

Eternally Damned: Chapter 6

Alexander

I don't know how I got to the living room. One minute, I'm trying to grab a pile of ash, then there is darkness, and now I'm here, watching this beautiful mad woman.

This human has lost her damn mind.

I stare down at her with my arms crossed. I can't stop admiring her beauty. Her hair is up, settled on top of her head in a messy nest of sorts. There's one waving piece that's framing her face. Her eyes remind me of the emerald gems my mother used to wear. Only the best and most expensive for mother.

This woman's skin seems soft and there are freckles all over her body that I want to explore the longer I stare at them. My eyes drift to her neck, the vein there begging for my attention. I'd lick and suck, drive her wild until she's begging for me to sink my fangs into her while I drive my cock inside her too.

I shake my head.

Why am I having these thoughts? This stranger invades my home, says its hers, and nearly reads my journal.

And then has the nerve to call me dead.

She's infuriating. At the same time, she can't hear me or see me. I can't touch her, so maybe I am dead.

She's brought a Ouija board, but it glows in the dark.

Amateur.

She's obviously has never met a real witch. Their Ouija boards are the real deal. My family had a family witch long ago. I'll have to look in the records for her name, but

she was the strongest witch for centuries. No one dared to challenge us, but then she was captured by werewolves and burned at the stake.

“Okay. I’m not here to fight, okay? I just want to talk and maybe we can learn to coexist.”

Not a chance, but I’ll play along. I sit down on the other side of the board, and I’m caught in her stare, as if she can see me, but she looks through me instead. It... hurts, I find, the longer I think about it, the more I wish she could see me.

My soul is screaming at her to save me, but from what?

She places her hands on the planchette and I do the same, out of habit. I place my hands on top of hers and she lets out a shaky breath. I jerk my eyes from our hands. She can’t see me, and my hands disappear within hers, but she feels something.

“Can you feel me?” I ask her.

“Are you touching me?” she replies with a question.

“Yes,” I answer, forgetting she can’t hear me, and I move the planchette across the board to the Y.

She grins and a giddy squeal leaves her. “I knew it. Your touch, it’s warm, you know. It makes me feel... safe. It’s the only way I know how to explain it.”

I can’t explain it, but I know she’ll always be safe with me. I’d start and end wars for her. I’d protect her with my life.

“Did you touch me earlier when I was crying?” She asks again, and I move the planchette to the left for a split second before moving it back over to the Y.

She rolls her red lips together, wetting them with her tongue next and I memorize every curve of her mouth, wishing I was a man so I could take her, to fill this need building in my chest.

“I’m sorry I ran. It was unexpected.”

“It’s okay,” I reply, remembering to spell my response out on the board.

Her smile is bright enough to cast the loneliness out of the dark.

I find it’s the only night light I’m wishing for.

“Am I talking to Alexander Monreaux?”

I nod, then roll my eyes. How do I keep forgetting she can’t see me? I force the planchette to the Y.

“I knew it! Well, it’s nice to officially meet you, Alexander. My name is Maven Wildes.”

Wildes. Where do I know that name?

“It’s nice to meet you, Maven.” I make sure to spell out my response, watching as her lips form the words with each letter.

This human woman is very intriguing. Dare I say, I’m obsessed?

“I’m so happy we can communicate. I’m sure you were upset when you saw me before. I’m guessing that’s why you yelled at me?” Her cheeks tint as she looks away, nibbling her bottom lip.

Guilt eats away at me. “Long response,” I spell out, wanting her to get ready.

She nods and another piece of hair comes loose. Automatically, I reach out and try to tuck the unruly piece behind her ear, but my fingers brush against her cheek, a hint of sparks coming to life between us. Her eyes flutter shut, and she leans into my hand. While there’s a centimeter of space between where we could touch, I can feel her warmth.

My heart rate speeds and the bitterness in my soul unravels as I become closer with Maven.

She’s the answer to everything.

I just need to figure out what *everything* means.

I jerk my hand away and her eyes snap open, her long red lashes curling with every slow blink as she comes back to the present. She reminds me of when my brother has too many glasses of wine.

He's a lightweight.

