

The Storm

A Siren Tragedies Short Story

Sarah V. Hines

Not for Distribution

© 2023 Sarah V. Hines

All rights reserved.

This is for your personal use only and is not to be shared, copied, or used as your own or in any capacity without explicit permission in writing from Sarah V. Hines or Balance of Seven, LLC.

For information, contact:

Balance of Seven: www.balanceofseven.com

Publisher: ctempleman@balanceofseven.com

Associate Publisher: leo@balanceofseven.com

Author: www.sarahvhines.com

The Storm

Sarah V. Hines

The child—the young goddess—was sullen, the villager noted. Her dark-green eyes were dim as they stared straight ahead, out at the sea. Her auburn hair fell loose around her face in a curtain of curls that added to the shadows contrasting against her solemn countenance. This boded ill to the man who watched her—would the dead season come early this year? She seemed to come into her darkness and, with her darkness would come the cold and the barren fields.

He peered around the rocks near the water. He hadn't meant to disturb the young goddess. He had merely been preparing to take his small boat out to fish when he had happened upon her. She was often in the caves or nowhere to be found, most likely in her kingdom in the Underworld, as the stories went. Yet here she sat, staring across the gentle lapping waves with her expression darkening further. Her presence filled him with both awe and fear—he had never dreamed he would

be near any of the goddesses, much less the most elusive, mysterious of them all.

“Glorious Persephone,” he said, trying to keep his voice steady in the goddess’s presence. “Your holy presence is a blessing. I hate to intrude. I was just coming out to start my morning in the water and—”

“The clouds will come in soon,” she said in a voice as soft as the breeze that tickled the reeds. “The winds will agitate these still waters. A storm is on the horizon. I advise you to keep your boat docked.”

The man squinted out across the clear skies and the bright sun. There was no warning of trouble ahead.

“I do not doubt what you say,” the man lied, “but, Your Greatness, I must make my catch for the day. If I have no fish to sell, I have no way of feeding my family.”

The young goddess sat in silence, watching a point far out at sea.

The man thought she might have given him no more regard. He went to his boat to push it into the edge of the water. It was then he heard her again.

“If you go out, you will not make it back to sell your fish. I advise you to heed my advice, good man. Your wife and daughters need you alive more than the fish you will catch. If you return tomorrow, you will find more bounty than you would have today.”

At the mention of his family, he stopped and turned on his heel to look at her once more. She appeared to be only his oldest daughter’s age of fourteen, though he knew her age was infinite. In a movement so slight he barely saw it at first, she turned her face until he could finally see her eyes, now glowing a bright green. At once, he felt a sense of doom wash over him, as if it had submerged him in the still waters. He couldn’t explain the

feeling, only that the young goddess was telling the truth where his mortal senses could not.

“Yes, my goddess, I will heed your advice. Thank you for your benevolence and care. I will make my altar to you in my home to give you thanks.”

The man stepped away from the boat, and the sense of foreboding faded with each footfall. The goddess said nothing else but turned her attention back to the sea.

As he walked the path back to the village where he lived with his family, the winds picked up. Only minutes more and he had a difficult time steadying himself on his feet. By the time he reached his door, the skies were black with angry clouds, which burst with a pouring rain as he pushed the door open. Lightning cracked above him, and he knew Persephone had not led him wrong. Had he gone out in this weather, he would have never made it back.



The young girl sat on the beach as the storm washed over her. There was comfort in the cacophony of sounds. The roar of the winds, the snap of thunder, the crash of the surrounding waves all pulled the turmoil and anger that swirled inside her out into the world, giving a voice more defining, more suitable than her own, to the misery and rage she felt at once.

She was enjoying the concert that the world immersed her in when she heard her name—her *real* name—over the chorus.

“Telese! What are you doing out here?”

She turned her eyes from the sea up to the rocks behind her. The thin frame of her older sister Morgesta battled the winds for balance, her long, black hair blowing across her face as she stumbled down the stones to her younger sister. She made it to the edge of the jutting rocks to the stand where Telese sat.

“I wanted to watch the storm,” she said in a voice that suggested this was a reasonable course of action.

Morgesta let out a hard sigh that Telese could hear even over the howl of the winds. “Telese, you’re getting soaked out here. You know Mother hates it when you sit out in a dreadful storm. Come, let’s go back to the caves and talk.”

Telese shook her head. “I like the storm. I want to stay out here.”

Morgesta watched her for a moment more, sighed again, and sat down. “Are you doing this?” she asked, pulling her knees to her chest to keep warm in the chilly rain.

Telese shook her head. “This is just a storm, Morgesta. Natural and unexpected.”

Morgesta fell silent. Out of the corner of her vision, Telese saw Morgesta lean forward to look at Telese’s eyes. Telese kept her sight on the white-capped waves in front of her, kept focusing on the sounds of the storm to drive out the sounds of a voice she despised more than anything else in the world.

“It’s Father, isn’t it?” Morgesta asked.

Telese stayed silent, but her eyes narrowed and her shoulders went rigid.

“Did he say something?”

“He always says something,” Telese said through clenched teeth.

Morgesta was silent again. Telese knew she didn’t have to explain further. Morgesta would be happier not to know what Alexandros had said to her earlier, how he had threatened her life once again.

“Anything I can do?” Morgesta asked.

Telese shook her head again.

Morgesta watched her for a moment more, then moved closer. She put her arm around Telese’s shoulder, and Telese felt the rage inside her quiet ever so slightly. She leaned against

Morgesta, watched the waves crash, and felt the cold waters wash over her crossed legs.

The two remained in silence, and Telese once again lost herself in the surrounding storm.

As usual, however, she took comfort in knowing she did not weather it alone.

Not for Distribution