

# The Immortal Queen

By S. L. Marshall



# Prologue

Atlantis



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The Immortal Queen by S. L. Marshall.

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First Edition.

Maya sat in her room, looking down at the sculpted garden below, hands placed delicately on her lap. Her eyes not straying from the young man that toiled before her. Tadeas' skin glistened with sweat, like precious jewels sparkling under the sun. She licked her lips and a small smile played across them as she watched him work; from her vantage point, she was sure he could be a god incarnate.

Though her desires to take him as her husband, even if they were purely for carnal reasons, had already been expressed to her father she had been forced to consider other options. Since he was of a lower caste he was unsuitable, so she had eventually relented to the idea of taking him as one of her concubines. Though, in that, a problem had arisen. The young man had been marked by the Gods; the Fates had already given him to his twin-soul. As children he had met and had fallen in love with the girl he was to wed, their union blessed by the Oracles and now being of the age where marriage was expected, they were betrothed. Maya was determined, one day, one way or another, she would own him.

The arrival of the great magician simply known only as Kentol awarded her an idea. He had come to their nation for two simple reasons. The first he kept well guarded, saying the time was not right, that in time he would reveal what had brought him to this place. The second, he all but shouted from the rooftops. Their country was vanishing. Daily people flocked in droves towards the relative safety of the capital or left the shores of their beloved island nation behind. Their homes and their lands were being slowly but surely eaten away by the relentless waves, cliffs collapsing into the ocean as violent tremors shook the land. Soon even the capital would sink beneath the waves, consumed for all time.

When Kentol had arrived he had wowed the populace with his magic and his vows to save the people of Atlantis. He claimed he could save some of them by giving them a new home in a world far from here. Citizens were being chosen. Not by wealth but by merit and skill. If you proved a match for the new world, a new world you would see. For reasons that Maya could only fathom she was guaranteed a place; she suspected Kentol's motives had nothing to do with any secret dealings her father had with the mysterious man and were more salacious in nature.

Maya kept this to herself, she wasn't about to jeopardise her chance with Tadeas by breaking a man's heart; that could come later.

Tadeas and Agnetha, his betrothed, had a place secured in the new world. This knowledge she had been privy to and had spurred her plan forward. A plan she had precious little time to enact, but with a willing and able friend at her side she didn't need to worry about such trivial things as a deadline. They would all leave Atlantis's dwindling shores in two days time. She intended to use those moments wisely, not just seeing her home and family for the last time, but also seeing to the fact that her life would be rid of Agnetha once and for all.

Absent-mindedly she ran a brush through her golden brown hair, not turning to look at the man who had just entered, her eyes still fixed firmly on Tadeas.

"Mauri, always you come when I call. I'm going to miss your loyalty and obedience..." Her youthful voice laced through the room; sweet, almost sickly sweet, like overly scented flowers. You either fell into her words or wanted to turn away from her. There was no in between.

She smiled and set the brush into its elaborately carved wooden box which rested on end table next to the window. Securing the latch she ran a smooth tanned hand over the top, content in the knowledge that the box and its contents were one of the very few things she would be taking with her.

"You've been invaluable to me these last few years. Less taxing than the Ring, yes?" There was barely a whisper of leather as Mauri shifted in his stance, not answering his mistress until he was bidden to do so.

Maya half turned, picking up a mirror as she gazed at her reflection a moment before setting it down. "I've one last task of you, and then you are released from my service."

The dark skinned brute of the man nodded and bowed, the leather of his cingulum rustling slightly as he did. Even though Maya could not see his action she smiled as she heard the brush of the leather, he had been trained well.

“Of course Principissa, my life has been, and still is, in service of your own. Anything you request will be done...it would be my honor.” His caramel voice carried across the expanse of the room easily as he watched the woman before him.

Maya turned from her position by the large window. The expansive views had vanished from sight, that had once been that of the mulling city and lands beyond were gone. The once bustling city sat in a desperate and fearful silence and the lands surrounding the city had given way to the sea. Maya smiled wistfully and looked to her servant; she had always been fond of the dark skinned man from across the seas. It was shame he was to be left behind, but no doubt she would find another faithful slave.

