



Sabine Traeder

**Elina
Nightbloom and
the Curse of the
White Stag**

**When light and
darkness collide,
balance will decide the
fate of the world.**

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Dedication

For all those who find the courage to face their fears, and for everyone who strives to keep the balance between light and darkness.

Motto

"The light within us is stronger than the shadows that surround us."

—Wisdom of the White Stag

Acknowledgments

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About the Author

Sabine Traeder is a passionate storyteller specializing in magical worlds and compelling characters. With *Elina Nightbloom and the Curse of the White Stag*, she weaves a tale of adventure, mystery, and friendship—one that will captivate readers and transport them into a world of wonder.

Elina Nightbloom and the Curse of the White Stag

A Magical Journey Begins

Elina Nightbloom's world is anything but ordinary. As an eleven-year-old girl of small stature, she has spent her life struggling to find her place in a world that often feels too big and too loud. But when a mysterious amulet enters her life and she is unexpectedly accepted into the Magical Academy at Wolfsrock, a journey begins—one that could change everything.

Hidden deep within ancient forests, surrounded by shimmering mountains and mystical creatures, lies the academy—a sanctuary for those destined to uphold the balance between light and darkness. But darkness never rests. The sinister sorcerer Malrik Soulcatcher has unleashed an ancient curse and shattered the powerful Crystal of Purity. With every missing fragment, the balance of the magical world tilts further into chaos.

Guided by the wisdom of the White Stag, guardian of the crystal, and supported by her loyal friends, Elina embarks on a perilous mission. She must recover the six lost fragments before Malrik can claim them—an undertaking that will demand courage, determination, and the power of friendship.

But as Elina uncovers the secrets of her own family, she realizes that her connection to this conflict runs far deeper than she ever imagined. The amulet she wears, the legacy of her father, and the prophecy of the White Stag make her the key to the battle against darkness.

Will Elina succeed in reuniting the fragments in time and breaking the curse? Or will Malrik plunge the world into eternal shadow?

Elina Nightbloom and the Curse of the White Stag is a tale of courage, magic, and the strength found in friendship and self-belief. Step into a world of secrets, adventure, and hope.

Prologue: The Origin of the Curse

In the deepest shadows of the forest, where even the moon hesitated to cast its light, an eerie silence reigned. Only the faint whisper of leaves and the distant crackling of twigs pierced the darkness. In the midst of a small clearing, surrounded by shimmering mist, stood the white stag. Its magnificent antlers sparkled like a thousand stars—a beacon amidst the encroaching darkness. By its side stood a wizard, keeping watch. His black cloak billowed in the wind, and the rune-covered surface of his staff glowed faintly in the dim light.

"The balance is in danger, Guardian," the wizard spoke in a rough voice, his gaze fixed warily on the darkness creeping through the forest. "Malrik is closer than I had hoped."

The stag turned its head, its golden eyes filled with wisdom and concern. "We must not waver. The Crystal of Purity must not fall into his hands."

In the distance, the darkness began to take shape. It slithered through the forest like a living shadow, twisting the trees and devouring all light. Finally, Malrik, the dark sorcerer, emerged from the blackness. His figure was tall and menacing, his blood-red eyes glowing like burning embers. A diabolical smile played on his lips as he took in the sight of his adversaries.

"A stag and a wizard," he sneered, his voice dripping with mockery. "Do you really think you can stop me? Your hope is pathetic."

The stag lifted its head, its glow intensifying. "Your darkness may be powerful, Malrik, but it will never overcome the light."

"Light?" Malrik's laughter echoed through the clearing, making the trees tremble. "You do not understand true power. But I will show you."

With a flick of his staff, Malrik summoned a vortex of shadows, swirling like a furious storm as it surged toward the clearing. The wizard stepped in front of the stag, extending his staff. Ancient words, whispered in a forgotten language, flowed from his lips. A shield of light grew around them, radiant and strong.

But Malrik was unfazed. With a single, brutal gesture, he unleashed the full force of his dark magic. The barrier of light shattered like glass, and the impact hurled the wizard to the ground.

"Go!" the wizard gasped as he struggled to rise. "Protect the crystal. It is our only hope."

"I will not leave you behind," the stag replied, its golden eyes shining with determination.

