

## Chapter 35 You Must Be Sacrificed

ELIANA.

I had voices coming from the basement even before I pushed open the door. It was the next morning so my guess was that Carys was finally awake and while my Nana tendered to Elijah, I climbed down into the basement.

Unlike the upstairs, there were no windows here so it was quite dark, besides the candle light that flickered in the corner of the room.

"What are you doing?!" His voice reverberated the walls as I thrust myself forward. "Denver!" I called unto him. He threw a look over his shoulders. "You're awake," He noted.

"You said we were going to take it easy on her. We've already established the fact that Carys was compelled to come down here. We have to get her to trust us." I whispered beneath my breath, hearing her groans and grunts coming from behind.

"Screw trust" Denver cursed, tearing himself closer to where Carys was.

She stood in the center of the basement but her arms were tied to each wall on the opposite side. Her bruised face fell to the ground on which her feet nearly grazed. She was hanging by her arms.

I knew because of Denver's past with Witches, that he wasn't going to take it easy on Carys but this was merciless.

"I...I already told you all I know." Carys whispered.

"Which is that you don't know anything? Well, what am I supposed to do with that?" Denver raised his voice, a stick clenched in his hands. "Huh!" He yelled, threatening to hit her again.

"I swear!" Carys cried out.

"Denver!" I did too. "Enough," I lunged myself between the two of them, resting my hand against his chest and I pushed him backwards. "Do you really want to kill her? What, is that the plan?" I muttered.

"I don't care for her trust. I'll get the truth out of her by any means necessary. If you're on her side so much, why don't you tell her yourself to come clean." He didn't even lower his voice, and Denver went ahead to dart a cold glare in her direction.

And as soon as he scoffed, Carys started to mutter something. It sounded like an incantation when I looked back at her and I was right because all of a sudden, the walls began to rumble.

"What's happening?" I turned back to Denver. Carys increased her voice as her pupils dilated and her eyes turned black. "She's trying to free herself" Propelling himself forward to snatch the stick, Denver hit Carys.

Her face turned to the ground as she spat out blood. When she stopped speaking, the rumbling stopped.

"What's going on?" Nana came down the stairs, hearing the minute-long chaos. Carys lifted her head with a bleeding wound running along her temples and her eyes fell on me.

"She tried to cast a spell that'll free her" Denver turned to my Grandma.

"Little did she know that I was already a step ahead. The one thing I'd never do again is underestimate another Witch."

"What did you do?" Carys asked. "I fed you with my blood while you were unconscious, not so much that it'll kill you but just about enough to keep you alive until I get what I want." Denver hissed. Carys cried.

"But Werewolf blood is poison to Witches?"

"I glad you're aware there's a ticking clock on your life. Because each second you waste, my blood is going to travel more and more into your body until it reaches your heart and you die a slow, painful death. You're already so weak so you could stop trying to use your powers because it won't work as long as you have my blood in your system."

"So Carys, this is your last option, if you don't want to die, I highly recommend that you start by telling me what exactly the Witches want by coming back to Oakland" Denver inched closer to her.

"I don't...I don't know"

"The last time, it was revenge. I know it's never something good so how about you skip the lies and just come clean?" Denver paused. "Maybe then I can decide to spare your life—"

"Denver," I called him and he looked at me. "Can you just give me a moment with her?" I asked. Reluctantly, he did pull away but not without handing me the stick. Carys flinched when I walked up to her.

"Relax," I whispered. "I'm not going to hurt you, Carys. I know this has nothing to do with you and that you were compelled to come to me or something. You shouted at me that day, that I should help you. So, allow me to. Allow me to help you, Carys" She lifted her eyes and they met mine. "Just tell me the truth."

"Whatever you're running from, I'm sure we'll be able to protect you. You don't have to die now for nothing—" I said. You don't understand" Carys interrupted. "Even if I tell you the truth, I'm still going to die anyway" Her voice cracked. "Because it means me betraying my people."

"And if she finds out,"

"She?" I echoed. Carys shook her head. "Who's she, Carys?" I asked.

"I can't."

"I doubt she'll say anything" Nana crept forward from behind. "Loyalty is everything to the Witches. They'd die before betraying themselves" I looked back at her, wondering how she knew all of this. Wondering if she knew about Grandpa too and the Great Fire.

I still hadn't told her. I didn't want her world to come crashing down like mine did. I'd rather she remembered Grandpa's death as an accident, rather a revenge plot. Then, I looked back at Carys.

Her eyes were fixated on my Nana for a moment. "You." She muttered.

An arch came between my eyes as I looked back at my Grandma who in turn looked back. "I know you" Carys said, almost out of breath from her lips. "The blood is already nearing her heart" Denver stepped forward.

"What happens then?" I asked him.

"Her heart rate would slowly drop, her mind would be a blur. She may even start hallucinating like now. She'll lose consciousness of her surrounding but even then, she would still be alive. Her eyes would still be open. Her heart would still be beating, once a minute."

