

Her Secret 96

CHAPTER 96 NO.96

"You smell just like your father." Ezekiel stated.

It was not Lana's first time hearing this since River's father mentioned it before but she still found the mention of it to be extremely weird. "Thanks for stating the obvious." She said, not attempting to hide her displeasure.

Ezekiel laughed, a strange gentle noise that escaped from him. Lana frowned, not expecting him to sound so...nice. "How much do you know about your parents, Lana?"

"Not that much since they passed away when I was young." She answered truthfully.

"Ray never talked about them to you?" he asked. Lana stayed silent. "From your silence I can tell that he doesn't, huh? Hm...well I knew your father very well. We were friends." He said as he went to the stool nearby and sat on it. he looked down at Lana who remained seated on the ground.

"Funny how you can say that with a straight face when I'm aware that you fought against his authority when he was pack leader." She casually said, recalling Griffin's story from not too long ago. From what she remembered, Ezekiel did not agree with her father over certain issues and that led to him leaving the Rosecliff pack and forming his own.

Ezekiel rested his elbows on his thighs as his hands went to his mouth. Lana could not properly see his lower face but from the gaps of his fingers, she could tell that he was smiling. "I see that Griffin has been talking about me, or was it Ray?"

"Does it really matter who told me?"

He shrugged. "I suppose not,"

"Why did you make Zane bring me here?" she asked firmly.

"You know, I only fought back against Aldric because I cared for him." he said, ignoring Lana's question.

"What do you mean by that?"

"If you knew that your friend, your dear, dear friend, was going down the wrong path...then wouldn't you do everything in your power to stop them from ruining their life?"

Lana stayed silent, not wanting to say anything at that point.

"What's wrong? Cat got your tongue?" he smirked. "Maybe it's a tough question to ask, huh? Well then, how about I give you more context to this question?"

"I don't care about the context. Let me go." She blurted out.

"Oh, but the context involves you, Lana. It involves your family." He said, causing Lana's eyes to widen. "Did that get your attention?" he raised an eyebrow.

"Stop messing with me and get to the point!" she yelled.

"Ah, such an ill-tempered child. Just like your father. Seeing you like this does bring back some good old memories." Lana clenched her hands into a fist, feeling her nails digging into her palm. Ezekiel noticed the shift in her body language but that intense stare of hers sent shivers down his spine. She really did look like Aldric, he thought as he could only feel overjoyed by that fact.

"Get to the point." She spat.

Ezekiel sighed. "Very well, let me tell you all about your father and your mother since you don't know a thing about them at all. Ray didn't really do a good job at keeping their memories alive, huh?" Ezekiel then shifted in his seat, getting comfortable as he was ready to go down memory lane. "Let's start from the very beginning."

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From a young age, Ezekiel looked up to Aldric. He was the definition of perfection to his eyes—he was a perfect son, a perfect friend, and eventually he became the perfect leader. Ezekiel was always by his side and so was Ray and many others. Aldric was a just and kind leader and everyone wanted to please him. He filled the pack with security, with love and knowing that he was there for them, the pack truly strived and so did the forest.

"I think I'm in love." were the words that Aldric suddenly blurted out on a hot summer's day. The three of them, Aldric, Ray and Ezekiel were lazing around in the forest, basking under the summer sun. Ezekiel could only stare at Aldric, wondering if he had heard him wrongly.

"Love? You finally found yourself a potential mate?" Ray asked, curious to find out more details for Aldric.

Aldric bashfully looked away and pondered for a moment. "Something like that."

Ezekiel hated this look on Aldric's face. The soft touch of pink of his cheeks, the tenderness of his gaze, he looked so different then the perfect Aldric he knew. The strong and confident leader, the most feared and wanted alpha was—in love?

"Well, we're on the edge of our seats here." Ezekiel said, forcing himself to smile.

"Do we know this person? They must be from our pack, right?" Ray chimed in excitedly.

“No, they aren’t from our pack.” Aldric said with a small smile and soft shake of his head.

Ray and Ezekiel exchanged glances. “Then? Did you meet someone when you went to Winfield?” Ezekiel pressed.

“You guys know that I trust you with my life right?” Aldric suddenly blurted.

There was a strange weight forming in Ezekiel’s heart the moment he said that. When neither Ray nor Ezekiel said anything in response, Aldric turned to them, his emerald eyes shining like the polished gem under the harsh sun.

“Of course.” Ray said automatically once he met his friend’s gaze.

“Then, I’ll tell you who it is but promise me not to overreact.”

