My Queen’s sixth and final month was spent in longing and melancholy togetherness.

 Philos’ mournful demeanor lessened but did not disappear entirely. It followed him like a phantom or a memory too painful to forget. Yet a week following my confrontation with Demeter, I felt determined to rid this melancholy haunting my husband. Anything to make my deer smile once more before the time came for him…to depart, back to the mortal realm with his mother.

 Following our daily round of judging the judgements of the deceased, I guided Philos out of the throne room and out of the palace.

 “Where are we going, Hades?” he looked into my eyes, uncertain and confused.

 “It is a surprise,” I smiled softly, holding his smaller paw in mine. “Simply be patient, and I promise you will no longer be sad as before.”

 He relented and shadowed me, refusing to let go of my paw as we traveled deeper into my underground domain. We traveled past the palace gardens, through the Elysium Fields and towards the bordering River Styx, until we came to a forked path that trailed along a branch of the Styx: The River Cocytus.

 The mortals referred to it as a wailing river, for they believed the souls who spent their lives drowned in sorrow would end up here. However, this was mistaken thanks to myth and legend. No, wailing filled the crystal caverns of the underground river not because of sorrowful souls, but because of the formations of the stalactites and stalagmites, twisting around the floors and ceilings in a pattern that turned the grottos into a musical instrument. What made this specific section of the riverbank so wonderful, besides the magnificent view overlooking a blue waterfall ahead, happened to be the given privacy and tranquility. The glowing crystals even illuminated our path until we arrived at a beach along the babbling water.

 That so happened to have a soft blanket placed on the sand.

 Philos raised an eyebrow to me. “I have been here before, dear husband…” the stag shook his muzzle amusedly. “I shall admit though, that it is strange you would consider a leisurely stroll along the Cocytus a surprise.”

 I reached into the pockets of my robe. “This is the surprise, actually…”

 Philos stared curiously at the small vial in my paw, containing a clear liquid that glowed like a tiny gem in the sunlight. His reaction did not change until I explained what it would do to any mortal who drank the substance. Since he happened to be part-mortal, it would apply in principle as well.

The hidden sadness from before seemed to literally melt away from his face.

 “Is this…why the guards haven’t followed us in here?” my Queen asked, examining the bottle as if it held more value than the rarest of silver or gold. “A-Are we…”

 “We are.” I smiled and leaned forward to kiss his nose. “Drink it, and you will be transformed into a female that can give birth. Drink it, and you will be able to conceive our cub together, nine months from now…I have even been given the blessings of Demeter.”

 His ears perked high in surprise. “How did you convince my mother—”

 My ears fell slightly. “If it is a daughter, she will be given naming rights.”

 “Ah,” Philos giggled, which then turned into joyous sniffling and tears of happiness he could not hide. “I-I do not know what to say…I…Will I stay a woman?”

 “Until you give birth to our son or daughter, my beloved.” My tail wagged as I opened the metallic ap of the vial. “It is your decision. If you wish not to fulfill this, I will understand.”

 Seconds later, Philos gulped every drop of the heavenly substance concocted by Leto and Zeus, with help from Dionysus whose berries sweetened it for consumption. No sooner did my Queen make her decision had the transformation happened in a flashing white light. It grew brighter and brighter until we were blinded and confused.

 “Philos?”

 “Hades?” My Queen suddenly squeaked, “Husband?”

 I looked back to my beloved soon as it receded, only for my maw to gape at the sight beheld before me. Peeking an eye Philos gawked down at the bosoms that had miraculously appeared on his—now, her—bare chest. My eyes then traveled down to my red deer’s crotch, expecting to somehow find his member now disappeared. However, the extravagant silk robes hid any changes from sight.

 “Have you…?” I trailed my question. “Do you…have…?”

 Philos glanced downward and placed one or two fingers down his robe, then blushed heavily. “I…I do.”

