

Chapter 1: Cursing Babies is Evil

Malenya cloaked herself in darkness, the mist around her hiding her entirely in the steam from the erupting geyser near the castle, as she watched as people entered.

A large parade of people came down the street, ushering in the carriage of the high king and queen, the woodland nymphs who ruled the kingdom of Coppiceshire and the entire realm of Yansu.

Malenya clasped her hands together at the sight of the high king and queen. “They will pay!” she hissed to the man standing beside her.

“Patience,” he suggested. “It’s not time yet.” He was no normal looking man, as he had horns on his head, leathery wings, claws on his hands, and a tail, as he was from a race called dracmen.

Malenya was of the same race, so she also had horns, wings, claws, and a tail. “They will remember this day, Fafner,” she assured him. “We will get the power we deserve.”

They watched as the high king and queen went through the streets lined with people eager to get a glimpse of the coronation for the new king of Flareton.

“It should be us!” Malenya insisted. “It should be ours!”

“It will be,” Fafner assured her. “This will work.”

They continued watching as the leaders of each of the other kingdoms came to the castle. King Eaton and Queen Nixie from the island of Brookdale came with their daughter Princess Rosie. Each of them had fins on their arms, webbed hands and feet, and blue hair, as they were a race called hyquid.

The other two kingdoms had kings who were fierce looking. King Mercury of Veinville was very muscular and carried a large sword. King Clayton of Terrance was huge, bulky, and the lower parts of his arms and legs looked like stone. He packed a punch. Both kings brought their queens and children to the coronation.

All the important people gathered in the great hall.

When they all arrived, High King Ashton stepped up with his queen, Calista, beside him. She had a newborn baby girl in her arms, and her sons, Roscoe and Heath stood beside them. King Ashton took a moment to brag about his newborn girl, Talia, before he started the ceremony. After Talia was introduced, Calista went and laid the adorable baby in a bassinet near the platform at the front of the hall.

King Ashton then began the ceremony. "Welcome, everyone," he announced. "Today, we are gathered to crown a new king of Flareton. King Blaken was a good king and lived a long life. His passing was sad, but he is in a better place. Now, I am proud to present as the new king of Flareton, King Cyrus."

He motioned over to a Dracmen with a very dignified look. Cyrus's wife, Nuri, and their son, Pierce, stood with him.

The crowd cheered for Cyrus. When they calmed down, King Ashton continued, "Choosing a new king for a kingdom

is not easy, as a king must be strong, but kind. He must care about his people and lead, but also serve. King Blaken has no heirs to take his place, nor do I think the responsibility should be passed down by blood, but by worthiness. I have considered the possible people who would rule well, and truly feel that Cyrus is the best choice as the new king of Flareton. He will lead well and work well with the other kings. The five magics – wood, fire, earth, water, and metal – all need another and are countered by another. I am confident that Cyrus will work well with the other leaders, and that all his subjects will love him. Thus, I will now give Cyrus the oath.”

Cyrus knelt before King Ashton, and Ashton began, “Cryus, you are a noble and valiant man. Do you now swear to ruling the people with order and compassion? Do you understand the responsibility you are taking, and agree to serve in it, putting the needs of your people and our realm first?”

“I so swear,” Cyrus answered.

King Aston continued, “Then I now declare you king of Flareton, equal to the other four kings and subject to me. Do you accept this position?”

Cyrus opened his mouth to answer, but a black mist swirled into the room, forming a pillar in the middle of the room.

The mist vanished to reveal Malenya standing there. “I accept the position!” she declared. “It should rightfully be mine. I am a descendant of King Blaken’s brother, so the royal blood is in me. I should rule. I am the rightful ruler and the most powerful fairy ever. No one can match my power. Fire is the most powerful of all, and I have more than just fire magic.”

“Which is one of the reasons you will not rule!” King Ashton insisted. “Cyrus is king. You have been banished. You know dark magic is not allowed in our realm. Be gone and don’t come back!”

