

## Chapter 11: Dreams

I found myself inside a hospital room. This room... It was quite familiar.

Of course, how could I forget it? It was the hospital where I gave birth to my beautiful daughter.

I felt her warm little body in my arms.

That moment when I gave birth to her... it was very painful.

Many times I felt like I was about to die... But when I finally got her in my arms, as she cried loudly? I couldn't feel any happier.

I think it was the happiest moment in my life. Even more than when my husband proposed to me.

My precious little Elena... She was so small, and wrinkly like a raisin.

But she was the most precious thing.

"She's so beautiful..."

My husband at my side smiled warmly, as he caressed her cheeks gently while she was being breastfed.

"Isn't she? I am glad she's healthy... Hahh... I am so tired..."

"You should rest for now," he said. "The doctors say that women are the most delicate after giving birth, you need some good rest."

"How can I rest when I have this precious little treasure in my arms? I just can't..." I sighed. "I want to be awake all night just admiring her..."

My husband smiled warmly, as he kissed me.

"Thank you for bringing her into our life," He said. "It was hard, but you did it well... You're really a hard worker..."

"Well, thank you for being at my side," I said. "Now you have to prepare to clean poop diapers, haha!"

"Ugh, You're right..." he sighed. "But for her? I would do anything..."

"So how do we name her?" I asked.

"I... I want to name her after my grandmother... who died some years ago..." said my husband. "Elena... Is it possible? Is it okay for you?"

"Elena... Hm! I like it... Let's name her Elena then," I said. "I'll name her Julia like my young sister..."

"Julia, I remember her too," said my husband. "I am sure that she's in God's embrace now."

"Me too..." I sighed. "Me too..."

"Elena Julia then. Two beautiful names from two wonderful women..." said my husband. "I'm sure she's going to grow up into a healthy and nice girl... I can't wait to see her grow up."

"Me too, we are up for a ride..." I said. "We have to prepare well for everything..."

"Yes, But with you at my side..." he said with a faint smile. "I am sure that we'll get through anything."

"Aww... Dear..."

"I love you..."

"I love you too..."

...

Ah...

It was all a dream.

I woke up at 9 AM due to the alarm clock and it seemed that things were back to normal.

Did I really have a dream about that time I gave birth? Maybe missing my little girl was really making me remember some old memories...

Sigh...

I looked at the other side of my bed, as I found it empty. I slowly moved to the side and hugged the pillows there.

This side was where my husband used to sleep at.

Now that I was sleeping all alone... it feels so empty.

Maybe... I should get a smaller bed?

But I cannot really bring myself to move aside the bed where he used to sleep with me.

I closed my eyes and breathed in slowly. I buried my face into the pillow. His scent... still lingered here and smiled sadly. I've washed the entire bed by now but... this single pillow I hug every morning? I have kept it well clean, and all... but... I have not washed it because I fear that the last remaining part of him would fade away from my life if I do.

I didn't want that...

I wish you could have lived a bit longer.

I missed you so much...

...

Something warm trickled down and I soon realized that tears spilled down my cheeks.

Ah, I was crying again... I was such a crybaby...

"Okay! Time to wake up! No more crying!"

I jumped out of bed and quickly went to the bathroom, and washed my face with some cold water, and cleaned my tears in the process.

I looked into my face in the mirror. Brown skin, emerald eyes, long brown hair... were there some fine lines? Not yet. But I could see that I was not really as youthful as before... I really am not.

I was slowly growing older and older.

Life is so delicate... it all fades away in an instant.

I have to live my life better and get my relationship fixed with my daughter. I didn't want to die with regrets.

Ah... Why was I crying again?

Sigh...

I washed my face again and then decided to take a warm bath to relax.

It had only been five years since he went away, but it still felt like it was yesterday that he was sleeping at my side, hugging me, kissing me, loving me...

I just wish... I wish I could feel his warmth once more... even a little bit more.

The warm water slowly washed away my depressive thoughts, as I ended up crying some more while taking a shower.

My mother always called me a crybaby... I always cried for everything, and even now, after growing so old, I was still crying.

I wish I could be a bit like in the game and have strength. The strength to move forward...

What would you do in this situation, Julian? I guess if it was me the one that passed away... Well, maybe you would be the same as I am.

We were really inseparable...

Ah...

Knock, knock.

"Oh? Who is it?"

Wrapping a towel around my body, I walked outside my room and looked into the window to see who it was. It was my daughter who came... with her friend?!

She came with her friend!

Ah! S-Shit! I have not even gotten clothes!

And where are her keys?!

"Mom? Mooom!"

