do not fret. We will manage somehow. We always do."

The old man looked skeptical. "Have you somehow learned to conjure gold?"

"Nay, there is no such spell, Jonas. God's teeth!" He threw the brown sack to the ground, frustrated.

"What?"

"I need herbs to make the shrinking powder and I have none. It would seem coins are not all we have run out of."

"The shrinking powder? Then you would use that magic on Benedict once more?"

He'd abducted Benedict by that very spell before. A usually harmless, though somewhat complicated, spell.

Warin nodded. "I thought if I make myself invisible, I can shrink Benedict and carry him out in my cloak."

Jonas frowned. "It is not without risk, but it might work."

"I am glad you approve."

"What I approve of most is that it will require you to spend at least a day obtaining the herbs for the powder. Why don't you rest here in the cave and I will gather what you need?"

Warin shook his head. "Nay, Jonas. While I do ask of you that you gather the herbs I will need, I will not be sitting idly by. I will go and see Benedict to advise him of the plan."

The old man sighed. "Why can you not wait a day? The prince will be fine for a day, Warin."

"You are worse than a woman worrying constantly. Ease your concern, Jonas. I will take care and spend only a short time there. I will probably be back here resting in the cave before you have

SORCERER'S LOVER II

returned from your errand.”

Jonas looked as though he doubted the truth of his words, but Warin was glad he did not seek to argue the point further. He would go to Benedict no matter what Jonas said anyway. Still, he would not take too many risks.

“And my sword and dagger? Where have you set them?”

Jonas walked with a weary step to a corner of the cave. Warin worried for the old man’s health. He’d been weakening of late. No matter the power of his magic, he could not prevent death from those he loved. He’d learned that well enough. He prayed Jonas would be with him a little longer. The man was his only friend. Other than his Benedict.

He fastened his weapons about him and then handed his brown sack to Jonas. “Put what is needed in here. Get as much as you are able. Don’t take chances. If you are tiring, rest. If soldiers come near, hide.”

“Aye, I will, Warin.” To Warin’s surprise, Jonas pulled him into an embrace.

Warin returned the old man’s hug. “Good journey, Jonas.”

“And you as well. Godspeed.”

CHAPTER 3

Benedict thought he surely must be losing his mind. With the rain he had not been outside at all. Not even for the daily walk about the ground allowed him by his brother. With guards, of course. He hadn't even had that today.

The chill in the room matched the cold despair in his heart. Warin would not come today and indeed Benedict did not want him to take the risk. But it did not keep him from grieving over it.

He knelt next to the hearth and poked at the fire with a long, thin stick. Embers flew about the chamber but none came near to him. The fire roared back to full life and he warmed his hands.

He was truly fed up with being treated as though he were still a small boy. He was a grown man, though Henry and his father did not treat him thusly.

SORCERER'S LOVER II

He straightened and looked out around the room for what he could use to escape his prison, at least temporarily. He snatched up his cloak and fastened it around him. He hid a dagger on his person and then grabbed up a goblet brought to him earlier with his meal.

“Gerard,” Benedict called through the door. “I need assistance.”

Benedict stepped to left of the door and holding his breath, waited for the door to open.

“Yes, my lord? What ails you?” Gerard asked as he flung the heavy door open. “My lord Benedict?”

Gerard stepped into the room and Benedict came out from behind the door and hit him over the head with the goblet. The guard fell to the floor with a loud thud.

“Oh, Lord, please don’t let me have killed him,” Benedict prayed. He knelt beside Gerard to determine if he still breathed. Benedict studied him until he saw the movement of his chest. He signed himself and then scrambled up and out of the room.

When Benedict reached the Great Hall several men turned to stare at him. The looks on their faces made him wonder if he’d grown horns on the side of his head. He pretended not to notice their gazes and went to the blazing hearth. He glanced around to see if Henry were anywhere near. So far, his escape had been successful.

He paused at the hearth to warm his hands. The dampness outside would not prevent him from chancing a breath of fresh air. From the looks he continued to receive, Benedict realized he dare not dally by the fire longer and he made for the heavy doors leading to freedom.

A light mist brushed his face and he pulled the hood of his cloak tighter around his head. He was glad the rain had lessened to

SORCERER'S LOVER II

this slight drizzle. His gaze going left and right as he made his way down the steps into the courtyard, Benedict hoped Henry would be well occupied with duties. Eventually Benedict was bound to be found out and would have to suffer the consequences. Hopefully they would not be too severe.

He hurried to the side exit of the courtyard, the one that would take him into the garden and then beyond into the forest. He held his breath, certain to hear his name called any time. It did not happen and he made it through the wooden doors of the archway and into the garden.

