

Chapter 43 A Shocking Revelation

ELIANA.

As I slowly opened my eyes, the dimly lit surroundings came into focus. I gasped shakily through my lips as I sat up. The cold, damp air clung to my skin and the distant echoing sound of dripping water filled the silence.

"Hello?" A bolt of panic sliced through my body as I stared into the darkness around me. My memory was blurry although I do remember stumbling through the forest after my fight with Nora. I also remember a masked man who had injected me to fall unconscious.

That was all in my head. But I figured whoever had captured me was the one who brought me here.

"Hello" My voice was shrill with a crack emanating from my sore throat. Once my hands touched the ground, the metal clangs dawned on me my grim reality. I was chained in the suffocating darkness of what seemed to be a basement or some dungeon I'd never seen before.

There was only one window which was at least several feet in the air and even behind that was pitch darkness. It wasn't morning yet, that much I could tell. I sat up and my hair was drenched in blood and sweat across my shoulders. It was then I heard a startling creak coming from above.

The sound of approaching footsteps caused my heart to pound in my chest and the metallic taste of fear lingered in my mouth. I strained my eyes to make out the fight ahead of me.

I was expecting the man who I'd seen in the forest but lo and behold, I was met with an even more shocking surprise.

"It's you!" I blurted out almost immediately as her face came into the light of the candle in her hand. In the other, she held a plate of food which she shifted closer to me.

"You must be starving" Her voice was gritty and coarse but at that moment, a million thoughts were racing through my mind. I recognized her from the Ballroom bar as the lady who had spilled her drink on my dress.

The one who spoke about my kindness.

She was without a mask now but I could still make out her features. Besides, she was still in that dress.

"It's a good thing you recognize me" She pouted her blood-red lips with a slight grimace. "That way, you'll know that I owe you for not picking up a fight back then" She added, gesturing to the slice of bed she'd just capriciously kept on a plate and expecting me to lung at it.

But I folded my arms, falling back at the cold wall. She stood to her feet.

"I don't want to harm you."

"It wasn't a mistake, was it? The whole drink thing?" I asked her. "You were profiling me—" "I was on a mission" She replied. "From who?" Once I asked that question, it didn't take long for me to see the tattoo on the inside of her wrist and it was just like the one on Carys.

I shivered with a chill going down my spine.

"You're a witch?" The realization dawned on me and she clicked her tongue. "Ding ding ding" She mouthed. "You know you're smart, I should have known it was you from the moment I entered that room. In fact I did but I needed to be sure" He leaned into me, grasping my hands to see where the drink burned.

"Sheesh, that might leave a scar" Her smile curled. Before I pulled away from her. She scoffed lightly. "What do you want?" I spat. "I want you to eat" She replied. My gaze fell on the nightmarish sandwich.

"I'll pass" I shook my head. She hovered closer with her fingers twirling through the ends of my hair. "I already told you I won't hurt you—"

"Luciana!" There was another voice from the dark and instantly, she pulled away from me. The atmosphere was immediately filled with an eerie stench and a mysterious aura. "If she won't eat, then leave her" That voice was so unsettling that it twisted a knot in my stomach.

I could even tell the fear in Luciana's eyes as she turned around. Our eyes awaited the majestic and haunting appearance of the owner of that voice. Her footsteps were clicky and her gait was poised. She was wearing a long, lacy black dress and a pointy hat on top of her head.

As soon as she emerged from the dark, Luciana fell to her knees. But as her eyes remained on me, it was then I realized who it was.

"Elyndra!" I echoed. It was her. It was the Queen of all Witches.

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"It's a pleasure to finally meet you, you know" Her gritty voice filled the room as Luciana gave way to her. She inched closer to where I laid, her fingers stroking my chin before I stubbornly turned away.

But she fastened a grip as hard as a rock, prompting me to look in her dark glistening eyes. And then she grimaced.

"The chase was fun but I'm glad it's finally over" She cooed.

"We sure have a lot to catch up on—" "I have nothing to tell you" I shook my head, standing my ground. "If not anything else, how about what you did to my own, Carys?" Elyndra narrowed her eyes at me and I pushed a hard lump down my throat.

"I find it hard to believe you didn't already know what would happen to Carys when you sent her out" I replied and a dark chuckle escaped the witch's lips. "Well, Carys...she was a special case."

"She tried to kill me!" I blurted out. "Well, who do you think sent her?" Elyndra pulled away from my face and I turned to my side. "Is that why I'm here?" I jerked forward with the chains around my wrists and ankles.

"Do you finally want to get it over with?"

"If you don't eat something, you're only helping me you know. Trust me, I do want to lull you and even regardless of what you've done in the past, I'm lenient enough to not make it slow, painful and torturous" She gritted through her teeth and a bolt of panic flashed in my eyes.

"You won't be able to kill me" I muttered. Even with the fear that pulsed in my veins, I made sure the Witch wasn't able to see it. Rather, she arched her brows. "Why so?"

"Because Denver already killed Carys. How long do you think it's going to take him to find exactly where I am and kill you too?" I widened my eyes and Elyndra scoffed. "I mean, Abigail's granddaughter, I heard you were brave but I didn't think it was up to this extent" Elyndra replied and an arch came between my brows.

"Abigail?" I muttered. That was my Grandmother's name.

"How do you know my Grandmother?" I asked. Elyndra chuckled. "For someone who knows nothing, you sure have a lot to say" She continued and there was a tint of enigma in her eyes. They were so full of secrets.