"She'll be both dead and alive. Now, I could spare her with a bite and only then would she get herself or I could let her die a slow, painful death and it really comes down to her" He folded his arms. My heart was throbbing in my chest but Denver felt nothing.

Absolutely nothing in his eyes.

You could tell he hated the Witches more than anything and I couldn't even blame him but I didn't want Carys to die. Not today.

"I'll do it" Nana's voice echoed through the room. "What?" I turned to her. "Allow me a moment to speak to her. Maybe I'll be able to convince her to change her mind. I know one too many things about dying a slow death and it's no fun let me tell you" Nana's voice was fragile with a crack inside of it. She inched forward while Denver and I went backwards.

"You really think this would work?" I looked at him. His arms were still folded as we stared at my Grandma. Her voice was inaudible but she was speaking to Carys. For about five whole minutes, she didn't back away and I only started to wonder what could possibly change the witch's mind.

Whether she was even going to.

But then again, I was wrong to have ever underestimated my Grandma. Because when she pulled away, her lips curled into a proud smile.

"What?" My eyes widened.

"She'll tell you. She'll tell you everything"

"But you must first save her" Nana turned to Denver who furrowed his brows. "That's not possible!" He replied. "Look, she can barely talk right now and even with the bite, it would still take her some time to get herself. She won't be able to run away" Grandma said.

"And we can trust her?" I asked.

"You can trust me," She squeezed my hands. "You have my word" And it was as though Denver left me to make the final decision. I looked at him, giving a slight nod. I really didn't want Carys to die.

And so he inched forward to her, grasping her shoulders and about to sink his teeth into her neck. "One more thing," Nana said. "We must protect her once she comes clean because the others will come" I sealed with my lips with a hard lump going down my throat.

Denver's eyes glimmered in red as he growled. He faced with Carys before crunching into her neck. Now, because of his diet and self-control, he was able to tear himself away within a second. He left her, wiping her blood from his lips while color immediately filled her face again.

Nana helped with the chains and brought her weak body to rest upon the ground. Carys laid there for a second, her hair drenched with tears, sweat and blood and when she looked at me, she nodded softly. I still wondered how my Grandma was able to convince her to say the truth.

"Now, tell us what's really going on?" It took a moment for Denver to come back and by that time, Carys was already so much better. She was able to sit up with her hands between her legs.

"Tell us what you really want." Denver pulled out a chair in front of her and her eyes meekly danced around the room until they fell on me.

"It's not a what," Carys paused.

"It's a who."

An arch came between my brows.

"I already told you the Witches want you, Eliana." She continued.

"Yes, but why?" My voice broke.

"I only know so much. At the end of the day, it was Elyndra's plan. She was the one who brought us back here." Carys said and Denver cleared his throat, "Elyndra...Who is that?"

"She's the Queen of Darkness, the Head Witch and the most powerful of us all. She's dedicated her whole life to finding a way to break the curse, the curse of darkness imposed on us by the Werewolves centuries ago" I looked to Denver in confusion but he wasn't confused.

"What curse?" I asked.

"We weren't just displaced when the Werewolves attacked, they also put a curse on us that banished the Witches to the dark world. Why do you think we wanted revenge so much? You thought it was only because we had to move?" Carys chuckled.

"The Werewolves, all of you, you hurt us first. The curse has lasted through generations since then. We're accustomed to pain, death and loss and every dark thing ever since then. We've been hunted down and so many of us have been killed only because we exist."

"Only because of the Curse" Carys pressed her lips together.

"But Elyndra, she has found a way to break it and that's why we're here, in Oakland—" "And how do you break the Curse?" It was Nana who asked. "That, I do not know" Carys confessed.

"The only person that does is Elyndra,"

"She's the one who sent me here, and she sent me to kill you, Eliana" I clutched my chest as my heart dropped. Color rinsed from my face as I stared at her with a dawning expression.

"But why me?" I whispered.

"Because you may not know it yet but you're special."

"I'm a Werewolf" I replied. But Carys shook her head. "You're a kind of Werewolf and to break the curse, Elyndra needs your blood" Carys said. My lips fell wide open as I stepped backwards.

Carys sat up and her lips started to twitch. Denver stood.

"My blood?" I echoed.

"Her eyes!" I yelled. "They're turning black again" A bolt of panic flashed across my face. "You must be sacrificed! You must be sacrificed!" Carys started to chant but it no longer sounded like her.

"You must be sacrificed!" Her hands met the ground as she took a stance, ready to leap in my direction. I pressed my back against the wall with fear in my eyes. "You must be sacri—" Carys lunged herself in my direction but Denver was quick enough to come between us.

He struck her with the stick which went through her chest and out her back. Then Carys came crashing to the floor. I exclaimed, clutching my lips as tears welled up in my eyes. Her skin turned pale as she died at that moment. "Are you okay?" Denver turned to me.

And for someone who was just almost killed, I was not okay.