"Wow." Her throat moves up and down as she swallows. She rubs her neck and laughs as if she's embarrassed. "Sorry. It's just this entire experience."

The fact that my touch felt amazing, because I felt the connection between us, has awakened something inside me.

"Anyway, back to the question?" Maven tries to get us back on track.

Right. The question.

I begin spelling out my reasoning for yesterday, keeping my movements slow. "I apologize for scaring you," I start with. "You came to me as a surprise. I don't remember anything. It's like I woke up from a very long nap and found you here, my home a wreck, and my family gone." I pause to take a minute to gather my thoughts and emotions. "Everything is black. I tried talking to you and I thought you were ignoring me. It was very frustrating as I am not the kind of man that is ever ignored," I end on a chuckle.

She rolls her eyes. "Cocky, much?"

"Confident," I correct her, remembering to spell it out. I sigh. "I realize you weren't ignoring me. You honestly couldn't see me or hear me. When I touched you, that is when I realized something wasn't right, that I wasn't present, not really, and I shook the house because..."

"You realized your reality," she completes my thoughts for me.

I slide the heart-shaped piece of wood to the Y.

"That's awful. I'm so sorry I disrupted you. Maybe I can help you?" she offers.

“I don’t know how,” I respond, wishing she could hear the sadness laced in my voice.

“Hmmm,” she stares at the board. “So, you’re a ghost, let’s start there.”

I shout in protest and shake the house, cringing when a piece of glass shatters in the distance. “Sorry,” I apologize.

She snickers and I find it adorable, wanting to hear it again. “So, you aren’t a ghost, is that what you’re saying?”

“In order to be a ghost, you’ve had to die. I haven’t died.” I don’t know how I know that; I just do.

“You have to be,” she corrects me, and I begin to get agitated.

I know what I fucking know.

“The year is 2021.”

I remove my hands from hers and gasp, holding a hand over my heart when I realize it’s been 121 years since I’ve last lived. What happened all those years ago?

“Alexander? Are you still here? My hands got cold.” She looks around for me even though she can’t see me, a sweet endearment that should make me feel better.

I press my palms against my forehead and try to breathe. 121 years. I let out an excruciating yell, the kind that holds pain and anger, the kind that hurts the lungs and the throat just by how loud it is.

The entire house rumbles again, the piles of ash being disrupted by the vibrations in the air. When I run out of breath, I inhale and roar again, a singular tear breaking free.

“Take my hand. Take it, Lex. Hold onto me,” she begs, desperation swirling on her tongue. “I know it hurts. I know.”

I can’t grab onto her, but I try anyway, those same sparks igniting between us at the attempt. I feel her warmth, the goodness in her soul, the thrum of her steady

heartbeat, and I focus on that. The rumbles slow until they eventually stop. I try to catch my breath, shoulders rising and falling.

Instead of answers, I'm only more confused.

"I'm here. It's okay," she shushes me as if I'm a baby needing cradled, yet her attempt to rub her thumb over my hand helps soothe me. "Do you see that?" She points to the golden sparks between us.

"Yes." I stare at the planchette to will it to move to the Y.

It works.

"Your pain... I feel it." She taps her chest. "Right here."

I remove my hand from hers and press it against her chest, her heart beating in the same untrusted rhythm as mine.

She gasps, her lips parting in invitation.

I lean in, then stop myself. We can't kiss.

"If you're upset about it being 2021, what year do you remember last?"

Her question yanks me from my sinful thoughts, wishing I could dip my tongue into the heat of her cavern, feeling the silk of her against me.

Removing my hand from her chest, the soft mound of her breast grazing my palm, I hold her hand again. "1900." The planchette scratches against the board.

"Oh my god." Her hand shakes as she covers her mouth. "How old are you?"

"Seventy." I answer, then change it. "Plus, 121."

"You're 191 years old." She laughs in disbelief.

"Vampires live a long time," I answer, watching her smile fade to shock.

"V-vampire?" she stutters. "The rumors are true?"

“I’m unaware of rumors.”

“This would be a lot easier if I could see you,” she says, seeming a bit pale from the news. “Vampires are real?”

“So are werewolves,” I add to the shock.

