

Chapter 21 Midnight Parade

ELIANA.

"Can you stop walking so fast?" Denver was breathlessly trying to keep up with my pace. I plummeted my feet forward even more, desperate to avoid being next to him at all costs. I'm not sure if he could tell.

"I said wait!" In a split second, he transported close enough to grasp me by my arms. I was forced to a halt, looking into his eyes, she was still trying to catch his breath. There were people around, a few of my Pack members who I recognized but luckily not one of them saw me.

I was trying to flee from Denver but at the same time, I was still trying to remain as undercover as possible.

"If you didn't want me here, why then did you come into my car and ask that I drive you here?" Denver asked. A sneaky scoff escaped my lips.

"Because my Grandmother insisted" I shook his hands off mine. Narrowing his eyes, Denver was taken aback for a moment. "Left to me, I would've been well off doing this all on my own" I brushed past his shoulders, wounding his ego even more, a delight to me.

"You're never going to take my word for it, are you?" After a brief pause, he picked it up again. We were on foot towards the direction of the Alpha's chamber. We still had a long way to walk.

"What?" I threw a look over my shoulders.

"Never going to forgive me?" Denver added. "It depends...what exactly am I forgiving you for?" I threw the question back at him and he chuckled softly. "Come on, Eliana" My name was so strange on his lips.

"Is it always going to be like this?" He asked. I finally came to a halt.

"I really want us to put the past behind us" He was the second person saying that, after my Grandma. But of course, neither of them could ever understand how much Denver had hurt me in the past.

Sometimes, it's so heavy and huge that it's not so easy to put it all behind me like everyone asks. I look into his eyes and suddenly, I remember those years when all I yearned for was his love. When I gave him my all, only to receive a rejection at the end.

I remember standing broken in front of him and hearing Claire's frivolous laughter echo through the door that day. I see him and I'm reminded of the pain. Which makes it a lot harder to simply just put it all behind me.

"Please meet me halfway," His arms dropped and I fell quiet. Perhaps, he thought I was actually giving it a thought. But in reality, I had only just sighted Jaxon leaving the tower. He had a whole army of wolves around him and in his arms was his bride.

"Shit" I cursed, brushing into Denver. He followed my eyes over the hill as he hid behind the bushes. "She's beautiful" I echoed. Long, dark hair, a few inches taller than him. She walked with a certain grace and elegance that made it obvious she wasn't from around here.

"Oh I pity her so much" I blurted, feeling a sting in my chest. How awful it must feel to be mated to Jaxon. To spend your whole life with such an evil man.

"Come on" Denver pulled my arms as I stood from behind the shrubs. We watched them pull away in their convoy of cars and only then did we make our way down the hill.

The air between us was a lot tenser and I could tell by how bright the full moon shone in the skies that it was well past midnight.

"There's a guard at the front" Denver forced me to a halt and I looked over. He was right. "He wasn't there the last time" I looked over my shoulders, my voice in a faint whisper. "Well, they probably don't want what happened the last time to happen again" He replied.

"And Sienna...I'm not sure I saw her enter the vehicle?" My heart began to race in my chest. "I did. She went in with Nora and someone else into the car at the front. I'm certain none of them are in there. We just have to find a way past this guard" Denver heaved and I looked ahead.

My eyes grew bright.

"I know another place!" I muttered. Pulling Denver's arms, we slid down the hill before I led him to the back. A little gate swung open that led into the stable. From the stable, we can get to the dungeon. That was where I stayed for most of my life so I knew all the posts and corners around here. Not much had changed.

Who was I kidding? Very much had changed.

"There's nothing here" Denver noted as our footsteps creaked across the stable. It was empty. All the livestock, gone. "I know" There was a crack in my voice. "For people who host parades and balls every other day, you sure don't have enough to keep a stable running" Denver teased.

I batted my eyes back to him.

It was more than that. It was worse than that.

"My dad used to love the animals, the horses especially. He was the one who took care of them, even riding them out into the woods on some days but obviously, he fell sick. There's only so much he can do now" I scoffed with a snuffle running up my nose.

"And Jaxon," "He doesn't exactly strike you as someone who loves animals, does he?" I asked, finally making it to the door. I wedged the metal away from its hinges and it fell apart. Denver stared in awe as I led him through the dungeon. It was hard for a chill to not run up my spine.

I could feel the coldness from the hard floor but those nights, I didn't care for that. I couldn't care for that.

I had to sleep, so in the corner I would sit down with my arms around my bruised knees. And I would cry there till my eyes closed. I could hear the echoes at that moment. Especially the screaming and yelling from that night I was able to get away.

"Hey" Denver's hand was what grasped me out of my thoughts and I zoned back at him. "What?" My throat was dry. "I said, do I strike you as someone who likes animals?" Denver asked.

"Really?" I scoffed.

"I would say no, given how many you've killed for your mere satisfaction" I grunted. "That is not true! Every werewolf kills, it's wired into our brains to hunt" Denver said. "So it is true, then?" I perched up a brow and he sighed in surrender.

"It doesn't even matter anymore" He said.

And there was a flash in his eyes, of an emotion I couldn't decipher.