Benedict leaned against the stone wall of the garden for a moment, catching his breath, calming his pounding breath. Though he expected no real trouble, he wished he had more weapons than a mere dagger. Unfortunately, as his brother's unwilling prisoner, all other weapons had been denied him. If he remained Henry's prisoner much longer, he feared his sword skills would suffer and his muscles would turn soft with lack of use.

Benedict picked his way through the garden, careful not to step on delicate plants. He kept an ear open for the sounds of footsteps following, but he detected none. Exhaling slowly, he slipped through the little known pathway from the garden into the forest.

Raindrops dribbled down from the leaves above, reminding Benedict of the harder rain from earlier in the day. It also reminded him the weather could become fierce again at God's whim.

The trees were thick in this particular clearing. If one were not familiar with it 'twould be fair easy to become hopelessly lost. Fortunately, as a youth, Benedict had spent a great deal of time getting to know this castle and lands.

He closed his eyes and breathed the sweet relief of being free and outside without guards on his heels for at least this short time.

SORCERER'S LOVER II

He was going fairly mad inside his tower room. It had been rash and foolish to escape the castle, Benedict knew. Gerard would catch hell for it and so would he, in point of fact. 'Twas selfish of him to do it.

Benedict sighed. He should return before he caused too much panic. His dear father lay ill and did not need the burden of worry over him. He was not naïve to believe the men who spied him in the Great Hall would hesitate to report to Henry.

As he turned to go, he heard the snap of a twig nearby. His heart pounded painfully in his chest and he reached for the ornate dagger about his person when he was pushed against a tree trunk. His hood fell upon his shoulders and he stared into the dark eyes of his sorcerer.

“Warin!”

“Hush, my prince,” Warin whispered, his fingertips lightly tracing over Benedict’s lips. “You do not wish to call attention to us.”

Benedict shook his head, but the movement was stopped by Warin’s hands on either side of his face. His sorcerer lowered his mouth to his in a blistering kiss. He grasped Warin’s tunic and pulled him closer, their tongues relearning the taste they’d only had yesterday.

“What are you doing out here alone, Benedict?” Warin asked when they came up for air. “Where are your guards?”

“I left them behind. I hit my keeper with a goblet.” Benedict frowned. “I know I should not have.”

“Nay, you should not,” Warin admonished. “Do you know how many of your father’s enemies would love to plot your demise? You must have a care for your well-being.” Warin softened his words by embracing Benedict tightly.

SORCERER'S LOVER II

“What of you? You are visible today? Should you be taking such chances?”

“I should not. I am too exhausted today. My spells are not what they should be.”

Benedict cupped Warin’s jaw, grazing his hand across the rough stubble there. “You have not yet recovered fully from the wound you received when we tried to escape.”

“It is mostly healed,” Warin insisted of the small knife wound to his stomach he’d received.

Benedict glanced behind him and then pushed Warin farther into the thicket of trees. He pressed Warin against the trunk of a tree. “I wish to taste you.”

Warin’s breath hitched. “There is little time.”

He knelt in front of his lover, his fingers already lowering the man’s braies. “Shh, do not waste time arguing with me. I will have my way.”

Warin’s eyes closed and he leaned his dark head back. A small moan escaped his lips when Benedict’s fingers pulled out his cock and sac.

A thrilling warmth filled Benedict knowing he could bring such a reaction from Warin. He wanted to give his lover such pleasure every waking thought in Warin’s head would be of Benedict. Such a fanciful notion, he supposed, but one true to his heart.

He took but a quick heartbeat to inhale the subtle musky scent of the man before closing his lips around just the tip of Warin’s cock. His tongue trailed along the drop of moisture leaking there. Benedict loved the taste of Warin. He would worship the man here if Warin would let him. Not that he did not love other physicals acts. He spent a few extra moments lapping at the spongy head.

Still he was conscious of the impending approach of Henry’s

SORCERER'S LOVER II

guards, so he knew he could not linger in the fashion he would want.

Drawing his lover's cock farther in his mouth, he paused, nearly rearing back when he almost gagged. Mayhap he'd been a bit too eager. Benedict relaxed his throat muscles, taking Warin's length deeper.

"God, Benedict," Warin groaned. His hands dug into Benedict's shoulders, holding him close.

Knowing Henry would be searching for him at any moment, Benedict worked quickly, sucking hard and fast on his lover's shaft, squeezing gently on Warin's balls. He kept his ears alerted to any unusual sounds in the forest and beyond.

He felt Warin tensing even before his short, heavy breaths alerted him to his coming release. Benedict welcomed it, wanting the taste of his lover. Salty, tangy fluid filled his mouth as Warin exploded with one last desperate cry.

He took as much as he could of the fluid before releasing Warin's cock with a little slurping noise. Benedict wiped his mouth a bit, unable to keep a satisfied grin from his face.

Warin opened his eyes and peered down at him. "Pleased with yourself, are you?"

"Aye, it did not take you long." Benedict leaned a hand on the tree and stood as Warin adjusted his clothing.

