

Cursed Treasure

Aria held her palm out in front of her, and let a small flame erupt from it. The ice beat down on the flame, but it held strong regardless. Aria pulled a compass out of her pocket, smiling when she saw it was still pointing north.

“We’re back on track,” she said to her companion, an older man named Nolan.

Nolan gave a grunt of an assent. The weather made it nigh impossible to see in front of them, but soon a small structure came into view. It wasn’t obvious what it was from the outside, but Aria knew it was a tomb. It was said to be haunted, and that no one ever left alive, but Aria had heard that hundreds of times. Very rarely was there actually anything to worry about, but she had always been able to think and magic her way out. This should be no different. The snow was piling up and the two were forced to run in order to stop the snow from burying them. Aria reached the tomb’s doors, panting. She tried to pry the doors open, but they were locked shut from the inside. She summoned a ball of fire, throwing it at the door, but it left no mark.

“Nolan?”

Nolan stepped to the door, and curled his hands into fists. They grew to a massive size, and turned into solid rocks. He slammed his fists against the door, three times before the door collapsed. They walked in and were greeted by a towering statue of an emperor, his kingdom had long since fallen. It was ironic, the long standing nation had fallen, but a small tomb still stood. Legends say that he had been in possession of the most powerful magic artifact in history, and she knew that they’d be able to get it. She marched forward to the statue. She rubbed its base, feeling for a seam. Aria motioned to Nolan, who pried it open, revealing a drawer with nothing in it. Aria bent down to examine it closer. It certainly had something in it before, but it was gone. Not that it mattered, she wasn’t looking for gold. She stepped back and scanned the room, her eyes resting on a picture frame. It had obviously been rotten for years,

it's painting faded. She reached out for it, prying it away. Behind it, was their goal. It was a small little thing, a lamp or teacup, but it had untold power. She pulled it out, and looked at Nolan.

"Are you ready?"

"As ready as I'll ever be," was his gruff response. Aria rubbed the lamp, and it immediately started to burn. She cried out, and Nolan rushed to her.

"Are you okay?" Nolan asked.

"I'm fine," Aria replied, "Look at the lamp!"

It was glowing brighter by the second, then a large creature rose from the lamp.

"A genie! I knew it!" Aria exclaimed.

"You were right, I'll give you that," Nolan laughed. Aria thought it was the first laugh she'd ever heard from him.

"Yes, I am a genie. And if you found me, then you both know the rules, right?"

"Yes, yes I do," Nolan exclaimed, greed filling his expression.

"Three wishes, no more, no less. You can't kill anyone, make anyone fall in love, or bring people back from the dead," Aria said.

"Correct. I'll guess you want your wishes now."

"I do." Nolan stepped forward. "I wish I was the richest man on Earth."

"Granted." Hundreds of pieces of gold and silver started to rise from the ground. "And you?"

Aria hesitated, "I wish I was the most powerful witch in history."

"I'll do the same, but as a wizard," Nolan interjected.

"Both granted." Aria grinned, then ignited her hand. The blaze that rose from it was the most powerful she'd ever conjured, and she'd put in almost no effort.

"I wish for knowledge, I want to be the wisest person there ever was." Aria asked.

"Granted."

Aria was hit with a flood of knowledge, and she knew something was wrong. The genie wanted to trick them, to end them and trap them here, where they'd die. She didn't know why or how, but she knew the last wish was a trap. She stepped back, staring at the Genie. As she did this she noticed the gold and silver was still coming, and would probably crush them if it didn't stop.

"You're trying to kill us." Aria breathed. "Why?"

"You would know that, wouldn't you?" The genie said.

"Wait, what? What are you talking about?" Nolan started to panic.

"He wants us to die. The wishes are a trap. Look, your gold will crush us."

"Oh no. I wish the gold would stop." The gold stopped flowing, but the silver still came, and Nolan was out of wishes. Aria stepped back, she knew this was up to her, but she couldn't wish her way out of this. Then, it hit her.

"I wish to know how to kill you."

"Good girl. Wish granted."

Aria didn't know what he meant, but knew that her magic could end the genie. She unleashed a huge blast of fire at it. The genie laughed, and stared at her.

"You can't. Your magic can kill me, but you'll die first. Goodbye, Aria."

The statue leapt to life in front of her, and she leapt out of its way, so it turned to Nolan.

"Nolan!" She screamed

"Aria!" He tried to reach her, but it was too late. The statue crushed him. Aria knew she was about to die, and did the last thing she could. Run. She pulled all of her energy to her, and vanished into thin air.

Outside the tomb, she collapsed, falling into the snow. She wasn't getting out of this. She'd had a good run, but had taken it too far. That was something her intelligence couldn't get her out of. The genie had won, she thought as the snow overtook her.