 “How do you feel, beloved?” I stepped forward to hold Philos’ trembling paws. To my slight surprise, they somehow felt the same while being more…soft and delicate. Like a female’s paws. “Do you feel ill? Are you feeling regret? Please tell…”

 “I…” He…she?...described, “My body feels different. The…lack of a manhood…it is strange…” Philos moaned when my body drew closer. “It is sensitive…and…my chest feels heavy…but I do not feel any pain…”

 “Good…” I sighed, licking the cold nose and marveling at the lack of antlers adorned atop his head. “That is good…”

 Without another word, I slowly started to undress ourselves from our robes. Philos did not object when I peeled away his robes—revealing a pair of hardened pink nipples surrounded by light dark fur on some succulent breasts that, I had to admit, made my cock twitch—nor when I gingerly guided him into a kiss. The only following noise that emitted from his lips besides heated rasping would be a squeaking moan when I felt the folds between his shaking legs.

 “Do my fingers hurt, Philos?” I asked carefully. “Say the word, and we can stop.”

 “N…Never stop, honey…Please don’t stop…”

 “Oh?” I grinned, dropping down to my knees. “As you wish.”

 The taste of virginal womanhood was different than how I envisioned it. Unlike male flesh, it felt slicker and not as elegant, yet something about it still made my length ache to feel the fleshy walls envelop it. As my tongue lapped and suckled on the foreign folds—dripping wet and leaking with each grunt the deer made—now present between Philos’ legs, we both started to grow hot under the pressure. I raised a paw up to grope one of my Queen’s breasts for balance, my fingers brushing against the nipple and causing him to whimper a half-moan. As well as my name over and over.

 Had I not known the female orgasm did indeed exist, I would’ve missed the opportunity to tease my Philos further. Before he could experience it himself—now herself, I reminded myself once more—I pulled my lips away from the soaked sex.

 Philos moaned, “Wait…what are you…?”

 “Shhh,” I stood to peck his lips, allowing the deer to taste himself, “We have all night. Let us not make it short, my love…”

 He giggled upon some realization. “Heh, if you say so, my King.”

 I cupped the deer’s curved hip. “I do say so.”

 I helped lay us together on a blanket atop the sand, and gently held my Queen’s limbs as I brushed my length against Philos’ sex. Waiting little, I inserted into him, causing the doe to arch his back and accept me in a chorus of moans that the rest of our subject no doubt could hear on the other side of the Underworld.

 My thrusts into his quivering body turned more frantic when I imagined my lover from before. Yet my hardness did not cease, knowing that this was still my Philos. My beautiful Queen. My genderfluid husband whom I would always love, no matter the body or the circumstances of our marriage. This was still the deer whose whimpering made my hips go faster, whose chanting of my name made me remember our first time, and whose panting smile reminded me how much I treasured him. It did not matter if my Philos was male or female.

 The doe squirming beneath me, pushing eagerly back on my length amid the beautiful scenery surrounding us along the Cocytus River, was the one I fell in love with all those years ago. And whom I would never stop loving until the end of the stars.

 “Ahhhhhhh~”

 “Mfh! Oh Philos, I…!”

 In large euphoric waves, I felt my mighty black knot spread Philos’ sex wide and the orgasmic volleys that painted his insides with my seed. I practically collapsed onto my Queen, panting like feral dogs in heat, and tied into her before carefully shifting our positions. Now Philos, sweaty, fur-matted breasts pressed into my chest in a way that made my member spurt a couple more times, lay atop me in a curled vice I did not object to.

 I slowly lifted his muzzle, both of us smiling and lolling our tongues.

 My heartbeat felt as if it drowned out any words formed, yet I managed to utter out a whispering, “I…love you…Queen Philos…”

 A giggle escaped the back of my beloved’s throat. “I…love you too…my King Hades.”

 Wrapping my arms around him, we relaxed into this amazing afterglow, passively waiting for my knot to soften listening to our breathing and heartbeats amid trickling waterfalls from the Cocytus River.