249 ELEANOR'S BURIAL

XADEN'S POV 1

Xaden had arranged for all of Eleanor's body to be put in a small coat and she was dressed in a beautiful white dress. 2

Loren had sewn her head back to her neck, and if you saw her, you would assume that she was asleep.

Her beautiful long and black hair had been washed along with her.

Even some make-up had been done on her, and all around here, there were thousands of white roses.

Xaden was the only one on the bank of the water.

He had wanted only himself to be present. But then he eventually instructed Marie to be present.

She was her sister, after all.

Marie walked up behind him, Grief-stricken and distraught.

"You came late to your sister's funeral." He remarked dryly.

"I was never early for anything." She managed. "Even my own birth. It would be a disappointment to my sister if I came early. She would not have wanted that."

"No, she would not have," Xaden said quietly.

As Marie walked to the river bank, she looked nothing like her true self.

Her face was plain and white as it could ever be.

There was no makeup.

Even her dreads seemed sad and hung down on her shoulders in a weak manner.

"You know," Marie said after a tranquil time.

"We fought a lot from the moment we came into this world, leaving mine. I was furious with her that I had followed her here, and she had ended up staying with you."

She sighed and breathed through her dark fur coat.

"We fought a lot. Never on good terms here. But it was not so back home. She always looked out for me, and I did everything for her. I was meant to take her home, but now she will really go home without me." Marie said.

The tears began to spring out once again and she dapped her eyes to wipe away the tears.

"I never got the chance to apologize to her." He said weakly. "I never told her I was sorry or told her thank you for Al the things she did for me. The last time I saw her, I sent her away and told her that I never wanted to see her again. Her eyes were filled with hurt and disappointment. I know she never forgave me. I know she hated me before she died." Xaden said regrettably.

Marie stormed up to him and forced him to look at her by grabbing his cheeks.

"If you are going to say anything do not ever say that!" She warned him. "It she hated you then she would not have come to help you and Jasmine in the first place." 3

His eyes were now filled with surprise. "She came here when I was gone?" 1

She nodded. "Yes she did. She came here when you were gone and without her I am not sure that we would have been able to conjure the snow or other things even though she was very Eleanor and argued that the weather was the natural weather and not to be messed with." She said clicking her tongue and they chuckled together.

"Yes that sounds very much like her," Xaden said with a weak smile.

"I rarely put my bet on things, but one thing I can assure you is the fact that she, on her own, loved you. I can put my life and whole money into that. She loved you the way your mother would have loved you." She promised him. "That I can promise you. So if you do anything, do not doubt her undying love for you. She gave up so much to be with you. Respect that."

And then Marie let go of his cheeks and tucked herself inside her fur coat and looked out to the sea where Marie lay.

Then she walked down the small, steep beach and went to where her sister's body was.

She bent down and touched her cheek.

"I hate that you are gone. I hate that I cannot get up and fight with you." Marie said. "But you are at peace. You will go and be with your son." 2

Marie was referring to Eleanor's son, whom Bale had killed.

It was when Eleanor had been looking for her son and Bale to kill that she found Xaden dead, but his soul still clung to his body and decided to stay.

"But what did you want to tell me before you were murdered?" Marie asked, remembering when her sister had said she had something urgent to speak to her about. "Xaden speaks of his own regrets, but I have mine sister. I should have been a better sister to you. I should have never dabbled in dark magic, and I should have stayed to hear what you had to say before you died. Perhaps I could have saved you."

She swallowed.

Her sister was quiet and still.

"Why is it that we always have our regrets at the dying moment and realize that it is too late to say all the things we should have when we are alive?" Marie asked her sister.

Then she very gently touched her cheek and laid a kiss on her forehead. 2

"Goodbye, my dear sister."

And she rose up and went back.

Xaden went down to Marie's boat, and he touched her beautiful hair.

He set aside one rose in her hair and gently arranged her hair.

"I have so many things I wish to say. Things I

should have said when you were here. Things that I should have done differently." He said to her. "But now you are gone. I will never stop until I find who did this to you, and then I will slit his throat."

He kissed her forehead. "Goodbye, Mother. I love you."

He gently pushed the boat away into the river, and she slowly began to go.

He took a step back, and it hit him again that he would never see her again.

"Will you do the honors?" He asked her.

"Of course, little nephew." She smiled.

And then she waved her hands, and the inside of the boat caught instant fire, and they watched as it went away.

"Now, what is going to happen?" she asked him.

"I am going to find out who did this." He said, and he went away.

FOR SNEAK PEEKS ADD DIS... ›