

## Chapter 37 An Existential Crisis

ELIANA.

I looked at my reflection in the mirror as I combed through my hair and it was then I heard a knock on my door. I didn't have to turn around to see my Grandmother come in. She folded her arms across her chest and her eyes bore enough worry for the both of us.

It was an hour to midnight now. Denver and I should have already been on our way. I realized that I got up. It was hard to move my legs inside of deep-blue resplendent ball gown Nana had given me. She said it belonged to my mother.

No wonder her eyes grew moist when I finally turned back to her.

"You look just like her" There was a crack in her voice. I faced the mirror again, the corner of my lips curling into a faint smile. My hands soothed the corset that hugged around my torso tightly. The gown was elegant and meticulously crafted and I was surprised it was even my size in the first place. But it was perfect.

Especially for tonight.

And the comfort from my Grandma's words seemed to be all I needed at that moment. "Don't take that off" She whispered, watching my hands trail up to the necklace. "I'm serious, whatever happens tonight, make sure you don't take it off" Her voice all of a sudden went deep.

I threw a look over my shoulders.

"Does it really protect me?" I asked. "Of course," Nana replied. And the whole finding out about Witches thing had put some things in perspective.

"Is the pendant guarded by some sort of spell?" I asked her. Nana's lips fell agape. "And what did Carys even mean that I was a special kind of werewolf?" I ran my hands through my hair. Probably the worst moment to have an existential crisis but I couldn't help it.

"Eliana..." She called softly. I ended up shaking my head. Whether it was the tension that finally got to me or it was this feeling that was constantly creeping up on me that my Grandma was hiding something.

Ever since Denver told me the truth about the Great Fire, I knew I said I wasn't going to tell her because I wanted to protect her but what if, all this time she knew? It was she who didn't want to tell me because she wanted to protect me. It was something my Grandmother could do.

But then again, there was always this one missing puzzle piece that didn't make everything come together.

"Why me? Why did the Witches want my blood?" I questioned my Grandma, holding firm around the hemming of my dress. "Why not any of the other werewolves to suffice for the sacrifice? And I'm not saying this to be selfish, I'm asking because I genuinely want to know" I said.

"I'm an Omega for God's sake. And I only just saw my wolf, I'm not like everybody else so why me?" My voice broke. "Why did she look me in the eyes and tell me that I was special?" Nana covered her head and it was me who inched towards her. I leaned forward to clench her hands.

"You see the only other person who's called me that, Nana"

"So if there's anything I should know, you would tell me, right?" My eyes welled up with tears and so did hers. "Right?" I echoed. A hard lump slipped down her throat and she just stared at me for a minute.

"Eliana, the Witches won't harm you...I'll make sure of that." She finally replied and a light scoff escaped my lips. As soon as Denver and Ivan walked into the house, I let go of her hands. But with my gaze still upon her, I shook my head. "That wasn't what I asked" I said.

Maybe it was then that I finally realized that my Grandma was definitely hiding something from me.

"Are you ready?" Denver asked, his eyes going back and forth between his watch and me. It took me a moment to wipe my tears but then I nodded. "I am" With my dress in one hand, I sauntered towards him.

"Just make sure you wear the necklace, Eliana and be safe out there—" As soon as I walked out of the door, I closed it to my Grandma's voice. I kicked my feet angrily as I made my way down the front porch.

"What's wrong, Eliana?" Denver paced behind me as I clenched my teeth together, I ripped the necklace from around my neck. If anything was going to happen to me, let it. But I would figure out what exactly Nana was hiding first. I wasn't a child anymore.

And if I was something else, then I had every right to know.

"Eliana!" Denver summoned me by grasping my hands back. When I came to a halt, the winds swept through my hair. I looked into his green eyes. "Tonight won't be easy so if you think you're not up for it, then it's not too late to turn back around. We can always find another way" He said.

"I just need to know that you're okay. That you can keep it together"

He gritted through his teeth and I nodded. Going back wasn't an option.

Not now.

"I said I'm fine. Let's go" I freed myself from his clasp, holding around my flowing dress as I climbed into the car door which Ivan held open. He closed it and there was silence for a moment. I heaved in a deep breath as I looked at the necklace in my hand before stuffing it into my pocket.

And the decision to do so would be one I would regret for a long time to come. I knew that night wasn't going to be easy but still, nothing could've prepared me for how it was going to end.

"Let's go!" Ivan climbed into the back and Denver into the driver's seat. Before he ignited the engines, our eyes met for one long, callous glare and then he pulled away. I cupped my chin to face the ground.

The one thing I looked forward to was seeing Elijah in the morning when all of this was over but little did I know that wasn't going to happen.