“Tadeas and his woman will be gathering in the temple on the day of accession. Right before we leave I need to you remove Agnetha from the area. She is not to come with us. Make sure Tadeas remains ignorant of the situation. Can you do this for me?”

Mauri bowed deeply. A smile spread across his face. “Of course Principissa... and if there is a problem with the woman’s co-operation?” He purred as a devious smile spread across his lips. It had not been the first time he had carried out such a task for the girl, and while he owed his life to the woman he was glad to be almost free from her clutches.

Maya smiled, she knew exactly what he was implying. “Make sure she has no other choice. Agnetha will not be coming with us.” She half turned towards the window then stopped herself, turning her head to look to the man once more. “Oh and Mauri?”

The man cocked his head, a slight questioning look spread across his face. He wiped it away just as quick as it had come. “Yes Principissa?”

Maya smiled softly turning to face out the window. She rather liked the view of the sea rather than the lands. Her next home would have a view of the sea. That was one thing she would be clear on.

“My father has agreed. Once I have left you will be paid for a full years service and given transport across the seas. You will be free to live your own life as you will it. You will have papers to prove this.”

Mauri smiled, he had come to terms with sinking with the cursed island, as long as he was free from Maya, but this...for all his years bowing to the would be queen, he would do anything; it was an offer he could not walk away from.

“Of course Principissa. You and your family are most kind.”

Maya nodded sharply without looking to him. “Just see to your task Mauri. You are dismissed.”

The man lowered himself into a bow once more, then, stiffening, he stood and left the room swiftly.

Maya paused before entering the room, her father, Ercole, stood speaking with Kentol about the upcoming ‘Transcendence’, as her father loved to call it. Gathering the skirt of her dress she cleared her throat as she entered. The two men turned in her direction, her father with open arms and a large smile, while Kentol bowed deeply, brushing the black hair from his eyes.

“Daughter we were just discussing the upcoming Transcendence. Have you been to the temple to offer your final prayers to the Gods?”

Maya smiled, meekly nodding her head. The ‘Gods’, she felt, had abandoned them long ago. So she, in turn, had abandoned them.

“Yes father, of course. I just came from there. I lit a candle for our family.” She gave her father a sad look, one she had practised over the years, before hugging him like a dutiful daughter. “It’s going to be hard parting from you, but I know I must lead the people to the new world.”

Ercole nodded, sorrow clouded his face as he pulled away from the hug, holding his daughter at arm’s length he studied her a moment. “Yes. Parting will be hard. Your mother and I will miss you. However, Kentol here has assured me that you will have a place in his palace and at his side if you so choose...” He smiled; winking to his daughter as he all but turned her to face Kentol.

Maya smiled inwardly and feigned looking taken aback; she looked at the man who was nether old or young. His softly tanned complexion

and green eyes a handsomely striking match with his black hair. She had suspected but now it was confirmed, the man, with his youthful face, certainly knew how to weave words. Her father must have been extremely impressed with him... Or just grateful, she knew gratefulness could drive a man, or woman, to do anything.

Kentol's eyes still sparkled and held the promise of knowledge, power and youth. So perhaps it was a suitable match. She smiled. He was handsome but he was no Tadeas with his caramel hair and muscled, weathered body. Though, at his side she could be a queen if she chose it and poor sweet Tadeas could remain as a concubine...surely. Maya offered a smile, her mind racing with possibilities.

"I think that might be a wonderful idea. It will unify our people. I have stipulations however..."

Her father looked at her shocked. "Maya, know your place! He is offering you great wealth and power as well as the chance of living and you want to bargain?"

Kentol chuckled quietly. A warm smile spread across his lips. "A woman like you Maya will be a powerful ally and asset. I'm sure we could come to some arrangement."

Looking somewhat relieved Ercole sighed, eyeing the man who stood beside him. "I am pleased my daughter has not offended you...It would have been a great disservice had she done so. We will speak again before the ceremony tomorrow, yes?" He asked, looking to the man.

Kentol nodded, a half smile across his lips as he looked the young woman up and down. She was the reason he had come to this world, to the crumbling nation of Atlantis. He had searched all the worlds for her, a soul without purpose, a soul not powerful enough to be a God of their own making, yet not made for a mere human life, the only soul that was exempt from the soul binding that all souls underwent upon their creation. He knew she would be the perfect woman to stand by his side for years to come. Her Grace already showing the promise of the power he wished to bestow upon her.

