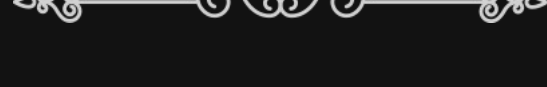


And Then There Were Four (Lilith Carrie)

Chapter 159



Chapter 159: A Losing Battle

Cassie.

A few days of going to the secret library Silas had brought me to hadn't brought me any closer to figuring out how to help Lucas. However, I learned a lot about Anna. Including just how close Silas was to her when he came to Asgard to be- gin with.

"So you were her guard?" I asked, staring at Silas, who walked around the library tossing an old brown ball up in the air before catching it.

"Yep, it was my first job here. It wasn't exactly what I had expected... when I came here she had already been here for a long time. I was young and rebellious. I hated the world be- cause of how I was treated, and she saw something in me oth- ers didn't."

"But... that doesn't make sense. She would have been an- cient by then-"

"Around seven hundred years old to be exact," he hummed as his eyes twinkled with amusement.

I was astounded. From the stories, she was supposed to be human or so I thought, but then lived that long. It didn't make any sense. "How, though?"

"How was she that old?"

Nodding my head, his smile widened, "Anna was one of Odin's creations, Cassie. She was a descendant of one of his wolves."

I had heard many things over the years about Odin, and some of the stuff he did but this... I had never heard before.

Odin's wolves were famous, and the entire reason our species was created. In order to protect the wolves hunted by hu- mans, Odin bestowed his wolves to gift them with the ability to turn into to humans to hide amongst the same men that tried to kill them.

"We are all descendants though," I whispered looking back down to the painting of her I have found in a scroll on one of the many bookshelves. "That still doesn't explain how she lived so long."

"Odin bestowed a gift on her when she lost Bjorn and two more of her children. When she came here, three of her chil- dren had died, and she wanted death as well. Her anger con- sumed her, making her hate the life she was given. However, Odin wouldn't let her give up on life. He knew she had more to offer so he made her immortal until she could see that even through the darkest of days life has beauty even in the dark- est of shadows."

Silas's words were always poetic when he wanted to ex- plain something important. Letting a smirk crest the corner of my lips, I rolled my eyes and went back to trying to read the faded writing on the parchment. However, the words were foreign and far more advanced than anything I knew, and I was left wondering what they were instead of actually know- ing.

"So, he made her immortal until she appreciated life?"

Nodding his head, he picked up another book and made his way toward me, laying it down. "This is Anna's journal from her last year here. When you have time, you should read it."

Picking up the purple fabric-bound book, I ran my fingers over the spine, admiring the intricate designs. It was beautiful, and my mind was curious to know what she had to say but right now, I had more important things to worry about.

"Maybe once things are better, I will. For now, we have more important things to figure out, like how to save Lucas."

The reminder made his lips part as he nodded again. "Of course."

He seemed to hate the fact I kept reminding him, but it was important to figure out if I was ever going to fix what was going on. Every single day Lucas was the way he was, I felt the distance grow between us within the little bit of bond we had.

Perhaps it was a good thing, but I felt an emptiness inside me I didn't like. "So we have been here for days at this. What is actually going to help me?"

Silas sighed, shaking his head, "Inanna was here when Anna was. The two women were friends at one point, but Inanna was strange..."

"So that makes her a villain?" I laughed.

"No," he smiled, "but her acting the way she was set Anna on edge. I worked closely with Anna, and through all of it, she felt Inanna and her were growing distant. That Inanna was up to something dark, and when she began hanging out with the wrong people, Anna became wary of her."

Glancing down at Anna's portrait, I took in her dark hair, celestial blue eyes and pink plump lips. I was shocked. The first time I saw her photo I realized how much she and I looked alike. The only difference was she seemed to smile all the time where I did not. Anna didn't seem like the kind of person whose smile ever fell, but of course, this was reality, or it was her reality once upon a time.

"So did she ever confront her?" I asked without looking up at Silas. My fingers once again brushed over the purple book he had given me.

"Yep," he replied quickly. "It turned into a huge fight, and the next day... Inanna and a few others were gone."

Letting my eyes dart up to Silas, I furrowed my brows. "What do you mean they were gone? Someone doesn't just vanish."

He shrugged his shoulders and took a seat in the chair across from me. "Back then, the vale between realms wasn't as confined as it is now. It was easier to slip out, but that was because Odin didn't worry about things like he does now I suppose. At least, since everything with Loki."

"Loki?" Hearing the name rang internal bells as I remem- bered the stories I had heard growing up of the battle my par- ents went through with him. How they wanted my brother and me but our parents fought to protect us.

