

## Chapter 30 No More Secrets

ELIANA.

My feet grudgingly struck the ground as I sat up. A yawn parted my lips and I consecutively ran my hands through my messy hair. Once my fingers hit the silky, uneven sheets of the bed, last night's heated memories came flooding back to me.

"No no. Shit" I clamped over my lips as blood rushed into my face. The hairs stood on my arms as I paced around the room. I couldn't believe it happened. I couldn't believe last night happened at all.

As my palms fell, so did my lips. When I reached the mirror, I halted for a moment. Staring down at my reflection, my fingers traced the ends of my skin until they grazed against my bruised neck. Denver's bite had nearly healed although there was still a scar there.

I feared there would always be a scar for the rest of my life as a reminder of last night. It was just supposed to be the ceremony! But my wolf, Aria came on so strong. I batted my lashes each time I remembered. The last thing I wanted in my head was Denver.

But even as I woke up to an empty space beside me, his aura and presence still lingered around the room. It was his Pack, I guess but it wasn't just that. It was the feeling of his touch that had registered unknowingly in my head. His woosy cologne that trickled up my nose.

I could feel him so much.

Maybe it was the bite too, but sex with him had only strengthened our mate bond even more. I wasn't sure when he left but thankfully, he did. I would've hated for him to see like this.

I tore myself from the front of the mirror before ravaging through my closet for a fresh pair of clothes to leave for Blood Hound later that day. I couldn't afford to spend another night here not to talk of being in the same room with Denver.

I was reeling with regret that I ever had to see him again. He was witty and egotistic more than a copious amount on a normal day. He would be even more dreadful, especially after last night.

I pulled out my only other clothes and laid it out on the bed. Running my fingers through my hair again, I sighed with exhaustion.

How could I have given myself so easily to him?

It was me who made the rules and ultimately, it was me who broke them too. "Fuck!" I looked up at the door once I heard a knock on it. And my heart suddenly sank in my chest.

It couldn't be him.

I scrambled to the ground to reach for my brassiere and after wearing it, I threw on the closest top I could find. I fluttered my hair and then pulled the door open.

"Thelma!" The shock was evident in my eyes as I called her name, and so was the relief that washed across my face some moments after. Thank goodness it wasn't him. I wasn't ready yet.

"I was coming for a run and said I should stop by" Thelma smiled, her eyes wandering past the wedged door. The room was a mess, there was no need for her to come inside.

"Anyway..." Awkwardness ravaged the air between us.

"How was the suite? I hope you slept good?" I pushed a hard lump down my throat. "Of course, it was—I was really good. I mean...comfortable. It was really comfortable. Not good...comfortable" Why was I stuttering?

Oh my God.

Even Thelma could tell something was wrong, by how her brows arched over her eyes. "Are you okay, Eliana?" She asked. I smiled. "Why won't I be?" I replied. "I only just woke up so my mind's a bit of a blur" I said.

"And your hair," She pressed her lips together. My fingers unconsciously picked at the standing ends. "You really had a good sleep I can tell for sure" Thelma chuckled and I exhaled in embarrassment.

"It's okay, there's nothing wrong with spending the night with the Alpha—" "The Alpha!" My jaw hung loose. "Yeah, I mean. Last night, I was coming from the kitchen after getting a glass of water and I saw him creeping out of your room. It was so funny" She laughed but only after she realized there wasn't anything funny, did she clear her throat.

God, I was dying at that moment.

I couldn't believe there was a witness.

"I'm sorry?" She whispered, pulling out something from her bag. "Shoot! I didn't realize I wasn't supposed to talk about that. This is what Cory says, I have a really big mouth, unfortunately" She swept it under the rug and I folded my arms across my chest.

"It's okay, really. It happened I guess" I scoffed, deciding to be a little more mature about it. "I brought you some clothes too. Didn't know whether you were leaving today or not but I just figured you could—" She handed them over to me.

"That's so thoughtful, but I actually have something that I'm wearing" I smiled politely but within a split second, she pushed past the door and into the suite. My arms fell with a sigh.

"Is this what you're wearing?" Her eyes landed on the clothes on the bed and when she lifted them back up at me, her face was far from pleased.

"What?" My hands nervously grazed the back of my head. She tossed the simple top and pants I had already laid out to the side. "Ouch?" I remarked. "Come on, Eliana. You're Luna now. This is THE day after your mating ceremony. Everybody will be looking at you," Thelma said.

"So you better dress the part. Luckily, I'm here to help you" She smiled deviously, roping my arms towards the mirror. "Think of me like a genie—" "A genie?" I echoed. She nodded.

"A makeover genie." She tapped my shoulders. "Now, take off this top" She said and I scoffed. "Shit, I had it on backwards the whole time" I only just realized and Thelma chuckled.

"That was what gave" She said. "Last night must've truly been intense. You know Cory and I got lucky too!" She whispered, bumping her arms into me and I gasped. "Thelma!" Before a laughter echoed from my lips.

"It wasn't my fault! Something about the mating ceremony was just so hot and awakening" She said. "Wouldn't be surprised if baby number three was already on the way" She joked. And with Thelma, I realized I was always just laughing. She was so funny.

Back then, she was the only person that made me feel at home the first time and now, here she was again. She sat me down on the chair, ready to straighten my hair from the hot mess it currently was.

"What about you?" Thelma puckered her lips. "Should we be expecting a baby on the way soon?" She asked. "I'll pass" I scuffed, like my mind didn't instantly go to Elijah. I'd been away from him for more than a day now. Nothing hurt me more as a mother than spending time away from my son whom I loved with all my heart.

But I'll pass on another, especially if it was Denver's.

Hell, he didn't even know about Elijah still. I had no idea when I was going to tell him I even had a son or whether I was never going to mention it.