My daughter began to call my name.

"I think she's sleeping, it is like nine AM after all, Elena..."

"But my mom always wakes up super early..."

"Hm... Well, don't you have a key? Just take it out of the backpack, sloth."

"Ugh... okay..."

I walked towards the door before my daughter would open it, even if I was half-naked, I had to do it!

"H-Hello, I was taking a shower, dear... Oh, Anna! Welcome..." I said.

"Eh? Mother you're half-naked..." sighed Elena.

"I was taking a shower!" I cried.

"G-Good morning, Lady Elayne..." said Anna. Her face was red as her gaze took note of my body.

"Good morning, dear! Come here," I said, a tad embarrassed.

But then I brushed it off as I kissed my daughter's cheek and then pecked Anna's cheek. The little Anna was a beautiful red-haired girl with blue eyes. She had been my daughter's friend since she was around twelve, so I was quite fond of her at this point.

"Mom, I told you she was coming through the phone... You never read anything," said Elene.

"I-I was asleep just a bit ago! Give me a break..." I sighed. "Let me change into some clothes and I'll prepare you girls some breakfast, okay? Anything you want!"

"No, we'll go out in a bit," said my daughter.

"Eh?!" I cried.

"Come on, Elena, let's enjoy your mother's breakfast. My mom never cooks me anything..." Anna sighed. "You're so lucky to have a mother that makes you tasty food. I've tasted the lunch boxes you got, they're so tasty!"

"Sigh... Okay..." Elena quickly gave up to her friend's request.

"Oh my, I am so happy you like my food, Anna. If you want I can make a second lunchbox for you, so Elena brings it to you!" I said.

"W-What? Seriously?" she asked. "But that... isn't the food money?"

"What? It doesn't matter! I always end up with some food leftover that I have to either refrigerate or eat myself, I prefer to give it to you rather than grow fatter than I already am," I said. "Now girls sit there for now, I will come back in a second!"

"Okay, we'll wait for you, lady Elayne!" said Anna.

"You're way too clingy with my mother..." said Elena.

"What's wrong? Jealous? If you don't take advantage of such a good mother, I might end up stealing it from you, hehe..." giggled Anna.

"Don't joke with stuff like that," said Elena.

"Geh... in the mornings you're always so dead serious..." sighed Anna.

I heard the girls talk about stuff. It seemed that even Anna found my daughter overly serious all the time. I am glad she was not like that only with me, but at the same time that also worried me...

I quickly moved back to the bath and finished bathing, washed my hair and then quickly got some clothes while drying my hair with a hairdryer.

I swiftly wore some sandals and went to the kitchen to cook something for the girls who were sitting there discussing about... the game.

"Elena, have you reached Level 200 yet? You're so slow..." said Anna. "I am already Level 200, and I unlocked the new leveling area... Hehe, my pet evolved just now, so the Phoenix is even stronger. She just gained the ability to take a humanoid form now!"

"Huh, Beast Tamers must have it easy..." said my daughter. "Unlike you, I have to train very hard to gain my EXP..." My daughter closed her eyes in a dignified manner.

Of course, they had no idea that I also played the game, so I had to pretend I didn't know what they were even talking about.

"You girls... What are you talking about? A game?" I asked.

"It's nothing," said my daughter.

"Yeah! New Life Online! We have played it a lot since you bought the console from Elena!" said Anna.

"Anna! Stop answering anything my mother asks you..." sighed my daughter.

It seemed that my daughter didn't like to share this info with me for some reason. Perhaps she felt a bit embarrassed or something?

"Oh, so you're enjoying that game, isn't it? So what are your names in the game? Did you pick some random name? I can't believe there would be someone really called after my daughter there, right?" I asked. This was my perfect opportunity to know my daughter's nickname.

I tried to ask it in the most casual manner as I began making pancakes batter, Anna was so attentive she quickly answered.

"My in-game name is Clementine, and Elena's name is... Haha, wait for it..." said Anna.

"Wait! Don't..." muttered my daughter.

"She's named Dark Reaper... Very edgy." said Anna.

"Dark Reaper? Why did you choose such an eerie name, dear?" I asked and glanced over my shoulder. I smiled. "You could have just used Julia or something!"

"I can name myself however I want in the game... it also fits my race..." said my daughter angrily. She took a deep breath and then sighed.

"Oh, what's your race?" I asked.

"She's a—" muttered Anna.

"Okay stop! Don't tell her everything, it's so embarrassing..." said Elena.

"Geez. Okay, okay... Sorry," said Anna.

"W-Well, you don't have to feel forced..." I sighed.

At the very least I got her name now!