Warin pulled him into a one-arm hug. "I am well fond of that mouth, your highness."

Benedict laughed and offered his lips to Warin, who drank from them rather greedily. Warin sighed and broke the kiss.

"I intended to come to you today unseen to tell you of a plan I have devised. Once I got near the castle I would try the invisible spell." He stopped speaking, listened and then drew Benedict

SORCERER'S LOVER II

farther into the trees. "We must hurry, for even now they will look for you."

"Can I not just go with you now?"

"No, it is too dangerous. We will another time. Jonas gathers herbs for me to make the potion I used before when I abducted you."

Benedict gasped and shrank back from his lover, his stomach twisting in knots. "Nay, Warin, not that. I do not wish to be shrunk."

"I know, my beloved, but it does not hurt, does it?"

"No," Benedict said reluctantly.

"It will be for a short time only, I promise. When it is time, I will come unseen and then take you with me."

"Very well, if it is the only way for us to be together."

Warin smiled and kissed him. "You must be brave and strong, Benedict. All will be well, you will see. Now, you must return to your brother."

Benedict knew Warin was right, but he was reluctant to be parted from the man he loved after so little time together. Still, he would not wish to endanger Warin. He pressed his lips hard to his lover's. "I love you, Warin."

"I love you, too, your highness. Now go. And wait for the day I come for you."

* * *

Benedict walked away from Warin and back to the garden path with a heavy heart. The parting only got more difficult. The more time spent with Warin, the more Benedict wanted.

For all his youth, and perhaps a touch of naiveté he admitted to

SORCERER'S LOVER II

himself, Benedict was not foolish enough to believe they would simply be allowed to spend the rest of their days together in peace. Love between men, though it existed, was a terrible sin to the church and illegal in the eyes of the king and kingdom. If caught, Warin would be most certainly executed. And perhaps even Benedict might face such a future.

But even if he had to spend his remaining days fleeing those who would end his love with Warin, he would do so.

Benedict stopped and listened just before the garden gate that would take him back into the castle courtyard. The rain still fell lightly, but it was a minor nuisance. Raising the hood of his cloak, he listened. He could hear talking, but nothing too urgent sounding. Perhaps Henry had not yet been alerted of his brief outing. Too much to hope for?

He reached for the wooden doors, opened them and stepped back into the courtyard. With lightning speed, Benedict was knocked to the ground so hard his breath caught in his throat and seized.

The unmistakable sound of a sword being pulled from its scabbard reached his ears. Benedict shrank back, trying to scramble away before the sword swung his way. Though a dagger would offer poor protection against a sword, he tried to locate it within the folds of his cloak.

I'm going to die.

Benedict crossed his arms in front of him so at least he would not have to see his death.

“Cease!” a voice boomed in the courtyard. “Get away from him.”

He recognized Henry's voice and lowered his arms. Henry's face loomed above him and then he reached down to help Benedict

SORCERER'S LOVER II

from the ground.

A soldier stood nearby, his sword now lowered, his expression remorseful.

Henry glared in the man's direction. "I should have your head."

"Forgive me, your highness. I did not recognize him." The soldier bowed his head.

"You kill first and ask questions later?" Henry shook his head. "Get out of my sight before I do have you visit the executioner."

Benedict's heart returned to normal and he could breathe again. He could not move, however, for his brother gripped his arm tight.

Henry turned to look at him, his face grim. "You are unharmed?"

"Yes, sire."

"I am most displeased with you, Benedict. You wander off in a storm—"

"'Tis a light mist."

"Did you just interrupt?" Henry growled. "You are young and foolish. Do you not know there are many who would gladly see to your death to hurt the king or me?"

Benedict waited a moment to be sure his brother had finished. "I did not go far."

"You are to go nowhere without escort. I made that clear."

He swallowed. "Yes."

"You are to return to your room in the castle. I suggest you spend what remains of the day asking the Lord for forgiveness for disrespecting your father's love for you."

"Henry, I—"

"Do not speak further. You will have a new guard, too. One that will not be so easily tricked."

"Is Gerard all right?"

SORCERER'S LOVER II

Henry's dark eyes narrowed. "Do not concern yourself with him."

Benedict's stomach turned queasy. "You did not... 'Twas not his fault."

"Return to your room, Benedict, and await your new guard."

* * *

The storm had worsened again Benedict noted glumly as he stared out into the late afternoon gloom. The clouds were thick and black and with the pouring rain came thrashing wind.

It matched his mood.

So far, he had not been introduced to his new guard, but he supposed it would happen eventually. Next Henry would have him shackled to the wall. It was indeed burdensome at times to be related to the king and his spawn.

Most illegitimate children did not have this constant influence in their lives, but Benedict had been fortunate, or it had seemed at the time, to be raised along with the king's proper children. His mother had been a favorite mistress of the king's and when she died shortly after Benedict's birth he had been taken in.

