

Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby – Chapter 9

“Welcome, Clan Head.” An old man with long, silver-white hair greeted Fiona with a bow, following the traditions of the werewolf clan. He was dressed in a flowing white robe, resembling a scholar from Greek mythology... a sight that immediately reminded Eleanor of characters she had seen in movies.

Fiona returned the bow and said, “Greetings, Elder Bedivere. I hope you are well.”

Bedivere smiled warmly. “I sensed the ripple at the gate and came to see our guest. I was secretly hoping you had brought a young talent for this year’s Ancestral Moon.” His gaze shifted to Eleanor, studying her intently, as if evaluating her worth.

Fiona turned to Eleanor and introduced him. “Eleanor, this is Elder Bedivere. He is the steward of the ancestral land. I may be the Clan Head, but here, he is the true authority.”

Eleanor, still caught off guard by the old man’s uncanny resemblance to an aged knight from Arthurian legends, snapped out of her daze. She quickly placed her palm over her heart and bowed. “Greetings, Elder Bedivere.”

Bedivere chuckled. “Welcome to Rayndell, Eleanor. Fiona brought you here on the eve of the Ancestral Moon; that alone speaks volumes about your potential. May our ancestors bless you.”

He turned back to Fiona. “Follow me. Some of the elders have come out of seclusion. They are in the courtyard.”

Eleanor followed Fiona and Bedivere through the winding paths of the ancestral land until they reached a vast courtyard, surrounded by wooden houses. Seated around a round table were three old women and two old men, sipping tea. As the trio approached, the elders turned their attention toward them, their gazes unreadable.

Fiona bowed deeply. “Greetings, Elders. May the gods bless you with wisdom, strength, and clarity.” Eleanor followed her example.

The elders placed their palms over their hearts and responded, “Greetings, Clan Head.” Though they acknowledged her presence, they remained seated, a sign of their high status.

One of the elderly women, her pale skin almost translucent against the backdrop of her long, white hair, studied Eleanor carefully. “Fiona, is she an Elizabeth candidate?”

Fiona smiled. “Grandmother, your eyes are as sharp as ever. She is newly turned.”

A hush fell over the elders. Murmurs spread among them, curiosity and speculation evident in their hushed voices. After a few moments, the elderly woman asked, “What is her resonance score?”

Fiona met her gaze. “Eighty-nine percent.”

Silence. The revelation left the elders visibly shaken. Even the woman, seemingly unfazed moments ago, stood up and approached Eleanor. She raised her index finger and pressed it gently against the center of Eleanor’s forehead.

A moment passed before she retracted her hand and murmured, “I see. You have fully accepted your transformation.”

She turned to Fiona. “Go and prepare her for the ritual. I will handle the rest.”

Fiona led Eleanor to a modest wooden hut. “This will be your temporary residence during your stay here,” she explained. “Tonight is the Ancestral Moon, a sacred time when werewolves connect with their lineage, receiving wisdom or visions from those who came before us. At midnight, you will undergo an uncontrollable transformation. Do not resist it; let it happen naturally.”

Eleanor nodded, listening intently.

“During the transformation, you will experience an overwhelming bloodlust. It will urge you to fight or kill anything in sight,” Fiona warned. “But don’t worry. My grandmother will oversee the ritual. The runes inscribed at the altar will confine you, preventing you from harming yourself or others. You may see visions, hear voices from past werewolves, or even experience heightened spiritual awareness. Whatever you do, do not move toward them.”

Noticing the concern on Eleanor’s face, Fiona offered a reassuring smile. “At the beginning of the ritual, we offer our blood to our ancestor, Elizabeth Raynor. Her spirit will protect you from harm. If you’re fortunate, she might even teach you something valuable. And if the gods favor you, you might meet our patron deity, Geri, the one who granted wisdom to our ancestor.”

She sighed before adding, “The ritual may be painful or even frightening. But remember, do not resist. The more you resist, the greater the pain. Many members of our pack do not even qualify for this ritual. You are already privileged to stand here.”

Eleanor took a deep breath and, after a pause, asked hesitantly, “Is there any risk to my baby?”

Fiona shook her head. “On the contrary, if our ancestor deems your child worthy, she may bless it, making it stronger.”

Relief flooded Eleanor’s features. She nodded and, following Fiona’s instructions, cleansed herself before donning the ceremonial robes for the ritual.

Half an hour before midnight, Fiona led Eleanor through a garden bathed in moonlight. At its center stood a grand altar, covered in ancient runes that Eleanor could not decipher. Behind it, a colossal stone wolf stood tall, an eternal sentinel watching over the sacred ground. Carved from obsidian-black granite, its surface shimmered under the soft light, as if the night sky itself had been woven into its form. Majestic yet fearsome, it exuded an air of both primal savagery and divine grace.

Eleanor felt its presence weigh on her as she approached.

Oswyn Elizabeth Raynor, Fiona's grandmother, stood before the altar. Her piercing gaze met Eleanor's. "I will be in charge of your ritual. Follow my instructions carefully. No matter what appears before you, do not resist. Acceptance is the key."

Eleanor swallowed hard but nodded. "I understand. Thank you." Though fear lingered in her voice, determination shone through.

Oswyn's expression softened. "This is the altar of our ancestor, Elizabeth Raynor. Behind it stands the statue of our patron god, Geri. Kneel and offer your blood to the altar."

Eleanor obeyed. Transforming a finger into a claw, she cut her palm and let the blood drip onto the stone.

Oswyn nodded approvingly. "Now, forget the past. Focus only on the present. Pray to our god for wisdom and guidance."

Eleanor closed her eyes, pressing her hand over her chest, and began her silent prayer.

Oswyn retrieved a deep blue magic stone and placed it upon the altar. Then, stepping carefully, she retreated beyond the boundary of the great rune that lay concealed beneath the garden. With another flick of her wrist, she produced a second, smaller magic stone and gently set it at the rune's outermost edge.

A hum resonated through the air, sending ripples of energy outward. One by one, runes hidden in the garden's soil began to glow, forming an intricate web of power. The magic surged, rising into an ethereal dome that enclosed Eleanor within its embrace.

The moon reached its zenith.

A sudden tremor ran through Eleanor. Her breath hitched, her body convulsed, and then... without warning... she transformed into her wolf form. A beastly howl ripped from her throat, echoing into the night.

A column of white light descended upon her, lifting her off the ground. The transformation overtook her entirely, and then a new agony seized her. A sharp cry escaped her lips as raw power surged through her body. Tremors spread beyond the dome, shaking the earth.

A golden cocoon formed around her suspended figure, pulsing with energy. The energy around her settled. Time itself seemed to hold its breath as she remained there, cradled in the embrace of the sacred light.

The elders watched in silent reverence. For ten long minutes, time seemed to stand still.

And then, gently, the cocoon began to fade, unraveling in delicate golden strands until nothing remained. Eleanor's body descended slowly, returning to the earth like a falling petal. She came to rest before the altar, her body curled in repose, her breathing slow and even. Eleanor lay still, unconscious.