Ercole turned to his daughter and, stepping away from Kentol, he guided Maya from the room. “Come now daughter, your mother and I wish to spend one last night with you...alone.”



The day dawned and the sun hung dismally in the sky. Maya stood on the balcony of the temple. Once upon a time fields stretched to the horizon where, only on a sunny day, could you see the ocean that surrounded their island nation. Now however the sea had claimed the fields. Already the shoreline was within walking distance. With a heavy heart she knew her home didn't have long before the Gods' curse was fully laid down upon them and Atlantis was gone from the world for good. Not that there was much left, the earthquakes that had been hammering her home had already laid a large portion of the nation to rubble, and sunk the remainder already.

She turned, looking down at the temples vast courtyard where the chosen few stood. Including herself, there were a thousand people chosen to leave. The rest would either stay and face the waves or, like most already had, leave the country on any one of the handful of the last remaining ships. She spotted Mauri weaving through the jostling crowds and knew it must be nearing the time to leave. She descended the cracked and broken steps to join her people she watched Mauri close in on Agnetha. She stepped into the crowd just as Kentol began chanting; strange mystical lights danced around them, like pale pastel rainbows, the air shimmering with Magick. People, young and old, stood transfixed, gasping in awe at the spectacle going on around them. Children gripped their parent's hands, giggling and laughing as the Magick danced around them. Maya held her pose, her face holding a hint of awe at the spectacle, while also revealing a tinge of sadness of her home land. Inside though, she was hiding a smile as she watched Agnetha muffled and pulled away from the awe struck Tadeas.

Just as the spell was about to be completed, Kentol took her hand, she turned, smiling at him, then turned back to face her people. A gasp slipped from her lips as she watched in mute horror as Tadeas, realizing his love was gone, gave a shout and ran from the crowd chasing after Mauri as he dragged Agnetha from sight.

Maya screamed his name, heartbroken and angry that her plan had failed, Kentol's hand gripping hers as she tried to pull free. "I'm sorry. His place is with her." He whispered in her ear.

Maya glanced at Kentol and pulled against his hand. "No, he is mine!"

Kentol sighed. "No Maya, please. You must learn not everything you want can be yours..."

Maya looked at him, shocked, as Atlantis vanished from view. For the first time in her life someone had dared to say no to her.

A week later saw Maya sat in a marble palace that sat on a cliff face, overlooking vast green fields. She could see the sea from her bedroom window. Already it didn't appeal to her anymore, and she had requested another room. Below people strove to build the new city, using both styles taken from the shape of the pre-existing palace and techniques and styles from their old home. Taking a deep breath she steadied herself, her new God powers thundering through her body. She was still unsure of what she could do, but she knew what she couldn't, and that was save Tadeas.

She turned and watched through a crystal viewing station as Atlantis gave one last shuddering roar, a sound from both the land and from the screams of those who still dwelled there as the island was overcome by water. She closed her eyes, her essence searching the rubble for any sign of Tadeas. She found him underneath a collapsed roof cradling Agnetha, her soul having already departed. Tadeas, his body broken from the debris that had fallen on them, breathed his last breath as the waters lapped at his feet. Maya watched as his soul rose from his body. Her hand snaked out unbidden, grasping it and pulling it to her.

She sat in shock for a moment. She had been unaware she could do such a thing. Then, smiling, she imagined her locket in her ethereal hand and forced Tadeas's soul into it then pulled back into her body. Opening her eyes she looked down as the locket manifested in her hand, inside a crystalline gemstone, his soul danced. It would be contained, prevented from decaying until such time she knew what to do with it.



Kentol walked down the dimly light hall. In all his years since his accession he had never walked these halls. For ten thousand years he had always found a reason to avoid this place. Now fatherly concern and moral obligation had forced his hand.

It had been less than a handful of days since he had discovered his wife's long held secret. Over one thousand years separated from his twin soul, Kentol now knew what had ailed his son all this time. When Maya had broken the laws set down by both the Grandfather of Souls and her own husband she had failed to realize the impact it would eventually have on the son she cherished so dearly. So here he was now walking the halls of a place no soul deserved to end up, the place where souls came to die.