But alas, Henry had decided to play father to him instead of brother. And Henry seemed to forget Benedict was a grown man.

The door to his cell, for he might as well be kept below in the dungeon, burst open and Benedict prepared himself for what was to come.

Standing in the doorway was his much beloved half-brother, James, grinning broadly.

"James!" Benedict hurried to him.

James embraced him, laughing. "'Tis good to see you in one

SORCERER'S LOVER II

piece, little brother.” He closed the door and came into the room.

James, like Henry, was a legitimate son of their father. He'd had the misfortune of being born two years after the heir, Henry. Henry's hair was light brown while James's hair was more the shade of honey blond Benedict had. But 'twas easy enough, despite their minor differences, to see their resemblance to each other and their sire.

“I didn't even know you were here,” Benedict exclaimed, still holding onto his brother's hands. “When did you arrive?”

“A short time ago. I have had a warm bath and changed clothes. I became quite soaked on the journey.” James dragged him to sit in one of the two chairs in the room and then sat down across from him. “I have heard you have been a thorn in Henry's side.”

Benedict blanched. “And who did you hear that from?”

James laughed. “Henry, of course. You will not sit still and behave yourself as Henry says you should since he rescued you from your abductor.” He fingered his chin and smiled. “But methinks you did not need rescue.”

Benedict's face heated. “You know much, James.”

He shrugged. “I keep myself advised of as much information as possible, brother. It does not speak well to be ignorant of what happens around you.”

Benedict nodded. “You may as well know that I am being held against my will because Henry knows I would return to Warin.”

“The sorcerer. Yes, I have been told. The corrupter as Henry calls him.”

“You are not shocked that I...” He trailed off, unable to ask his brother what his thoughts were on his loving a man.

“Hmm. 'Tis not for me to render judgment. I will say you will not have an easy time of convincing Henry.”

SORCERER'S LOVER II

“I know.” Benedict sighed. “I am even now waiting for my new guard.”

James smiled and pointed to himself. “You have met your new guard.”

His jaw dropped. “You?”

His brother nodded. “Aye, I have been given the task of guarding and protecting you from yourself.” He glanced around the room as though he expected to see someone listening to them. His voice dropped to a whisper. “Never fear, I will help you, Benedict.”

CHAPTER 4

“Jonas?” Warin ducked under the cave overhang into the body of the cavern. He lit the torches left in the path earlier by Jonas as he walked deeper into the dank place.

“Here, Warin,” Jonas called from within, some distance from his current location.

Warin followed the path until he reached where Jonas had set up their camp. The old man sat on the ground sorting through a brown sack. The torches here were lit.

Jonas glanced up. “You are back sooner than I expected.”

“You as well.” Warin threw down a rabbit he had killed for their dinner. “Did you obtain what was needed?”

“Aye. And you? What of your prince?”

Warin grimaced and sat near Jonas on the sleeping roll. “He

SORCERER'S LOVER II

grew bored and escaped the castle without his guards. Fortunately, it was me who came upon him.”

“He is young and impetuous.”

“That is a kind way to say foolish, and on that we agree.” Warin sighed. “I need him to wait patiently for me to take him away from there. Acting so rashly will only cause Henry to put more restrictions upon him. As if any more were needed.”

Jonas rose and went to the rabbit. He began to skin and clean it. “When will you be ready to make your move?”

“I will mix the shrinking potion this afternoon and then I will rest.” Warin smiled at the relief on Jonas’s face. “Tomorrow as well. Then, I will take him from the castle.”

* * *

“Here is your meal, Benedict,” James announced, entering the small room. He held a trencher of several slices of meat.

Benedict made a face. “Very well. Set it down.”

James set it down on the nearby table and then smiled. “I have brought you something else.” He disappeared through the door and then returned holding a sword. Not just any sword, but his own.

Benedict took it from his brother, his hands gliding over the hilt. “How did you get it away from Henry?”

James smile widened. “I have my ways. You must hide it until you are ready for it.”

He nodded. He was grateful for his brother’s help, but couldn’t help wondering at it. He adored James, but generally James did what benefited James and not much else.

James handed him the trencher. “Have you and your sorcerer planned your escape?”

SORCERER'S LOVER II

“No,” Benedict lied. Though James promised to help, Benedict knew enough about his family to be cautious. He did not think Warin would appreciate him telling anyone of their plans. “I am sure Warin will think of something.”

Later that afternoon, James came into Benedict’s room again looking very grim. “Come, Benedict. The king worsens and asks for you to attend him.”

Benedict followed James immediately. His heart pounded hard in his chest.

The castle belonged to Henry, but when the king’s health became a concern Henry had insisted on him staying at his castle so he could be cared for under Henry’s constant supervision. Yet the king’s health help did not improve.