Malenya laughed a mocking laugh. As she did, she shot the mist at Cyrus. It engulfed him, and Cyrus began gasping for breath.

Malenya was attacked with every magic and weapon people could safely use, but the black mist swirled around her, and everything passed through her as if she was not even real.

When they gave up, Malenya again became solid and warned. “Do not even try to fight me. Your magic is all weak compared to mine. You know I’m fire proof and that a dracmen’s wings can withstand almost any attack. Yet, those are nothing compared to the mist. You have yet to see its full power.” Again, she shot the mist around Cyrus, and he gasped for breath. Everyone watched, not sure what to do.

When Cyrus went unconscious, King Ashton called out, “Stop! What are your demands?”

“I should rule!” Malenya insisted. “Make me ruler over Flareton and the realm, and I’ll let Cyrus and the rest of you live.”

“Never!” King Ashton refused. “I will not concede the kingdoms to you. Be gone!”

She laughed again and again her mist surrounded Cyrus and he gasped for breath.

Prince Roscoe, a strapping son of King Ashton’s, quickly nocked an arrow and let it fly at Malenya. Malenya

immediately went immaterial and the arrow passed through her. A boldron, an earth mage with stone-like arms, blocked it so it didn't hit anyone else.

A knife seemingly came from no where and landed in Prince Roscoe's gut. As it did, Cyrus gasped a final breath and lay on the floor, likely dead.

Healers immediately ran to Roscoe and Cyrus's aid. Each form of magic had some type of healing, so a water mage tried to get Cyrus to breath, and a fire mage went to stop the bleeding on Roscoe. Princess Rosie of Brookdale ran over to help Roscoe too.

The room became chaotic, and several of King Ashton's guards grabbed Fafner because he had thrown the dagger.

"Stop!" Malenya called to everyone. Everyone instantly froze, as they realized that she had her hand forward and there was a dark mist around the baby.

"No!" Queen Calista yelled, charging at Malenya, but Malenya tightened the mist, and the baby started crying. Queen Calista froze in place, but begged, "Don't hurt my child!"

Malenya laughed a mocking laugh again. "Everyone will listen," she insisted. "You will release Fafner, or the baby dies."

"Agreed," King Ashton replied. "Now, take Fafner and go."

"I will," Malenya mocked, "but I will leave you with something to think about. You will turn the rule of the kingdom over to me, because if you don't, your little girl – Talia, isn't it? – will die. I now curse her that before the sun sets on her sixteenth birthday, she will be poisoned and die." She glared at

King Ashton and added, “Only I can break a dark magic curse. Turn control of the realm over to me, and I will break the curse. If not, say good-bye to your baby. You don’t know when or how long you have, but by sunset on her sixteenth birthday, she will be dead unless you do.”

With that, she grabbed Fafner, released the mist around Talia, and she and Fafner flew out in a dark mist through a high window.

“What do we do?” Queen Calista panicked, picking up Talia and hugging her. “None of the five elements can counter a dark magic curse.”

A small pixie, only about two or three inches tall, named Zaina, flew over. “Pixie magic may have some effect she offered. Would you like me to try?”

“Indeed,” Queen Calista agreed.

Zaina sprinkled pixie dust over Talia and swirled it around. She concentrated for a moment and then announced, “I cannot undo the curse. Malenya’s magic is too strong, but I can weaken it, so that instead of having Talia die from the poison, she will fall into a deep sleep that can only be awakened by love’s first kiss.” Again, she sprinkled pixie dust on her, and announced, “It is done.”

“What do we do?” Queen Calista asked King Ashton in a panic. “Roscoe is wounded and Talia is cursed.”

“Roscoe will heal,” Ashton assured her. “Now, we finish the coronation.” He looked over. He couldn’t finish the coronation. Cyrus was still lying on the floor with healers over him. He was either unconscious or dead.