"Yeah, Loki was dangerous, but thankfully, Odin impris- oned him."

I opened and closed my mouth, considering what Silas had said. As far as I remembered, it was my mother who had thrown Loki back into Asgard, but then again, who was I to correct the history they knew? "Oh, right."

Unsure of what to say or do, I simply rolled back up the portrait and retied the ribbon around it that had once held it closed. I was learning a lot being here but it wasn't helping me like I wanted. While I was here doing this... Lucas was out o his mind with partying and fucking with Zia.

He was never that kind of person before, and I was never the person I am now before.

"Are you okay, Cassie?" Silas asked as I moved towards the bookshelves to replace the scroll with Anna's portrait or it.

"Not really, just a lot on my mind."

"You know you can talk to me, Cassie. I can help you through whatever is bothering you," he said as the sound of his footsteps echoing behind me let me know just how close he was to me.

I placed the scroll on the shelf and turned to face him. "As I said before, Silas... how does any of this help me?"

"Because... Inanna acted like this before, Cassie. How she is acting now with Lucas, she did it before."

For a fleeting moment, I thought I had hit a brick wall with what to do. I had found myself lost wondering if I would ever find something to get me closer and then Silas finally lets this bit of information out. "What?"

Taking in Silas with much irritation, I watched as a quizzical glance of amusement danced in his fiery eyes while the corners of his lips turned up into a wide smile as if he thought what he told me was the most insightful thing ever. What he didn't know was I was more than irritated with him because that was information he could have told me long ago.

"Right, I mean, it shocked me at first. Back then, I didn't want to believe-"

Shaking my head, I couldn't believe he thought I was in- terested in the details. "Stop. You didn't think to tell me about Inanna before?"

Stopping with his mouth wide open, Silas gave me a con- fused look before closing his mouth with a sigh. "I guess I should have."

"Then why didn't you?" I asked, trying to understand why he wouldn't. That was something I could have used to steer me closer in the right direction but instead, he had said noth- ing and let me float around in unanswered questions.

"I guess I didn't think about it, honestly... there is much you still don't understand."

Resting my hand on my forehead, I closed my eyes and breathed through the outburst that desperately wanted to leave me. I wanted to shout at him, scream and curse his name for dragging me around for days and giving me a histo- ry lesson instead of telling me but I knew I wouldn't get any- where acting like that.

"Who did Inanna act like this with before... the people she was with, who were they?"

Glancing at Silas again, I watched him tap his fingers on the table. "I may have been Anna's guard, but I didn't know everything that was going on. I just saw and heard certain things."

I found it hard to believe that Silas didn't know more, con sidering the fact he had told me so much already. Granted, he could have read a lot of it in books, but I had a feeling every thing he told me was first-hand information.

"Okay, then answer me this... how many years has Anna been dead?"

The moment that the question left my lips, Silas froze. He stared at me with such a blank expression I began to wonder if what I said was not in English. After all, he was staring at me like I had grown three heads. "A hundred years ago... three years after Inanna left the realm."

The conversation was clipped, and with the last of his words, he turned quickly and made his way toward the main door. I wasn't sure why it was his attitude changed but shov- ing the purple book into my bag, I quickly made my way after him.

"Silas!" I called out in confusion, "Silas, stop."

My feet carried me forward, and by the time the moon- light filtered over me once more, I barely had caught Silas', arm stopping him in his tracks. He was angry, and as he grit- ted his teeth with a clenched jaw, he stared down at me. I didn't understand why.

"Let me go, Cassie," he said sternly as he pulled his arm from my grasp. I had no clue what had happened. All I did was asked when Anna died. One minute he was laughing and telling stories, and the next, he was pissed off at the world.

"Dude... what's wrong? Why are you acting like this?"

He turned away, taking a moment before glancing back at me. "You just... you remind me so much of her and thinking of the day she died... the day she left is not something that brings back happy memories, Cassie."

There was so much emotion in those last few words that suddenly made me realize why he was so dead set on telling me about Anna, how he knew so much about her to the point where most of the memories brought a smile to his face.

Silas had cared for Anna... maybe even loved her at one point, and when she died, it left an empty place in his heart. One that the thought of death caused nothing but agony.

"Silas, I'm so sorry."

Holding up his hand, he took a deep breath and shook his head, "I'm trying to help you, Cassie. If you're not careful, you' re going to end up like Anna."

"What? What do you mean I'll end up like Anna?"

Staring at me, his entire body sagged as if the weight he was carrying was too heavy. "She allowed herself to fall for darkness and in the end, gave her life for it. Something you will do if you don't find a way to separate your emotions and let go of what you can not change."