"You must," the wizard insisted. One last time, he raised his staff, and a wave of blinding light burst forth, forcing Malrik back for a brief moment. But the darkness was relentless. It enveloped the wizard, pulling him into its depths until his body and voice were silenced.

"A pitiful sacrifice," Malrik scoffed as he turned once more to the stag. "Now, Guardian, only you remain."

Alone in the clearing, the white stag felt the darkness closing in. It bowed its head, its glow intensifying. But Malrik

was too powerful. With a cruel motion, he unleashed his black magic upon the stag. A sinister crackling filled the air as the curse took hold. The majestic antlers, once a symbol of purity, darkened as if the stars themselves had been snuffed out. The stag's voice, once a beacon of wisdom throughout the forest, fell silent.

"You are mute now," Malrik said with a cold smile. "Your purity is broken, and the Crystal of Purity is no longer yours."

With a mighty blow, Malrik shattered the crystal. The fragments scattered in all directions, each carried away by an unseen magic that sent them deep into the world. The clearing, once bathed in a gentle glow, was now shrouded in utter darkness.

The white stag sank to its knees, its body heavy under the weight of the curse. Yet deep within, it felt a spark—a remnant of the wizard's magic that had saved it. This spark, barely perceptible, kept hope alive. Despite the darkness surrounding it, the stag knew that balance was not lost forever.

"Your darkness may be strong, Malrik," it thought, its golden eyes still shining. "But the light will return."

As Malrik and his shadows vanished, the stag remained alone in the clearing. The wind carried the scent of ash, and the stars in the sky seemed distant and cold. Yet the world still had a future—an uncertain, distant future. Eleven years and six months later, a child would be born, carrying that spark of hope, ready to challenge the darkness once more.

Section 1: The Preparation

Chapter 1: A Touch of Magic

The last school days dragged on endlessly, as if time itself were working against Elina. The buzzing of insects, the laughter of children on the street, even the oppressive summer heat seemed to conspire against her. While her classmates cheerfully chatted about the upcoming holidays, Elina felt strangely disconnected.

Under the old chestnut tree in the garden, she found a moment of peace. The tree was her refuge, a place where she felt safe. A well-worn book about magical creatures lay open on her lap, its pages filled with Jorin's hasty notes. His scrawled handwriting brought a smile to her lips.

"The Light Stag," she read aloud, "is a magical being that appears only in the darkest hours. Its antlers glow like a star and are said to carry the wisdom of past ages." She ran her fingers over the delicate drawing of the stag, lost in thought.

Jorin had brought the book back last vacation when he returned from the Magical Academy at Wolf's Peak. His stories of flying brooms, talking picture frames, and glowing runes had transported her into a world she had scarcely imagined before.

"Maybe one day I could have an adventure like that too," she murmured.

Since Jorin had left for school two years ago, much had changed. His visits had become rare, and when he did

return home, he was always full of energy, stories, and secrets. But in those moments when he was gone, Elina felt strangely lost.

"Elina, come inside! Dinner is ready!" called Aruna, her mother, from the kitchen.

The scent of freshly baked bread lured her into the house. She closed the book, stood up, and walked along the garden path as the sun slowly disappeared behind the rooftops.

At the dinner table, her mother awaited her, moving calmly as she filled the plates. Aruna, petite herself, had always radiated a warm, comforting presence. Her hands, shaped by daily life, moved with confidence and care.

"What did you do today?" she asked, placing a steaming bowl of vegetable soup in front of Elina.

"Read," Elina answered quietly. "The book Jorin gave me. It's truly fascinating."

Aruna smiled, her eyes twinkling softly. "I'm glad you like it. Perhaps magic lies in your future as well."

Elina felt her heart beat a little faster. The thought that she might one day wield magic herself was so enticing it almost frightened her. But just as quickly, doubt crept in. She had never felt particularly special.

After dinner, she retreated to her room. The evening air drifted coolly through the open window, and the sky was painted in soft hues of orange. From the distant train station, she heard the rhythmic clatter of wheels—a familiar sound that always soothed her.

Tomorrow, Jorin would come home, and the thought of his return made her smile. He would bring stories, perhaps new books, and that peculiar, magical energy that always seemed to surround him.

With the book in hand, she sat by the window and gazed outside. The pages whispered of wonders waiting to be discovered. She traced the drawing of a phoenix and imagined what it would be like to see such a bird in real life. The stars began to appear, one by one. Elina felt a strange tension in the air, a kind of anticipation she couldn't quite grasp. "Maybe this summer holds something special for me," she murmured softly.