“The way you’re building this up will only make us overreact even more.” Ray laughed but Ezekiel did not find that funny. For some reason, he knew that whatever Aldric was going to say, he would not like it at all. His perfection was crumbling apart right before his eyes and he so desperately wanted to hold him together, to fix his cracks and flaws.

“Her name is...Claire Danley.”

There was a looming silence that followed because both Ray and Ezekiel knew who Claire Danley was. In their small community of Rosecliff, they knew everyone both human and werewolf and it did not take them long to realise that Claire Danley was undoubtedly a human.

“Aldric...she’s—” Ray started, breaking the heavy silence.

“I know Ray. I know she’s human but I fell in love with her on my own accord. No instincts pushing me to mate with her, no alpha nonsense controlling my body. It happened suddenly and abruptly and I truly felt alive at that time. I love her to the point that I want to spend the rest of my life with her.” he babbled on.

Ray stared at him dumbfoundedly before his expression softened. “And what about her? Does she love you back?”

Aldric laughed. “Naturally.” He grinned proudly.

“So...you want to take her as your mate?”

“I’m the pack leader, I know that I can do nearly anything that I want but I also know that the people in our pack are—traditional folks.”

“Don’t tell me you’re going to keep your relationship with her a secret?”

“Of course not! I told you guys, right?”

“Aldric!” Ray fumed.

“Relax! Things will work out, I’m sure of it.” he said with a toothy grin. Aldric then noticed how Ezekiel was and turned his attention to him. “Right, Ezekiel?”

Ezekiel finally looked at Aldric’s direction. They stared at each other for a moment before Ezekiel smiled. “You’ve gotten weaker, Aldric.” He suddenly said, causing Aldric’s face to drop.

“What?” he snapped.

“You truly believe you can be mates with a puny human?” Ezekiel sneered. His harsh words caused Aldric to jump to his feet and approached him menacingly. Ezekiel stayed silent as he felt Aldric grab a handful of his shirt collar.

“What’s your problem?” he asked, his face was tainted with disappointment and anger.

“You. You are my problem, Aldric.” He answered.

“G-Guys...” Ray muttered as he placed his hand on Aldric’s arm. “Don’t fight!”

“What do you mean by that?” Aldric asked, his attention solely on Ezekiel as he glared into his intense golden eyes.

“You are the leader of the Rosecliff pack. You are strong, you are capable, you are—no, you were perfection, Aldric!” Ezekiel snapped and as he grabbed Aldric’s arm, nails dug deep into his flesh but Aldric did not react whatsoever. “And now everything is crumbling apart! If you make that human your mate, you will be ruining yourself.”

“Ezekiel!” Ray warned.

“You don’t even know her, how could you say that about her?”

“Because, my dear friend.” Ezekiel started, emphasising harshly on the word ‘friend’. “Love will become your greatest weakness.” He spat before prying his fingers from his arm and slapping Aldric’s hand from his collar. He then turned around, instantly transforming in his wolf form—a brilliantly large wolf with the shade of midnight for its fur.

“Ezekiel! Where are you going!?” Ray called out but was ignored as the wolf rushed away swiftly, disappearing behind the tall trees that surrounded them.

Ezekiel was furious, a disgusting feeling creeping over him as all he wanted to do at that moment was to stop this feeling from corrupting him. A strange sensation went up to his throat where he felt it growing bigger and tighter to the point where he felt like he was about to explode. He allowed himself to howl aloud, his voice echoing through the forest. Pain, despair, disappointment, betrayal, hatred, at this point he did not know what he was feeling anymore.

The distance between Ezekiel and the rest of the pack was growing as he started to avoid everyone. Until the day Aldric grew the courage to announce that he had taken a mate and although he was secretive about it, everyone knew who his mate was. That was the final straw for Ezekiel, the fact that Aldric went through with his plan to be with Claire Danley—Ezekiel did not want to be a part of such a pack, where traditions and ways of their predecessors were tossed aside without a second glance.

He left, but to the rest of the pack, he had abandoned them. It was funny how he was deemed a traitor when Aldric was the one who betrayed him first, betrayed his idea of perfection. Ezekiel then laid low, building his own pack from the ground up but he would always keep tabs on his old pack, learning about their every move. At first, he thought that maybe he missed them—his original family but as time passed by he became aware that what he actually missed was the forest.

A sense of dread crept up on him when he remembered that the forest and the pack, everything and everyone he loved will be ruined just because of Aldric's lust over that human. Ezekiel thought that he could just turn a blind eye to them now that he was not a part of the pack anymore, but who was he kidding, as all he ever thought about was them and ways to save them from the human named Claire Danley.