

Chapter 20 The Serum

ELIANA.

"This is a serum" Ivan stretched out of his hand and in it was a plastic amber bottle. An arch came between my eyes which fell to him. "I might have used the lab back in the Pack to create some sort of antidote for your father" He added. I couldn't whether to be relieved just yet.

"Now, it's not a total cure. Unless somehow we're able to stop them from poisoning him, that's our greatest chance. But this—" He handed it over to me, clenching my palms right after.

"This could slow down the progression of the poison in your father's system and it could buy us some time until we come up with a plan" He continued. "Ivan" My eyes narrowed thankfully.

"I did say we were going to figure something out, didn't I?" He shrugged.

"Thank you" I muttered. I had no idea he was even working on something but it was about time for some good news around here. My gaze fell on the serum as I held tighter around it.

"Your father," Ivan paused. "I'm doing this for him too. He may not have shown it in the best ways but he loved this Pack. Everything he did was in our own best interests" He said and I pressed my lips together.

My eyes darted to the floor.

'I wish he loved me too' I said, but only in my mind. I couldn't dare it say aloud but sometimes I felt if I at least had my father's love growing up, things would've turned out differently. For one, he wouldn't have married Selene and there would've been no Jaxon.

I wouldn't have had to endure hell growing up. More so, now too.

"I can see you love him too" Ivan's voice swelled in my ears as I drew my eyes to look up at him. "What?" I blurted out. "I mean you came back. After everything that happened and all this time, you still came back to help him. To help us."

"Your Grandmother wasn't so sure at some point. She was the only one who could reach you regardless but she didn't think you'd actually come" I scoffed with a lump forming in my throat.

"Of course I came" It wasn't even up for debate.

They are my family—these people.

Even if I wasn't theirs, they've always been mine still. My mother was such a loving person from the stories I'd heard, sometimes I think that's why I'm the way I am too, to a fault though.

She was one of the reasons I came back too. I could feel her around here, she was right here. Not in Tuscany. Right here.

"Not a lot of people would've though" Ivan purses his lips and mine lined in a half smile. I guess I wasn't like a lot of people.

Our eyes shifted once the door opened to my Grandma.

"I've finally been able to put him to sleep" She announced, wheeling herself into the room and my shoulders went flat. "Oh Elijah" I whispered.

"Could you blame him? The last few days have been especially rough for him" Nana said and it couldn't have hurt my heart any more that I was the reason he was in such terror. Ever since that day Jaxon came by, he's been convinced of even more monsters coming to the cabin.

I'd assured him more than a million times that I wouldn't ever let that happen but he never stopped asking for his father. Only then, he was convinced, would he feel truly safe. As for Denver, even if he stayed his distance which was only just a few meters from the driveway, I still saw him every time I went out.

To take out the trash, he'd be right there, parked in his truck and watching over the cabin. He wouldn't ever take no for an answer, that much was clear so I just stopped asking him. He was hellbent on keeping his brother and Jaxon away from here.

He was actually protecting us. Only if I could tell Elijah that the man outside our window was his father...but I couldn't.

"What's that?" My Grandmother's eyes soon met the bottle in my hands.

"It's a serum we're meant to give my dad. Ivan made it and it might be able to slow down the poison from affecting him so much and buy us some time—" I replied. "Exactly the opposite of what Jaxon wants" She said and I nodded. I knew he wanted to become Alpha.

And he wanted to become Alpha fast.

Everyone knew. It would only take a while for his patience to truly run thin. "And how will you be able to give your dad the serum?" Nana asked.

"Well," It was Ivan who chirped in.

"There's a parade at midnight." I looked at him. "Jaxon is meant to officially introduce the bride he's chosen from the Moonlight Ball to the members of the Pack, especially the Elders. It's Park rites" Ivan continued.

"A parade?" I echoed.

"Yes, we could do exactly what we did the last time and sneak into your father's chamber. Only one dose could last him a week" He replied. "And what if he's not alone like the last time?" I questioned.

"Oh he will be" Ivan was so certain.

"He's never at these things. Hell, he doesn't even know his son is already preparing to take over after his death. All he knows is all he's heard. Jaxon made sure to threaten everyone to stay away from your father" He added. "All he ever does is stay in that room, never comes out."

"So the only people that get to see him are Jaxon, Nora and Sienna."

"What if you're not able to get in this time?" Nana asked worriedly.

"That's why it must be tonight. At least none of them would be near the chamber. As for the guards, you could easily find a way around them like the last time" Ivan muttered and a glimmer of doubt ignited in my eyes.

"The last time..." I echoed. "The last time, someone died."

"I don't think it's safe" Nana refuted. "You can't send her all by herself into the lion's den. Not when he knows now that she's around" She said.

"I can't go along too. I have to be there at the Parade. He's already noting the unusually long hours I spend down here. I think it's really risky because he can always replace me at any time. If even he finds out about this serum, I'd have a sword in my chest by midnight" Ivan continued.

"But you simply can't go alone. It's dangerous!" Nana persisted and in the dawn of a brief silence, Ivan walked to the windowsill and looked out.

"No" I blurted from my lips.

"He can follow you" He still suggested nonetheless. "Hell, he will even be happy to." He added. "No" I turned to my Grandma who nodded. It was clear she was on his side.

"He wants to protect you so allow him to do that" She uttered.

"You don't understand" I scoffed.

"I understand that you both have a rough history but that was six years ago, Eliana. Don't you think it's time to not even just move on, but to at least face the bigger problem?" Nana spilled and I bit into my lips.

"He's going with you and that's final" She still found a way to stamp her feet even with the wheelchair and a groan escaped my lips as I walked up the stairs. "Fine" I grudgingly agreed, already dreading the next few hours. I made my way into my room.

It was almost 10 PM which meant we didn't have that much time anymore. So I slipped into some pants and wore on a lavender top. On second look, it was a bright color for someone who's supposed to be invisible. So I went with a black leather jacket too.

Slipping my hands through the long sleeves, I made my way down the stairs. "Stay safe" Nana chuckled as I hissed. Ivan was already gone by then but unfortunately, Denver wasn't.

As soon as I opened my front door, there he was, still parked across the roads. "Please goddess, give me patience tonight" I muttered beneath my breath as I crossed over to his car. I pulled my hands out from my pocket and knocked against his window.

I could hear him blasting an 80s rock song before he even pulled it down.

And he didn't hide the surprise in his eyes.

"Open up!" I clutched the handle of his door and he scoffed in disbelief.

"Well those are words I never thought I'd hear" He remarked sarcastically and it took a lot of self-control to not roll my eyes to the back of my head at that moment. "Don't be gross" The locks clicked. I opened the door and stepped into his car.

"I told you to leave but you don't, which is fine now! Because you're going with me to my Pack for the parade—"

"The...what?" I could barely hear him over the loud banging music so I just turned it off. "Please enough with the God awful music...The parade" I replied to him, also reaching across to start the car engines with the keys. He looked back and forth with a stick between his lips.

"I have no idea what's going on but it's hot seeing you all bossy" He kicked the car into gear and with his arm over my head, he reversed out of the driveway. "Again," I scrunched my whole face at him.

"Don't be gross"

"You know we were married once, surely there's—" Regrettably, I turned up the volume of the radio. It was playing a song that physically made me almost slice my ears but it wasn't nearly as bad as hearing Denver.

He turned to me with a smirk across his lips and I tore my eyes off him to look out the car windows.

God! It was going to be a very long night.