Two heavily armored guards stood outside his father’s room. Benedict stopped, swallowing heavily. He actually hadn’t seen his father since he’d become so ill.

James rested his hand on Benedict’s shoulder. “Go on, Benedict.”

Benedict opened his mouth to ask James to accompany him, but closed it again, deciding he would not be so cowardly. He stepped through the doors the guard had opened for him.

He gasped when the scent of sickness assailed his nostrils. There were several people standing around the bed, blocking his view of his father. Among them a few women, an advisor Benedict recognized, and his brother, Henry.

“Come here, Benedict,” Henry called to him.

He approached the sickbed and the ladies dispersed with a glance in his direction. Now only Henry and the advisor were left.

“Benedict is here, sire,” the advisor said. “I will leave you for now.”

SORCERER'S LOVER II

Benedict kept his gaze on the man as he left, unable to force himself to look upon his dying father. God, he was a coward. His fists clenched and he looked down at the frail old man in the bed. He knelt on the floor and grasped the bony hand of the man who'd sired him.

Once the king had been strong and muscular, a warrior king. Vital and feared in his youth and even more so once he'd become king. Now he was mere skin and bones, shrunken and pale, lying helpless in the bed.

Henry sat on the edge of the bed and touched Benedict's arm. "Here, we have brought him, Father."

He tried to smile, almost asked how his father felt and then thought better of such foolishness. He swallowed a lump. His father's gaze went to his face, roaming over the features.

"Henry, can I have a moment?" James said from the doorway.

Henry stood and, somewhat to his surprise, placed a kiss on top of Benedict's head. His oldest brother went to talk to James.

"I...I don't know what to say," Benedict whispered.

His father's blue eyes crinkled at the corner as he smiled. "You don't have to say anything. I just wanted to see you."

Benedict squeezed his father's hand. "I feel like such a fool."

"You are no fool."

He sighed. "Weak then. I should offer words of comfort."

"Do not despair, Benedict. I have lived a full and rich life."

"I know. I would want even more years with you if it were possible. I am selfish that way."

The king nodded. "Me, too. But God has other designs. You are stronger than you realize, Benedict. And Henry will need your strength and loyalty when he becomes king."

The way his father spoke made him think there was something

SORCERER'S LOVER II

more to his words than the usual mind-your-elders command. "Are there rumblings, sire?"

"There are some that would take the opportunity to look for any weaknesses in the regime. Even in my early days, I was forced to deal with those who craved the kingdom for themselves. Will you stand by your brother?"

"Without question," Benedict assured him.

His father smiled. "You are a good boy. Sometimes I fear for you because of your gentleness and kindness. You trust too easily. Have a care, Benedict."

"I will, sire."

The king shook a little. "I am very tired now. Send Henry back to me."

Benedict's eyes burned with tears. He knew very well this would be the last time he spoke to his father. He was exceedingly grateful for the way his father had taken him into his household even though he was a mere bastard. Most men would not, let alone someone as powerful as his father.

He brought his father's hand to his lips and kissed it, then released his grip. He stood and, leaning over his father, placed another kiss on his forehead.

When he turned to leave he saw Henry had returned without Benedict having fetched him. Henry gave him a small, sad smile.

"James is waiting for you," Henry said, and then turned back to their father.

Benedict walked back into the hallway without a backward glance. James stood at the far end, his muscular arms crossed over his chest.

"How are you?"

"Horrible, but I will be all right. Have you seen him?"

SORCERER'S LOVER II

James shrugged. "I will go later."

"James."

His brother looked away. "It is difficult, Benedict."

Benedict knew his brother had fought with the king more than a year ago. Their rift had not been healed in that time.

"You won't get another chance, James. He is fading. He may not even last another day. Do you wish him to die without your ever reconciling?"

James shook his head. "You do not know what you speak of, brother. There will be no reconciliation. 'Tis not minor and we both said terrible things."

"Even if you do believe that, you should see him."

"I will go later as I have said." James straightened from the wall. "Are you ready to return to your room?"

* * *

A couple of days later, Benedict began to wonder if Warin would ever come for him. It seemed an eternity since he'd seen his lover, though he knew it had only been a few days.

The morning had passed without incident. A short time ago, James had come by to tell him their father yet lingered on though he was no longer conscious. Henry stayed at his side. Basically it was King Henry now.

Benedict grew more anxious as the time passed. Once his brother officially became king, he could see Henry making it even more difficult for him to be with Warin. He wanted to be far away as soon as possible.

Benedict kicked the nearby table. "God's teeth, I will go mad."

James had spoken of helping him before, but his brother hadn't

SORCERER'S LOVER II

mentioned it since.

The door creaked and then opened.

“You have a visitor,” James said, and then shut the door again.

Benedict saw no one. He blinked, confused.