Yet the night brought no clarity, only dreams filled with strange images—a stag with glowing antlers, a crystal shattering into countless fragments, and shadows creeping over everything. Elina woke several times, the visions still vivid before her eyes, but their meaning remained elusive.

As dawn broke, she rose early and stepped into the garden. Dew glistened on the blades of grass, and for a moment, the world seemed to stand still. She took a deep breath and felt a quiet determination growing inside her.

Perhaps this summer really would be different. Something deep within her whispered that the world was ready to reveal its secrets—if only she had the courage to discover them.

Chapter 2: The Silent Observer

The last school day before summer vacation began like any other, but to Elina, it felt heavier. The sun burned relentlessly on the asphalt, and the laughter of her classmates echoed through the schoolyard. It seemed as if everyone but her was brimming with excitement for the upcoming freedom. The swimming class that ended the day felt like an obstacle she still had to overcome.

Elina entered the pool with a nervous feeling in her stomach. The echoes of voices and the splashing of water bounced off the walls. The pool, which so many of her classmates associated with joy, was a place that challenged her every time. It wasn't the water—she loved that. It was the constant stares and the quiet, sometimes not-so-quiet, remarks that weighed on her.

"Look at how she paddles!" giggled a girl as Elina struggled to swim another lap. Her shortened legs moved rhythmically, but it felt as if she was fighting against an invisible resistance—not just the water, but also the eyes that followed her.

The swimming instructor, standing at the edge of the pool, shook her head. "You need to try harder, Elina," she called, her tone more reproachful than encouraging.

Elina remained silent and kept swimming, even as her arms and legs ached. She knew that saying anything would only draw more attention. The other kids whispered, their words unclear, but their meaning evident. When she finally reached the end of the lap, she pulled herself to the edge of the pool and sank onto the ledge, exhausted.

With her feet still in the water, she tried to block out the teacher's words and the giggles of the others. The cool water around her legs was soothing, a gentle reminder of something she loved. She closed her eyes and took a deep breath, but a strange sensation pulled her from her thoughts.

A slight tingling spread through her hands as she dipped her fingertips into the water. It felt as if the water was reacting to her touch—as if it had come to life. She opened her eyes and watched as small ripples formed around her fingers, almost like a greeting.

For a moment, everything else was forgotten. The giggles, the harsh words from the teacher, the stares—all of it faded as she focused on the tingling. She lifted her hand and watched as the water clung to her fingers, as if unwilling to let go.

"What...?" she whispered, but before she could finish the thought, the teacher's voice snapped her back to reality.

"Elina! We're not done yet. Back in the water!"

The moment shattered like glass. The water stilled, the tingling disappeared, and Elina felt the magic of the moment slip away under the weight of reality. She nodded silently and climbed back into the pool, but the thought of what had just happened refused to leave her.

After class, she left the pool with a heavy heart. On the way home, however, a warm sense of relief settled over her as she remembered that Jorin would be back soon. His arrival was like a beacon of hope, a reminder that the world wasn't always so cold and incomprehensible.

At home, the familiar scent of freshly baked bread greeted her. Her mother, Aruna, stood in the kitchen and turned toward her. "How was your day?" she asked in her usual gentle voice.

"It was okay," Elina replied evasively, setting down her bag. She knew her mother picked up on her tone, but Aruna didn't press further.

"Jorin wrote to say he'll be here soon," Aruna said with a smile. "He's excited to see you."

Elina nodded, and a small smile crept onto her face. The thought of Jorin and his stories, the world he brought with him, felt like an escape.

That afternoon, she sat on the porch and waited. The train that would bring Jorin had yet to arrive, but she could feel the excitement growing inside her. When the familiar sound of the locomotive echoed in the distance, she jumped up and ran to the garden fence.

Jorin walked down the path, his bag slung over his shoulder and a broad grin on his face. "There you are!" he called when he saw her.

Elina ran toward him, her steps light and full of anticipation. "You're finally here!"

"I have so much to tell you," he said, wrapping her in a hug. "But first, I want to hear what's been going on with you."

Elina hesitated, but she knew she had to tell him about what had happened at the pool. She wasn't sure why, but maybe Jorin would have an answer—or at least a story to make it all seem a little less frightening.