How is it that I remember those details, but I can’t remember events or reason? Why am I like this? Why do I find this woman so enthralling?

Maven clears her throat. “Not anymore. At least, I don’t think.” Her brows furrow.

“We always exist. You just haven’t seen us yet.”

I’m not sure how she feels about it. She isn’t passing out or crying, but she looks like she might throw up. It’s better than most humans.

Shaken, she asks the million-dollar question. “What’s the last thing you remember happening in 1900?” Maven stares at the board waiting for my answer as I think.

“I wish I could remember. Everything is dark. When you leave, it’s like I don’t exist. I fade into the nothing. When you’re here, I come to life again, but that’s all I know. Everything is uncertain. Maybe I am dead, but in my time, ghosts remembered how they died. They stick around for unfinished business or revenge. I don’t feel either of those things,” I say. “It’s like I’m stuck.”

Maven remains silent as she thinks, nibbling her bottom lip. “I’ll find a way to help you. I promise. I...” she suddenly seems nervous. “I bought this house at an auction, Lex.”

Lex.

My brother calls me something similar. I hate it when it comes from him, but I find I like it when the nickname falls from her blood-colored lips.

“I’ve wanted this property ever since I was a little girl. I’ve been drawn to it. Maybe it’s because I was meant to help you.”

I let out a built-up breath. "While, I hate my home went to auction, I'm glad it is you who bought it. I hear you have plans?"

"Yeah, but I'd like your help to restore it to the way it was?" She asks, once again staring at me as if she can see me.

I get lost in her eyes, the way they glitter in the moonlight casting down from the hole in the roof.

"I'd like that," I admit, my instincts telling me to pull her close and never let go.

She tucks her hair behind her ear and her cheeks turn a bashful shade of red. I wish I could feel how warm her skin is, experience the rush of blood rushing under her flesh like a raging river.

If I didn't know any better, I'd think this woman was meant to be mine.

In another life, in another form, in another world, I'd bind her to me. I have this life, this ghostly form in this world, and she deserves more than an apparatus.

She stands and wipes the dust off her odd waist overalls. "I guess I should get going...." She sounds unsure.

She doesn't want to go, and I don't want her to.

I reach out, taking her hand in mine and her head tilts to where we touch, the sparks of the veil between the living and the unknown colliding. "Don't go. I only exist when you're here," I admit, not wanting to fade into nothing. My heart isn't ready for her to leave either.

Her eyes widen, the whites of her eyes as big as moons. "Say it again?"

"I only exist when you're here," I repeat, watching as emotions I don't recognize rush over her face.

"I heard you."

I feel stronger every second she is here. Maybe that's why.

“I heard you, Lex!”

I smile, wishing she could see the relief on my face. “Thank goodness. Talking through that board took ages,” I joke.

Not that I had anything better to do.

“Yeah, but I would have waited all my life anyway,” she admits.

I cup her jaw with my hand, the sparks stronger and brighter.

It’s a barrier I intend to break. I don’t know how, but I will. I need to feel her in my arms.

Pressing my forehead against hers, I drag my other hand down her arm. The sparks tingling my fingertips. I don’t say anything and neither does she. Saying something might ruin everything. This moment is too hard to believe.

A vampire’s ghost and a human falling for one another?

It isn’t possible.

Yet, here we are.

“Stay?” I finally say after what seems like hours holding one another.

“You wanted me out yesterday.”

“And now I never want you to leave.” I only wish she could see me now, so she could see the want and need I have for her as I stare into her eyes.

“This is my house. I’m not going anywhere.”

I correct her, “*Our* house because I’m not either.”

With hesitation, she lifts her hands and tests the waters of touching me, hovering them right over my chest.

“Higher,” I say to her.

She slides her palms up to my neck and the glow the sparks create give her an outline of my chest, illuminating my form. She continues up, trailing her delicate fingers across my neck until she reaches my face.

She can finally see me, granted it's through light since our veils are hitting against one another, but it's how she reacts when her eyes land on mine.

"I've dreamed of you." Maven has a look of wonderment and astonishment on her beautiful face.

If I could dream, I have a feeling I'd dream of her too.