Each time I thought about my secret, I couldn't even pretend my heart wasn't heavy.

On one hand, there was the need to give Elijah what he wanted which was a family. And on the other hand, the fear that if Denver ended up knowing about him or anyone at least, they'd try to take him away from me. And I could survive a lot of things but losing Elijah—I wouldn't be able to survive that.

"Eliana" Thelma's gentle voice roped me out of my thoughts and I fluttered my lashes at her. "You left for a second, like your mind wandered elsewhere" She added and I scoffed lightly.

"Really?" Pressing my lips together, I looked into the mirror and could feel my heart pulsating in my chest. That was the thing about secrets—I'd always questioned when it would all come out alas.

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"See," Her voice towered over me as I stood in front of the mirror. "You look even more gorgeous!" Thelma complimented. The makeover nearly lasted two hours and she was right. Her dress did in fact, fit better.

It was an emerald green, long, satin gown with a slit that went as high as my thighs. "The Alpha wouldn't be able to take his eyes off you" She added. I scoffed.

"That's the opposite of what I want" I replied. She chuckled.

"Are you coming downstairs now?" She clung to the door for a moment and I looked over my shoulder with a soft sigh. "Yeah" And when the door closed, my fingers found the side of my neck.

"Ah!" I exclaimed faintly, touching his bite once again. And this time, it was a reminder of what was coming as soon as we got back to my Pack.

But still, nothing could've prepared us.

"The car is waiting outside" Cory said to me as I sauntered down the stairs and he helped me onto the front porch. As soon as I made it outside, the breeze refreshed my face and ran through my hair. But then, I saw him.

And my heart dropped.

"My Luna," Denver walked all the way to open the car door for me and I couldn't resist rolling my eyes to the back of my head. "What now?" I scoffed. "You're really so difficult to please, aren't you?" His lips pouted.

"One might think things might change after the passion-filled night we shared" He was inches from my face when his gaze to my lips. A nasty grimace crawled onto his lips. This was what I was saying.

I hit him in his chest and he backed away.

"Not a single word about last night. It won't ever happen again" I gritted through my teeth and made my way into the car. He closed the door, standing for a moment with a smile across his lips. And when our eyes met, Denver winked at me.

He made his way into the passenger's seat and I already began dreading the whole ride home. Luckily, it was as quiet as it was fast. A little faster than how we came. When Cory pulled over, I looked at the Cabin in disbelief.

"Nana!" Alighting the car, I immediately ran toward her and he held me in for a lasting hug. "How did it go?" She whispered, letting her gaze to my neck and then she smiled. I nodded my head.

"Oh Eliana!" She hugged me again.

The sound of Denver's footsteps drew closer to the front porch and when I looked at him, he had one of my bags in his hand.

"And thank you, Alpha Denver" I didn't know my Grandma was going to pull him back the way she did. "Thank you for agreeing to this. The whole Pack owes you a lot—"

"I haven't even fought the guy yet" He joked, inching closer to the door when I stepped in front of him. "You can...drop it here" I requested, standing in front of the door.

Elijah was inside and he could be in the living room for all I knew. There was no use risking it.

"Are you sure?" He looked at my Grandma who ultimately figured out the reason why I halted him. Even Denver could sense something was wrong, unfortunately. "Yes," I flashed a smile, taking the bag from his hand and the other from Cory. "Thank you" I muttered.

"So you're not going to invite me in?" He shrugged with a chuckle. I pressed my lips together. "There's no use coming in. I'm sure the house is a mess" I lied. He crossed his arms once my Grandma left.

"Can I talk to you for a moment?" He stepped down the porch. I followed him. "If it has anything to do about last nig—" "It doesn't" He sharply interrupted and his tone sliced through me.

"Before the ceremony, you made your rules and I gave you just one of mine which was what?" Denver asked. A hard lump went down my throat.

"Trust?" I mouthed.

"Exactly."

"And no secrets, Eliana. If this is going to work, we must trust each other because if we don't, we give the enemies an advantage" He added.

"And you're telling me this why?" There was a crack in my voice and my heart was pounding in my chest, yet I stood confidently so if there was a way Denver couldn't read through me, he wouldn't actually see that I was hiding something. But it doesn't mean he didn't have his doubts.

"I need you to tell me now if you're keeping something from me" He replied tensely and the air between us was cold. My hands rubbed together nervously and I'd lie if I said if I didn't think about telling him the truth just then.

Because even I was tired of the secrets. But I wasn't sure. I didn't think it was the right time yet. And I covered my chin with a light scoff. "I'm not, Denver" I lied. Denver's eyes still stared intensely for a moment.

But that was before he pulled away.

"I believe you" Those words hit me like a storm as guilt stung my chest a little bit. He pulled away from me with a smirk. "I'll see you tomorrow" Denver said. "Or maybe tonight." He struck a finger at me.

"Just look out your window" There, he did it again. He winked at me and my heart swelled in my chest for a moment. As he made his way into the car, a faint smile curled at the corner of my lips.

He pulled away with Cory and I ran my fingers through my hair with relief.

"He knows," I told my Grandma as I walked back to the porch. "Knows what?" She asked. "He knows I'm hiding something from him" I halted.

"Elijah!" She heaved and I nodded my head. "It's going to be a lot harder keeping him away now that we're mated." I whispered with genuine concern in my eyes and she reached for my hands.

"It's going to be a lot harder now in general." My Grandma was usually the optimistic one but at that moment, not so much. I looked up at her, as she squeezed my hands.

"But we're going to get through this, together."

I'm not sure whether she said it because she genuinely believed or because she felt she had to. But only one thing was certain now, war was coming, and it was never going to be easy taking Jaxon down.