As they walked into the house together, Elina knew one thing for sure: This summer would be different. Something in the world had changed, and she could feel it.

Chapter 3: The Message from Wolf's Peak

A gentle scent of freshly baked bread filled the room as Elina stepped into the kitchen. The morning sunlight streamed through the window, casting a warm glow over the wooden furniture. On her place at the table lay an envelope, its understated elegance making it stand out from the ordinary. The thick, cream-colored paper and the intricate golden script gave it an air of importance.

"What is this?" she asked, hesitating at the doorway.

Aruna, who was pouring tea into two delicate porcelain cups, looked up and smiled. "You'll only find out if you open it."

Jorin, sitting at the table and biting into a piece of bread, grinned widely. "Come on, Elina! Don't chicken out."

With a mix of curiosity and apprehension, she stepped closer. The flowing script forming her name had something magical about it. Her hands trembled slightly as she picked up the envelope. The material felt unexpectedly soft, almost like velvet, and a faint scent of lavender wafted from it.

Slowly, she slid open the envelope and pulled out the letter. The paper was heavy and smooth, the ink shimmering in the light. Her eyes scanned the first few lines, and for a moment, she held her breath.

"Elina Nightbloom, we are pleased to inform you that you have been granted a place at the Magical Academy of Wolf's Peak. Your enrollment will commence at the beginning of the

new school year. We warmly welcome you to our community."

The words burned themselves into her mind, yet she read them again to make sure she hadn't imagined them. Her voice was barely more than a whisper as she asked, "I... I've been accepted?"

Jorin, still chewing, nodded enthusiastically. "Of course! What did you think? That they'd overlook you?"

Aruna stepped behind her, gently placing her hands on Elina's shoulders. "Elina, you belong there. There's no doubt about it."

An overwhelming mix of emotions swelled within Elina. Joy and pride clashed with fear and doubt. "But... what if I'm not good enough?" she murmured, barely admitting it to herself.

Jorin set down his cup and looked at her seriously. "That's exactly what I thought before I started there. But trust me, Elina, the magic of Wolf's Peak will show you what you're capable of—and it's more than you can imagine right now."

His words sparked a flicker of confidence in her, though uncertainty still lingered. Her mother pulled up a chair and sat beside her. "It's natural to feel unsure when something new begins. But you're stronger than you think, my child. And you won't be alone."

The letter still rested in her hands, and she studied the golden letters elegantly forming her name. The feeling that her life was about to change was overwhelming. She sensed that the coming months could turn everything upside down—yet she knew she couldn't pass up this opportunity.

"When do I leave?" she finally asked.

"In six weeks," Jorin replied. "That's plenty of time to prepare. And don't worry, I'll be there with you. It's much less intimidating when you have someone who knows the ropes."

A faint smile crossed Elina's lips, and a spark of determination grew inside her. She wanted to take on this challenge, even if she didn't yet know what awaited her at Wolf's Peak.

Aruna stood up and placed a hand on Elina's head. "I'm so proud of you," she said gently. "And I know your father would be, too."

The words hit Elina like a warm current. The thought of her father, whom her mother rarely spoke about, gave her an extra sense of courage. Somehow, it felt as if this was the path she was meant to take—not just for herself, but for her family as well.

"Then I suppose I should start packing," she finally said, attempting a confident smile.

Jorin leapt up, grinning from ear to ear. "That's the Elina I know!"

The next few hours passed in a blur. Elina retrieved an old travel bag and began packing her favorite books, clothes, and small keepsakes. Meanwhile, Jorin told her stories of his first days at Wolf's Peak, of the floating staircases and the enchanted libraries he had explored.

As evening fell and the stars appeared in the sky, Elina sat by the window with her packed bag beside her, gazing out. The thought that she would soon be part of this magical world was both thrilling and terrifying. But deep in her heart, she knew she was ready.

"Wolf's Peak, here I come," she whispered before closing her eyes.

Chapter 4: Farewell and Departure

The final days before departure were a mix of excitement, nervousness, and quiet moments. As Elina packed her bag, Jorin's stories about Wolf's Peak echoed in her mind. She placed each book carefully in its spot, folded her clothes neatly, and paused when she held the small journal she planned to bring. Its empty pages felt like a promise—a promise of adventures waiting ahead.