“James—”

He jumped when someone laughed directly next to him.

Warin formed in front of his eyes. “You’re a silly goose, Benedict. Who did you think it was?”

“Warin!”

“Who else?” Warin pulled Benedict against him and kissed him hard on the lips. “Ah, as I hoped.”

“What?”

“You still taste the same.”

Benedict smiled. “It has only been a few days.”

“A few days too long, your highness. I mean to make it so we are never apart again.”

A sort of giddy happiness bubbled forth within his chest and ’twas all Benedict could do not to give voice to it and sound like a gushing maiden. Instead he just pasted his lips to Warin’s again.

The sorcerer’s hands came up to frame Benedict’s face. They were callused hands, used to hard labor, so unlike his own. Warin’s dark, almost black eyes gazed intently at him. Benedict shook with a nearly uncontrolled desire and such intense love he could hardly contain it. His cock rose against his braies.

“I wish that we had the time to make love now, my prince, but alas we must be content with this until we are safely away from your brother’s castle.”

“I know. Even now my father may have passed.”

Warin’s lips covered his and their tongues tangled for an instant before Warin pulled away. He reached into his cloak for a

SORCERER'S LOVER II

small pouch.

Benedict's stomach turned queasy. He dreaded this. When before Warin had abducted him he'd used the shrinking spell. Benedict was definitely not fond of it.

"Are you sure you cannot just make both of us unseen?"

Warin gave him a look and then removed an ornate box. It was the same he'd used to house tiny Benedict before.

He opened his mouth to offer one more half-hearted protest when several shouts from below stopped him. "Wait, Warin."

Warin frowned and returned the box and pouch to his cloak.

They both rushed to the window and looked out. Heavily armed knights riding in on horses were clashing with his brother's guards. Benedict's heart leapt into his throat.

"We're under attack."

CHAPTER 5

Warin's hand immediately went to the hilt of his sword. His instinct was to push Benedict behind him, protecting him from would-be attackers, but he did not think the young prince would allow him to take such a liberty.

Instead he said, "We can take this opportunity to escape. Henry and his men will be distracted by the battle."

Benedict shook his head. "Nay, I cannot abandon Henry while he is under attack. We must help."

"I both knew and feared you would say that," Warin said. "I knew you would be too honorable to flee."

Benedict bent down near the bed and came back up with a sword. "Of course I cannot just leave my brothers to it."

Warin frowned. "How did you get your sword?"

SORCERER'S LOVER II

“James.” Benedict was already moving to the door. He wrenched it open and Warin noted James no longer stood outside Benedict’s room. Likely he’d gone to join the battle. Benedict paused, biting his lip and looking back at Warin. “This is not your fight, Warin. You can escape.”

“You insult me if you think I would let you fend for yourself.” Warin placed a firm hand on the too eager prince. “You are stuck with me, your highness.”

Benedict smiled. “I am very glad.” His smile faltered. “My father told me something might occur against Henry and that I should support him.”

Warin grasped his hand for a moment, squeezing his fingers. “Come, then, let us join this battle.”

Rushing down the various stairs to the battle below, they barely paused in their descent.

They reached the Great Hall before they ran into any fighting soldiers. Warin was rather surprised to see many warriors had already breached the castle. Clearly, Henry had not been prepared for such an uprising. at least not before the king died. Whomever attacked apparently decided to strike fast.

Warin preferred to use magic over brawn, but he had been trained to fight. He swung his sword to meet the warrior who came at him and noticed Benedict doing the same.

He made fairly quick work of the man, cutting him down and moving on to the next. He kept a careful eye on Benedict, ready to step in if the need arose, but he was pleased to see the young prince handled himself well.

Warin did not see either of Benedict’s brothers in the Hall, but it was difficult to spend too much time trying to locate their positions. The fighting had become fierce.

SORCERER'S LOVER II

He cut down another fighter and then looked for Benedict. The battle had separated him by some distance now from Warin's location. His gut twisted. His lover was doing fine in battle, but still he did not like the distance.

Warin then noticed Henry toward the doors leading out of the castle. Several of the opposing warriors seemed intent on cornering him. No doubt part of their plan to do away with the heir. He could see Benedict making his way in Henry's direction. His heart in his throat, Warin cut his way to his lover.

One of the warriors trying to get to Henry broke through and swung in Henry's direction.

"No!" Benedict shouted. The young prince ran to help his brother, dodging attackers as he went.

Warin was finished messing around. With Benedict's life on the line, he had no choice. With a wave of his hand, he knocked several warriors out of his way and against a nearby wall. A few men who weren't thrown stepped back, crossing themselves and shrinking back from Warin in terror.

Henry blocked the attacker's blow, but the impact brought him to his knees. Benedict rushed forward and swung his sword at the warrior attacking his brother. Their swords clashed, metal against metal.