Maybe it had something to do with what my Grandmother was hiding. I mean she did say she knew Elyndra in the past but that's because she's just lived long enough. But the way I heard it, it seemed like the two of them were much more familiar with each other.

More than either of them were willing to divulge.

My brows with knitted with intrigue as I tilted my head.

"I ask the questions here, Eliana" She croaked. "You're about to kill me, don't I at least deserve some answers?" I threw a question back at her.

"Fine," It took a moment before she nodded. "Fair enough."

"What do you want to know?" She asked. "Why me?" I blurted out. "You were wrong because I know about the curse and the sacrifice you need to break it. It's for the Witches..."

"I see Carys and yourself had a talk" Elyndra said and I sat up. "My question is why me? Why must it be my blood needed to break the curse and don't tell me it's because of special" I groaned. "I'm tired of everyone saying that without telling me exactly what they mean" I said.

"I'm tired of being in the dark and not knowing who I am especially when my life is on the line. I deserve that, I deserve the truth" I added. "Well you're telling the wrong person. Because the truth is what your Grandmother owes you, not me" Elyndra shook her head.

And my shoulders fell before my head cupped to the ground. I thought this was going nowhere, but alas, I was wrong. Because Elyndra heaved a sigh and when I looked up, she folded her arms.

She was enjoying this, especially with that much resentment in her eyes.

For who? Maybe my Grandmother.

"Why do you want to know the truth...everyone's usually so keen to find out the unknown that they rarely ask themselves whether they're ready for it. Ready to hear it" She said and a chill went down my spine.

"I'm ready" I pressed my lips together, certain at that moment that it was what I wanted but nothing could've prepared me for the truth. Because as Elyndra let her arms fall and her eyes close, my heart sank.

"It all started centuries ago, right here—" She heaved a deep breath.

"In Oakland...this was our home, where the Witches lived so peacefully amongst each other. We were always so big on family that it was our commune. It was our home. And it wasn't even called Oakland back then, it was called the Celestial Haven—our Celestial Haven"

"But all that changed when the Werewolves attacked us" I arched my brows. "Why?" I asked softly. "Because unlike us, they had no idea what family was. We were created as Witches, to be the balance of nature, they were created to feed and kill and for their own selfish desires. It's just who we both are. Who we've been since the beginning of time" She explained. "They can call themselves Packs or whatever"

"But that wasn't how it was us, there was no division, just family"

Elyndra said and there was a crack in her voice. "What happened...what happened when they attacked?" I asked.

"People say the Cold War was when the killings and death started but it really was from that day that they evaded us. The Witches didn't want to leave, we were forced out of our home. Thousands of us were displaced, families were torn apart and lost, properties were gone. We watched our home be thrashed and treated like garbage" She replied.

"I know that part of the story, what I don't know is about the Curse?" I asked.

"The Curse" She echoed before heaving a sigh.

"The Witches...We wanted our home back after we saw what they did to it. So when the Cold War happened between them, we saw an opportunity for us to finally get our revenge. To pit their heads against each other wasn't just the only plan but for the Great Fire to consume at least one from each Pack ruling family. We were to split and across several months, blend in with the Werewolves, as friends, family and even lovers..." It struck me at that moment. Aurora and Denver.

"To get them to trust us so it will be easy for us to lure them into the chapel that day and that was my sister's idea. The Great Fire was her idea because we lost our mother when the Wolves attacked" She said and I furrowed my brows.

"Sister?" I echoed faintly and almost unbelievably.

"So what happened? Where's your sister now?" I asked her and a light scoff escaped her lips. "She fell in love with the family she was assigned to. The man especially. So she divulged our plan to him and a few Elders"

"So that would stop the Great Fire from happening then?" I asked even though I was familiar with the history well enough to know that it still happened.

"Well, not the whole plan. My sister, that wasn't even all of her betrayal to both our family and our Pack. She was so blinded and consumed by love that she sided with the Wolves and helped them make that Curse. She was the one who cast the spell on her own people"

There was a crack in Elyndra's voice and I'm sure that was the most emotion I'd ever seen her portray.

My lips even fell apart because a betrayal like that had to hurt. It was no wonder the Witches were so spiteful. No wonder they wanted revenge.

"That's how the Curse came to be" I whispered but one thing still struck my mind so much. One last answer I need to know. "Yes" She replied.

"Then why must it be my blood to break the Curse?" My lips quivered as I asked and Elyndra mouthed her steps towards me. "Because your blood is not only that of a Werewolf's" She came to a halt and I lifted my eyes into hers, watching as she leaned forward.

"You're not just a Werewolf, Eliana. You're also a witch" My heart sank in my chest at that moment and I was brazen at a loss for words. "The first of its kind and the only hybrid existing at this time" Elyndra added.

"I don't...I don't understand" A tear rolled my cheek.

"I'm not a Witch, I'm a Werewolf. I've been a Werewolf my entire life and it doesn't even make any sense. My mum was a Werewolf, my dad is a Werewolf. I don't understand..." I muttered with tears in my eyes and all Elyndra did was grasp my hand softly.

"My sister..." She paused. "You're a Witch because my sister is your Grandmother Abigail" My blood froze at those words. "She fell in love with your Grandfather who still died in that fire and she was the one who created the curse that must now be broken" Elyndra added.

"She's a Witch."

"Your Grandmother is a Witch, your mum was a Hybrid until she died which makes you a Hybrid too. Because your Grandmother is a Witch" My heart stung with a shooting pain as I stared at her blankly.

This was her secret. This was it.

My whole life has been nothing but a lie.