Aruna was always nearby. Sometimes she helped Elina pack; other times she brought things her daughter might have forgotten. But now and then, she seemed lost in thought, her eyes filled with pride but also with worry.

"You'll amaze them," Aruna said one evening as she brushed a stray lock from Elina's face. Her voice was calm but full of conviction. "They will see how special you are."

Elina smiled faintly, but the words left a heavy feeling inside her. The responsibility they carried frightened her. What if she couldn't meet her mother's expectations? What if she failed?

On the last evening, she sat with Jorin on the veranda. The sky was clear, the stars twinkling like tiny beacons. "You know," Jorin began, leaning back in his chair, "I was just as nervous when I left for the first time. But once you get there, you'll realize it feels right. You'll see that you're capable of more than you think."

Elina looked at him, wanting to say something, but the words caught in her throat. Instead, she just nodded, hoping he was right.

Epilogue: The Secret of the Nightblossom Family

The stillness of the evening lay heavy over the Nightblossom house, yet inside, a tense quiet filled the air. Elina and Jorin sat at the large wooden table, facing their mother, Aruna. The room was bathed in the warm glow of candlelight, casting soft shadows over the ancient books and artifacts lining the shelves. A sense of familiarity surrounded them, but Elina could feel it—something unspoken lingered in the air, something Aruna had kept hidden until now.

“You have accomplished something truly remarkable,” Aruna began, her voice gentle yet firm. “The Crystal of Purity is whole once more, and I am endlessly proud of you. But there is something I have kept from you—not out of mistrust, but to protect you.”

Jorin studied her intently. “You mean why the White Stag is so connected to us?” His voice was calm, but his eyes betrayed his curiosity and need for answers.

Aruna nodded slowly, folding her hands in front of her. “It is time you learned the truth. Your connection to the White Stag and the crystal is no coincidence. It is rooted in our family—in your father.”

Elina’s breath caught. “Our father? You’ve barely spoken about him.”

Aruna lowered her gaze for a moment, lost in memories, before lifting her head again, determination shining in her eyes. “Your father, Caelum Nightblossom, was no ordinary man. He was a Guardian of Balance, a mage of

extraordinary power and wisdom. Alongside the White Stag, he protected the world from darkness—long before you were born.”

Jorin frowned. “Why have we never been told this? Why keep it from us?”

“Because his legacy is dangerous,” Aruna replied. “Your father fought against Malrik when he tried to destroy the Crystal of Purity. It was a battle that nearly plunged the entire magical world into chaos. Caelum sacrificed himself to save the White Stag and the crystal. He knew that one day, the fragments would need to be reunited—and he knew that his children would be the ones to do it.”

Elina felt the weight of this revelation settle over her. The amulet she had carried for so long suddenly took on a new meaning. “The amulet... It belonged to him, didn’t it?”

Aruna nodded, a sad smile crossing her lips. “It was his most treasured possession. He infused it with our family’s magic, ensuring that one day, it would guide you. The amulet is not just an artifact—it is a part of him, a piece of his light.”

Jorin leaned back, his gaze drifting toward the flickering candle flames as he processed his mother’s words. “He was preparing us, even though we never knew it.”

“Yes,” Aruna said. “And now, you have continued his work. But your task is not yet complete. The crystal is safe, but the balance of the world remains fragile. You are now the Guardians of this balance. It is your responsibility to protect the light—not just from Malrik, but from anything that might allow darkness to rise again.”

Elina placed her hand over the amulet, feeling the warmth that radiated from it. “We won’t fail him. For Father, for the

White Stag—for everyone who depends on us.”

Aruna placed her hands over theirs, her gaze filled with both pride and concern. “I know you are ready for this responsibility. But never forget —true strength does not lie in magic alone. It lies in the bonds you share—with each other, and with those who believe in you.”

The night passed, and the Nightblossom house was filled with a quiet determination. Later, as Elina and Jorin stood by the window, gazing up at the stars, they both felt it—a greater purpose waiting for them.

“Malrik will return,” Jorin said, his voice calm but resolute.

Elina nodded, her eyes fixed on the glittering night sky. “Then we’ll be ready.”

In their hearts, they knew they would honor their father’s legacy and protect the balance of the world. Darkness might not have surrendered, but the light within them had grown stronger—and as long as they stood together, it would never fade.