Warin was fairly sure Benedict was getting the better of the man, but he couldn't take any chances. He unsheathed his dagger and threw it at the man's throat with a little touch of magic tossed in to ensure it made it through any protective armor. The warrior's eyes widened, he made a sort of gurgling sound and fell to the ground.

Both his lover and Henry stared at him. Benedict with admiration and just a touch of wariness, while Henry with barely

SORCERER'S LOVER II

disguised terror mixed with relief.

More of Henry's men rushed inside, making quick work of the warriors who still remained.

Benedict reached to help Henry up. "Are you injured?"

Henry shook his head. "No. My thanks to you." He glanced at Warin. "And you."

He shrugged. "I would do anything for Benedict."

A warrior hurried over. "Sire, shall we arrest the sorcerer?" He aimed his sword in Warin's direction.

Benedict gasped and moved forward, but Henry put his hand on his brother's shoulder. "No. Make sure all the enemy has dispersed. And see to the wounded."

"Yes, sire." The warrior bowed his head and walked away with a wary glance at Warin.

Henry blew out a breath and looked around at the carnage. "I am indebted to you for your assistance. I knew there would be an attack, but I hoped it would be after our father's death. You are free to go, sorcerer."

"I'm not going anywhere without Benedict." Warin stepped close to his lover, who inched closer to him.

"Yes, I expected so." He studied them for a moment in silence. "Go with him, Benedict. 'Tis all right."

Benedict didn't look like he believed him. Warin could hardly blame him. He didn't quite trust Henry himself.

"Really?" Benedict asked.

Henry smiled. "Yes. Go, before I change my mind."

Warin grabbed Benedict's hand and tugged to prevent him from wasting any more time questioning Henry. They had almost reached the doors.

"Benedict!"

SORCERER'S LOVER II

Warin froze, his hand on the door.

Benedict's other interfering brother, James, came toward them, but he was smiling.

James pulled Benedict in his arms and hugged him tight. "You can't leave without giving me a brotherly hug, hmm?"

Warin almost asked James where he'd been in the battle. His absence seemed a bit suspicious to Warin, but he did not voice it.

"I'm so glad you are well. You did not get injured in the battle?" Benedict asked.

"No. And I can see you are not either." James glanced at Warin. "No doubt owing to your sorcerer." He released him, but stared intently. "Godspeed, Benedict. We will see each other soon, I know."

* * *

Warin ducked into the already lit cave, pulling Benedict with him. "Jonas? You are here?"

"Yes, Warin." Jonas came to greet them. He smiled at Benedict. "Welcome, your highness. Then, all went well?"

"Not quite as planned, Jonas, but we will tell you all about it later." Warin wrapped his arm around Benedict's waist. "Much later."

Jonas nodded. "As you wish. Everything is ready."

"Thank you."

"Ready?" Benedict asked.

Warin pulled him along, waving good-bye to Jonas. "You will see, my prince."

It had been too many days since he'd been with Benedict. Later, when they had more time, he might spend days, perhaps

SORCERER'S LOVER II

weeks in a big, soft bed making love over and over. But now, he would have to be content with renewing their love on the cave floor.

They reached the camp in the cave and Warin saw Jonas had indeed readied things. There was a sleeping pallet laid out with furs and a small jar of oil set next to it. The cave was aglow with torchlight.

Benedict's blue eyes were wide with understanding and his tongue darted out to trace his full bottom lip. Warin turned him until they were face to face.

"I'm sorry I don't have more comfortable accommodations tonight, Benedict. Will you lay with me?"

Benedict nodded, threw his arms around Warin's neck, and kissed him hard. "I love you," he said, pausing for a breath.

Warin reached for Benedict's clothes and had to slow down so as not to tear them. After all, they had left without any of the prince's belongings. Probably not wise, but he hadn't wanted Henry to change his mind. He trusted no member of the royal family. Benedict the exception, of course. They'd find some way to get Benedict the things he would need.

Benedict made a frustrated noise and pushed Warin's hands away. "Let me. See to your own clothes."

Warin raised an eyebrow, but did as Benedict said. Perhaps he was more like the other members of royal family after all, he thought with a grin.

When they were both naked, Warin paused to stare at Benedict's beautiful pale body. His hard cock pointed slightly up. Warin's mouth watered and he moaned. Benedict blushed.

Warin laughed. "On the pallet, your highness."

Benedict hurried to lay down, on his stomach Warin noted, his

SORCERER'S LOVER II

ass provocatively displayed.

“Ah, God, Benedict, you’re so beautiful.”

Warin knelt next to Benedict and placed a kiss at the base of his spine. He trailed his lips up the line of Benedict’s back and then stopped at the prince’s neck. Benedict shook underneath him.

“Warin.” He gasped.

