

## CHAPTER 37: THE TAINTED ONE

"What?" Claire snarled in disbelief, her eyes wide with shock as she stared at Eunice. Raped? Her Eunice was raped? Claire tried to process the information, but it was too much for her. She believed now that she had a second chance, that meant everything was going to be fine in her life. So how could such a thing happen to poor angelic Eunice?

Claire felt rage burst into her body, her wolf Mia just as outraged as her at the thought of someone doing something this heinous to Eunice. She was such a sweet soul who deserved the best in life. A loving mate who cared for her regardless of her status and a happy life with him. That was what she deserved. Not to be tortured and humiliated like this!

As she looked at Eunice, Claire felt anger and frustration rising inside her with each angry breath. She knew Eunice had some problem, but even in her wildest imagination; it didn't occur to her that such a thing could have happened inside the safety of their pack territory. How could a stranger creep into their territory and rape a helpless woman? Just how did that happen?!

"I tried to fight him off me b-but he was too big. I begged him to s-stop. I pleaded that I had a man waiting for me. I begged him to just k-kill me instead of such a humiliation," Eunice cried, her eyes wide with terror as if she was back in the moment, reliving the nightmare. "But he just laughed and continued, enjoying my struggles and pain. He just destroyed me."

Claire literally saw red, her nails digging into her palms as they turned sharper with her rage. She could feel Mia trying to take over to avenge Eunice, who she thought of as family. She could feel her body

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getting ready to change before she made a conscious decision to do so, and she was absolutely ready to do it. She was ready to shift and hunt the bastard who did this to Eunice. And she was going to kill him slowly and painfully, making him regret ever glancing at Eunice. He will pay for what he did to Eunice!

Claire almost shifted, her desire to hunt, maim and kill Eunice's rapist growing stronger in her mind as Mia prepared to take over. They will avenge Eunice!

Eunice was now back to crying hysterically, her whole body wracking with her heartbreaking sobs, making Claire's rage turn to sadness and guilt. She couldn't bear to see Eunice like this. Even in her last life, when everyone hated and humiliated Claire, she hadn't been disgraced like this.

Claire remembered the mortification and panic she went through in her last life when she was attacked by the man sent by Liam and Diana. She was drugged by an aphrodisiac by that man and for the few moments that she knew he was going to rape her, Claire had gone through hell. She could still remember the panic, helplessness, and humiliation she felt at those moments, even now.

When she was about to be raped by that man, Sebastian had burst inside before pummeling him to a pulp and saving her. But then she had to sleep with Sebastian because the aphrodisiac's effects were too intense by then and could have even taken her life. It was not rape by a stranger and he had been gentler and sweeter than Liam had ever been to her. Still, it hadn't happened because she wanted to, and Claire had been upset after the event. So Claire could only imagine how Eunice, who actually went through that horrendous experience, would feel. She could only hope her sweet friend would get over this pain someday, even if she knew it would not be any day

soon.

Claire felt her heart weigh with guilt at the thought that it all happened because of her. Had she agreed to accompany Eunice when she had asked her, this wouldn't have happened to her. She could have prevented that man from touching, let alone even glancing at Eunice the wrong way. Her sweet Eunice wouldn't have gone through such a traumatic event, and she wouldn't have become so lost and broken like this. It was all her fault!

Claire sighed, looking at Eunice, who was letting out whimpers as if remembering about what had happened to her. If only she could go back in time again. But she had no idea how it had happened the last time, let alone how to repeat it. All she could do was try to comfort Eunice and bring her back to normal life. Being raped was not her fault, and she deserved to have a happy life!

Claire straightened up, determination flaring through her. She will track down that bastard and make him pay. If his death will help Eunice get over her trauma, Claire will gladly do it.

Claire looked at Eunice with fire in her eyes.

"Eunice, look at me," she ordered, and hearing her powerful voice, Eunice stopped crying and looked up. Having gained her attention, Claire continued speaking.

"I promised to always protect you, and I failed that promise. But now I vow you. I will find the bastard who did this to you and I will show him what hell is."

Eunice just blinked at her dazedly, as if she couldn't process the words. As if revenge was a concept that was far from her grasp. She was too shaken up by the ordeal she suffered to think of things like

making her tormentor suffer at this point. But she will reach that state once and by that time Claire will bring justice to her.

Claire sighed, looking at Eunice sitting there like a broken doll. This girl was so full of life just a day ago, her eyes full of hope for a life with Devin. Claire straightened up, remembering Devin. Shit! How will he react after knowing what happened to Eunice?

"Eunice, are you going to tell Devin about this?" Claire asked in a tentative voice. If she wishes to tell Devin, Claire will be there to support her. And if she didn't, that was totally fine too, because she had the right to choose who to share this information with.

Eunice shook her head in response, fresh tears welling up in her eyes.

"I can't. I have to stay away from him from now on. Even though I am just a wolfless omega, I was greedy enough to fall for him. I was stupid to hope that I had a future with him. I was already unworthy of him, but now I am tainted by the touch of that vile man. I am worthless!" She cried out before sighing in defeat. "Maybe the Goddess is warning me to remember my identity, to stop wishing for things beyond me."

"Eunice! You are the sweetest soul I have ever met, and what happened to you doesn't define you. It was not your fault and you don't need to suffer for the sin someone else did! You are not tainted. If anything, the bastard who did this is the tainted one," Claire cried out passionately, her voice raising angrily. Then she sighed. "Devin would know this too, and if he doesn't, it is his loss. But never, ever think that you are worthless. Because you aren't and will never be!"

Claire shook her head, trying to gather her thoughts. She had seen the tender way Devin looked at Eunice, the smile on his face as she talked to him animatedly, the anxiety he felt when Diana attacked

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Eunice... Claire knew Devin had feelings for Eunice and they were deeper than Eunice herself knew. She enjoyed seeing the glow in Eunice's face when she talked about Devin and thought that the two were perfect for each other regardless of their status difference. With her confidence and kindness, Eunice would be the perfect Luna for Devin. But Eunice believed she wasn't worthy enough for him and wanted to stay away from him.

Claire sighed and looked up, as if searching for the divine powers responsible for the things that kept happening to her and her close ones. She didn't understand why two people who loved each other could go through so many challenges. First it was Sebastian and her who couldn't even reveal their feelings to each other regardless of loving each other passionately. And now Eunice and Devin had such deep feelings for each other, but their happiness was snatched away from them just like that. They all loved each other so much, but life threw hurdles at them every turn they took. Why can't they just get happy lives with the people they love? Is it too much to wish to live a quiet life with their love?

At that moment, Claire heard some noise from outside, startling her out of her thoughts, and she stiffened. She turned to look at Eunice, who just sat there stiffly, giving no hint that she had heard the noise. With another sigh, Claire stood up and walked out of the room. She looked around and frowned, but saw no one in the corridor. Maybe she had imagined the sound?

Claire turned, moving back towards the room, only to freeze. There in front of her, looking out of place on the white-tiled floor, were a few blood-red roses...