

THE WATERFALL TRAVELER

EXCERPTS

Blurb

All eighteen-year-old Ri wants is to cure her adoptive father Samuel from his hallucination-inducing illness. Everyone tells her it's impossible. But when she meets two newcomers in the forest—a rogue with a vendetta against the gods and a fugitive with the power to travel through water—she'll be torn away from Samuel and swept across the sea to an oppressive city governed by a ruthless tyrant. Once there, she'll need to confront Samuel's unlawful past, and evil that threatens those she cares for.

Excerpt 1

"Wait." I chased after Mallory. "I need to know who Robert Renselar is. He may be able to help someone very close to me."

He turned toward me. "What makes you think I know who he is?"

"You looked disgusted when you said his name."

He smirked. "You may be perceptive, but you lack good judgment. You'd rather converse with a cursed man in a cursed forest than scurry home to safety."

"There's nothing wrong with my judgment." I pointed at the inscription on my compass. "Who is this man?"

Mallory hooted. "Tell you what. Not only will I tell you who he is, but I'll tell you exactly where you can find him."

"You will?" That seemed easy.

"Sure will." He pulled his dagger out of its sheath and offered it to me.

"I don't understand." I backed away.

"My terms," he said. "Once your curiosity has been quenched and Mr. Renselar is of no more use to you, you take this dagger and you drive it into his heart."

"You're crazy," I said. "I'm not going to murder him."

He returned the dagger to its sheath. "If you're not willing to kill him, then you're not ready to meet him. Go home. You've nothing to offer me."

"That's not true," I said, but he walked off. "If you want Robert Renselar dead so badly, then why don't you kill him yourself?"

"I've got more vicious snakes to toast over the fire first." Without glancing at me, he waved his hand in the air, shooing me off.

I dashed after him. "Please, I need to know how to find this man."

He yanked me close by my collar. "Dammit. Didn't your pop ever teach you not to chitchat with questionable men in evil forests?"

Excerpt 2

I spun around and rushed toward the tunnel to my left. The fire had diminished to a faint wisp, barely lighting the cavern, and I accidentally knocked over a pile of books sitting on the ground.

Bryce blocked my path. "Ri, please listen to me. This is going to sound crazy, but ... we're no longer on your island, and we can't return until the next dark moon."

The effects of panic paired with my fever. Dizzy, I braced the rock wall. "We're no longer on my island?"

He nodded. "I know it's not ideal. But I will take you home."

"But not until the dark moon?" I plunged my hand into my pocket and rubbed my thumb against the glass face of my compass. I struggled to calm my breaths. Inhale. Exhale. Calm. Ouch. The broken glass pricked me.

"It's not so bad," Bryce said through a nervous laugh. "The dark moon comes every month. It's rather predictable that way."

"But the dark moon just passed. You want me here for a month?"

"Well, no. Of course, I don't want you here for a month." His jaw dropped, and he chopped his hands back and forth. "I'm so sorry, I didn't mean it like that. I'm sure you'd make pleasant enough company. There's plenty we could do together. I mean ..."

"Come with me." I cupped his shoulder. "There's a very good healer in my village who can help ... um ... manage your condition."

He jerked his head. "Great, you think I've lost my mind." He raised his arms and then let them flop to his side in defeat. "Well, prepare yourself, because there's more. I walk through an underground waterfall in this cave and emerge from the one near your village. It's exactly as the older gentleman explained it to you. Magic."