As he walked through the atrium and into the main hall, the room lit up. Large geodes of clear quartz glowed, the light that flickered from them cast soft shadows in the corners of the large room. At the center, a great brazier stood, instead of fire dancing at its heart, souls swarmed weaving around each other.

“Altreus, are you here brother?”

Kentol waited. He cast his gaze over the walls where clear glass urns lined shelves. Inside souls lingered. Their Source almost spent. A voice from behind him made him turn. He took in the presence of the Brother of Souls, a God much older than he. It was said he was there right after the birth of the worlds, brought into being by the Creator as a guardian for its children's souls.

“Unfortunate, isn’t it brother? All these souls, separated from their twins. Left to languish, life after life, their twin-souls gone, banished from this world.” He spoke softly as he entered the room and sighed deeply as he placed a vacated soul jar on the shelf. He closed his eyes for a moment and then turned to Kentol. “Another one lost. I really hate my job. Watching day after day as the Source fades from them. Some last longer than the others, you know, but in the end they all meet the same fate.”

Altreus stood beside Kentol now, his grandfatherly face taunt with sadness. He turned to Kentol, who stood, transfixed, eyeing his council brother, as if he already suspected the reason for his visit.

“Why are you here brother? I know you hate this place.”

Alterus asked after a few moments, breaking the man’s train of thought. Kentol walked forward, running his hand over an urn. The soul inside flared at the touch, but soon after resettled in a heap at the bottom of the urn. He turned to Alterus.

“What I would give to save them all. Spare them from this fate. It’s something we all yearn for I know. But there is yet a chance I can save one of these souls.”

Altreus raised an eyebrow at Kentol. His interest peaked. “And how, brother, do you propose that?”

Kentol swallowed. He needed to be careful what he said. If the other council members discovered Maya’s blatant breach of protocol it would be disastrous.

“First you need to promise not to ask questions brother. It is imperative. There are too many people involved, to many lives at stake. My own included.”

Altreus tilted his head to the side, taking in what Kentol had just said, knowing that the man never overstated the facts. His curiosity wanted to ask more, but he would respect his brother’s request. “Okay brother, I trust you.”

Kentol smiled. He knew he had to give some explanation but he was relieved Altreus, ever the curious God, was going to refrain from asking.

“The simple truth is there are two reasons I want this soul. One, given its drive and it’s purity it will make an ideal candidate to be our upcoming champion-”

Alterus’s eyes widened, immediately knowing what the champion was for. “You mean against –”

Kentol nodded. “Yes brother, against Him. Secondly, while I know the soul is dying, I feel I can save it.”

Altreus frowned. He had watched others try before to save a soul. It never ended well. Placed into a body the soul had still died, leaving an abomination, a soulless husk to walk the worlds until the body gave out and died. It was not pretty. The only way for a soul to survive, to live, was to be in the same incarnation as its twin. Even if they never met, the presence of both souls fed each other.

“You said that, but how?”

Kentol raised a finger. Altreus inclined his head, too many questions. He backed off.

“No questions as to where or how. You’ll no doubt learn most of that in time. I know where its twin is. I can reunite them...before that soul meets the same fate.”

Kentol swallowed back the bile that rose every time he thought of his son dying. Altreus nodded, confused. It was very rare for a soul not to return to the Brazier after the death of its host, but it had happened. The soul could be torn from the host right at the moment of death. Those souls where mostly fed upon, others sacrificed. It was a slight against the Creator to destroy a soul, and as such punishable to interfere with a soul’s destiny.

“Which soul, brother? I will find it. It may take time and there are protocols as you are aware...” Altreus waved a hand and a shimmering crystal monitor appeared before them. Kentol shook his head.

“No brother. I need it now. No protocols, no questions. Please. I have little time. The gap for the soul’s re-entry is closing fast. I already have a family lined up.”

Altreus frowned, waved his hand once more the great crystal screen vanished. “You, Kentol, maker of these very protocols, seek to break them. This is highly unusual... but I will relent. Do you know where the soul you require is?”

Kentol nodded. Turned and headed deeper into the chambers. Where the most broken souls were housed in their last throws, before the Source drained from them for good.