Warin’s teeth sunk into the nape of Benedict’s neck. His hands caressed up and down Benedict’s sides, taking his time, his fingertips grazing over his abdomen, the defined muscles there. Little bumps appeared on his lover’s skin wherever he touched.

He gritted his teeth, his erection growing nearly painful. He wanted to take some time with Benedict, but it was proving to be more difficult than he thought. He closed his eyes and concentrated. Moving his lips to Benedict’s ear, he whispered, “I love you, too. I want you so much.”

Benedict’s ass rose, teasing him. He groaned, leaning his head against Benedict’s. After a moment, he scooted down Benedict, tracing his lips over the hot bare skin, nibbling as he went. The prince quivered beneath him.

Warin reached Benedict’s crease and ran his tongue along it and biting each one of his lover’s cheeks.

Warin reached for the jar of oil, letting out a shaky breath. He poured some into his hands and rubbed it all over his straining cock.

“Turn over,” he said softly. “I want to see you when I take you.”

Benedict flipped over, his blue eyes intent with a heady mixture of love and lust. Warin smiled and inched up his body to place kisses on his lips and along his jaw, slightly stubbled with rough blond hairs.

SORCERER'S LOVER II

“Love you,” he said against Benedict’s lips before going down to prepare Benedict. He lifted Benedict’s legs and drove his tongue into Benedict’s entrance. He lapped around it and in it with several quick strokes.

Benedict tried to grab for him. “Oh. Oh, God. Warin, I...it’s too much. I’m—”

Benedict’s cock exploded with white globs of liquid, some of it hitting Warin’s nose.

The prince laughed. “S-sorry. I wanted you so much.”

Warin grinned up at him. “I’m not sorry.” He scooped up the liquid and tasted it. “Mmm.”

Now that Benedict had found his release, there was nothing stopping Warin from pounding into that tight ass. He poured more oil out and inserted fingers to stretch Benedict’s entrance, pressing in.

Benedict bit his lip, shaking and squirming. “My body’s a little sensitive.”

“I know.” Warin pushed his fingers in farther, past the ring of muscle. “I don’t want to hurt you. Are you ready?”

His lover nodded.

Warin poised his cock at Benedict’s ass and thrust in. He exhaled slowly. “Relax, love. Let me in.”

Benedict closed his eyes and loosened his muscles. Warin pushed all the way in, balls-deep. “Ah.”

“Shh.” Warin thrust in and pulled out, over and over, thrusting into Benedict again and again. He wanted to take his time, spend long moments making love to Benedict, but his own release was coming fast, Benedict was so damn tight. So sweet and beautiful. And his. “Benedict!”

SORCERER'S LOVER II

* * *

He'd collapsed near unconscious after making love to Benedict, barely noticing when his lover had risen from the pallet. He was exhausted, but it was a blessed exhaustion. One that felt incredibly close to happiness. Something that had eluded him before.

"Benedict?" he murmured, pushing sweaty locks of his hair out of his eyes.

"Here."

Warin struggled to sit up. Benedict leaned against a cave wall, re-dressed and with his arms crossed.

"What is it?"

"I'm worried about Henry. That was no mere uprising."

"No?" Warin asked carefully.

"I fear someone very close betrayed him."

Warin had guessed the same, but was a bit surprised Benedict would voice it out loud. He wondered if his prince had come to same conclusion as he had. "Who?"

Benedict sighed. "James."

Warin blew out a breath. "I have thought so, too." He remembered wondering where James had gotten to during the battle. Warin rose and went to pull Benedict in his arms. "What will you do?"

"I don't know," Benedict admitted. "They are my brothers and I love them both. But I think the battle has only just begun between them."

Warin nodded. "I will be beside you whatever you decide and whatever comes."

"Bound together by the bonding goblet?" Benedict whispered,

SORCERER'S LOVER II

his eyes searching Warin's.

“No. Bound together by love, your highness.”

SHAWN LANE

Shawn Lane believes love and passion know no boundaries. Shawn writes both erotic love stories involving men in historical or contemporary settings and interracial romances between men and women. Shawn is always looking for new stories and new characters to create while holding down life in California.

* * *

**Don't miss *Sorcerer's Lover*
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When Warin, a sorcerer, needs a large amount of coins to rescue his sister from her abductor, he chooses to abduct someone himself. And he selects the man he has been lusting after ever since sharing a secret, sensual moment at court months earlier—Benedict, the beautiful and illegitimate son of the king.

At first, Benedict is reluctant to give into forbidden desires, but he cannot resist the enigmatic sorcerer's pull. Yet when he surrenders to his lust, he's also not sure whether it's of his own free will or because of a spell Warin cast on him.

As the men grow closer, however, they realize that when the ransom is paid, Benedict must be released and Warin must flee from punishment. Will they be able to end their passionate affair and separate, or will they fight to stay together, even if it means facing the king's wrath?

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