"What doesn't matter?" I asked. We paused for a moment, behind the door that finally led into the tower. And then he said. "I haven't killed in six years, Eliana" He called my name for a second time.

That's how I knew he was serious.

"What?" My lips fell wide open in disbelief. "That isn't possible" I said.

"It is. Not since you left" His hands slipped into his pocket. "I just...At first, it was sort of to get my life in order. These cravings, they mess with your head so much. It's like every time you feed on something, it digs an even deeper insatiable hole inside of you and it's never enough."

"You kill, and kill and kill which I did and it was still never enough. I had to control my primal desires, rather than being a prisoner to it" He added and I folded my arms for a moment.

"But you're an Alpha...You need to feed to be strong, don't you?" I asked harmlessly. Because it was true. As an Alpha, he needed flesh and blood to become stronger and be able to fight off his enemies.

My father had tried to wean our Pack off feeding on wild game too and even though it was mostly a success, you can't compare it to when an Alpha does it. I'm an omega so I didn't really need flesh and blood in the first place. Hell, I even went so long without it too.

All the time I was in Tuscany, I lived like a human because I lived with the humans. And it was especially easier given I was still yet to come into my wolf. I tried not to think about it some days.

But a part of me might have already come to terms with the fact that I might actually never shift.

I drew my attention back to Denver and I realized this was probably the longest we'd spoken without getting into a fight. Mostly because I could see a tint of genuineness in his golden eyes.

"I'm still alive so," He finally shrugged.

"I guess I'm doing something right. Since I've been able to control myself, I honestly feel a lot better." He said. "Now I feel terrible," I whispered.

"For thinking you killed Adam in the first place."

"You owe me an apology, you know" He bickered. "Don't push it" I rolled my eyes to the back of my head. "No wonder your first thought wasn't to just rip out the heart of the guard standing in our way. It would've been a lot easier than this" I turned to force the door open.

There was a huge step to climb out of the dungeon so he mounted first and then stretched his arm to me.

"Don't give me ideas" Denver croaked. I chuckled softly.

"That means your brother, he's the exact opposite of you now" I said, because clearly, Blake was different. He obviously still fed and the thought of him usually drove a chill up my spine.

Denver's face straightened at the mention of his brother's name and his aura went cold. I climbed out of the dungeon.

"Blake's always been different" He didn't emphasize much but his deep, decadent voice conveyed enough enigma. "What happened?" I didn't even know when I blurted out that question but it was from a place of not just curiosity but of sudden concern.

"You won't understand" Alas, Denver shrugged it off coldly. "Of course" I murmured. There he was, there was the Denver I knew.

"Come on" He turned to walk down the halls but I called out to him.

"It's 'tis way" I pointed up the stairs. Luckily, there wasn't a single soul the whole way up. But that changed when we reached my father's chamber. There was yet another guard standing in front of the door.

"Maybe I will rip his heart out this time" Denver croaked.

"Please don't!" I reached for his hands and a sizzling sensation struck my chest. Uneasy, I let him go. "Relax," His eyes fell on me.

"I'll only snap his neck," Denver said but it was only a tease. He just ended up making a noise that was able to distract the guard and buy me some time. "Finally, so he could be useful" I muttered beneath my breath as I made my way into my father's room.

Quick enough before the guard gets back, I had to inject the serum through his wrist.

"This will help!" I convinced my father and luckily, he didn't make a fuss. Of course he knew they had been poisoning him. Only God knew how long he'd been watching Nora slip Serpentoxin into his drink. But he couldn't do anything. He could barely even say anything.

But with the serum, it was a step towards his recovery.

"There" I soothed over his hand before lifting my eyes to him. "You should get better soon" But his hands held around mine. Although he could only say so many words, I could see the gratitude in his eyes. I didn't know when tears welled up in mine.

Because there wasn't ever a time when he looked at me the way he did at that moment. It felt like he was proud. It felt like love.

"I have to go" I stood up, still holding his hand for a second longer. "But I will get you out of this and save the pack" Seeing what had become of it had only made me more hungry for revenge against Jaxon. Now, I was certain that it was exactly what I wanted.

"There'll be horses again in Blood Hound" I muttered and my father nodded. I wasn't sure how we'll be able to do this the next time but all that mattered was that we were able to do it today. And so I slipped out of the door just before the guard reassumed his position.

"Did you do it?" A whisper crawled down my neck and I was startled to find Denver standing right in the corridor. "Yes" My hands clutched my chest. "Don't be scaring me like that" I gnashed through my teeth and he let out a chuckle.

"We really should get going" We looked back and forth the empty halls before making our way back the same we came. "You see, you actually needed my help. You in fact couldn't have done this on your own"

Denver hissed as we climbed down into the dungeon.

I couldn't resist rolling my eyes to the back this time around.

"That makes two apologies you owe me" He darted me a stare as we made our way toward the stable door. All that was in this room was hay laying around and a couple of tools. And we were almost out.

Nearly, in fact.

When suddenly, we heard voices echo through the door and it almost immediately jerked wide open. The last thing I remember was looking Denver dead in the eyes and his said the exact same thing.

We were doomed.