

## A Gift from the Goddess by Dawn Rosewood Chapter 8

### Chapter Eight

It was cold. There was no light. Only darkness surrounded me.

I wasn't sure what I had expected for when I died, werewolves didn't seem to have any real lore hypothesising about what came after death. I'm sure humans would think we should be cast into hell, our entire self being a creature opposed to the ways of their natural laws. But we didn't have any thoughts or values on that.

Did I expect the Goddess to embrace me and lead me into some pearly gates? She had abandoned me in life, I could only assume she would abandon me in death also.

I stayed curled up in the darkness for longer than I could say. It felt like days, or even years, but time didn't seem to move the same way here. Hell, for all I knew, it could have been only seconds that had passed in this eternal abyss.

But suddenly, without warning, light surrounded me and I began to fall.

Around me were images from my memories, floating past me as I dropped. I saw my childhood, my mother tenderly caring for me. My father with his always stoic attitude. I saw Aleric, how attractive he looked when I saw him for the very first time after coming of age. I saw Thea, her air-headed facade as she always smiled at me. I saw Sophie... betraying me.

And I saw my death. It was replayed over and over, and over again as if trying to make me go insane. I would see Aleric lift the blade, the sound of the sharp edge eating into my flesh, and then the darkness... the silent cold darkness. It continued to repeat like a broken record.

"Please... stop..." I begged to the empty.

I didn't know if anyone could hear me but I couldn't handle this anymore. If this wasn't hell then it was damn near close. I shut my eyes tightly, pressing my balled-up fists against my ears to block out the images and sounds, but they continued to drill themselves into my brain.

Why...why was I being punished? I had never done anything wrong. I had done exactly what was asked of me the entire time. I had died for that very reason.

"My child," a melodic voice then called out to me, bringing the peace and silence with it that I had craved.

I quickly opened my eyes and saw a woman with brilliant gold hair and silver glowing eyes. I recognised her immediately. She was the woman I'd witnessed in the woods whilst I was shifted. But who was she?

I asked the question in my mind but, deep down, I already knew the answer.

She was the Moon Goddess, Selene.

Her presence was overwhelming, making me feel so strange inside. I was warm but I was cold, I was empty but I was full. Just looking at her made me want to break down into tears before her but I held back.

I couldn't help but wonder though, why was she finally showing herself now? Where was she when I was **alive**?

"I can sense your turmoil inside, even your disdain for me," she said. "I know you have many questions but I also know some of these answers will not satisfy your anguish."

I felt instantly embarrassed. We were taught from birth to worship her loyally, yet I was conflicted inside. How could I worship someone who had allowed me to suffer for so long?

"Why..." I said, my voice wavering and betraying my emotions. "...Why did you do this to me? You made me

be Aleric's mate when he couldn't love me. Didn't that mean you wanted me to become Luna? If so, why would you abandon me to endure that horrific fate?"

"My child, I never left you," she said gently. "I have watched over you since the beginning but there are some things I cannot interfere with. I never wished for you to experience such hardships." 1

"Then what's the point in worshipping you?" I said a little too harshly. I was letting my anger get the better of me. "I prayed every night to you for years until eventually had convinced myself you either didn't exist or didn't care."

"I do not ask my children to worship me. I am merely a mother to you all. I give you all the tools to bring you immense happiness in your lives, but if something interferes with that then I cannot intervene."

"Are you saying that this all happened because something changed your divine plan?"

If that was the truth, then what had happened to change the course of destiny? I felt she wasn't telling me everything.

“You look at things too simplistically, trying to apply your earthly knowledge and logic to something that cannot possibly be understood so easily. You are one of my favourite children, so intelligent and strong, but I cannot change the future in the ways you might think.”

She gently grabbed my palm and, with her other hand, caressed my cheek. I wanted to flinch from her touch but her presence instinctively made me want to give myself to her entirely.

“If you care and nurture a child, give them the best education and family, only for them to grow up and commit grave crimes, would you blame the mother? I wished for you to have the best life, full of love and happiness. However, if things change from my original plan, then there is nothing I can do until it has run its course.”

“Run its course? You mean until I die?”

She nodded her head. “I cannot change the future but I cannot deny that the interference that occurred was not entirely natural. Your death in this instance would have triggered something far bigger,

something that cannot be allowed to occur. ...And so, I intend to send you back.”

Her silver eyes were boring into mine, making it hard to disagree with anything she was saying.

“...And if I refuse?” | asked hesitantly.

“Then you will remain in the Abyss, forever reliving your earthly memories.”

My mind recalled the images that had just tormented me, showing me my death over and over again. I knew now she must have shown me that strategically so I had a taste of what my refusal would look like.

“Then I don’t want to be Luna again... and I don’t want to be Aleric’s mate,” I said, surprising even myself that I was bargaining with a Goddess. But I couldn’t shake the feeling something seemed off.

“That is the fate I have chosen for you.”

“Then I don’t accept,” I argued, removing my hand from hers. “I think there is something you’re not telling me. A reason why you need me to go back so badly.”

She was silent, her eyes regarding me wearily.

“...So, I am correct,” I said, taking her silence as confirmation.

“I cannot rewrite a fate that was established during your birth. The ramifications of such a thing could potentially change your entire being and identity. Your mate will be Aleric, just as it always has been. But I will give you a gift. I will gift you the ability to choose your own fate, your own destiny. You will need it for your future battles,”

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I watched as she then gently kissed my forehead, tingles erupting from where her lips met my skin. It was like a rush of energy flowed through me all at once, opening myself to emotions I'd never felt before.

Once she moved back, I needed to take a second to steady myself, trying hard to clear my mind to focus on what was most important; answers.

“What battles? You haven't even told me what I need to change yet.”

All she'd told me was I needed to stop my death. But how could I possibly know exactly what I needed to change in order to reach that goal?

“I have given you a part of myself,” she said, her voice sounding oddly strained now. “With this, you can stop your death. You must not die at all costs. The future of all werewolves will fall when you do.”

She was beginning to flicker, like a candle struggling to stay aflame.

“What's wrong?”

I tried to grab her hand but it went straight through her.

“The piece I have gifted you has made me weak, I must rest. But I will be with you and I will be watching over you. There is no reason for you to feel alone this time.”

She vanished then, before my eyes. Gone into thin air

And with that, I woke up in bed.