

A Gift from the Goddess by Dawn Rosewood Chapter 9

Chapter Nine

There was an alarm ringing in my head.

It was so loud, aggressively thrashing against my already sore brain. However, it wasn't until I turned towards the source and opened my eyes that I realised it was an alarm clock. An alarm clock I hadn't seen in years.

I instantly sat upright in bed and took in my surroundings. This was the bedroom of my family home, the bedroom I had lived in up until my coming of age. Everything looked exactly the same. Was it all a dream? Had I really died?

I jumped out of bed, running towards my mirror, and instantly, I could feel the difference when I moved. I was shorter, lighter. My limbs didn't feel as muscled.

...And I felt strange. Like something was missing.

As I looked at my reflection, I quickly realised that I was young. Very much so. My cheeks were plumper and my eyes rounder. The stress lines I'd accumulated over my years of mistreatment were completely gone. I looked almost... pretty. Had I ever thought that before? I'd been so focused on changing myself to suit Aleric that I'd never noticed.

But that's when I realised what was missing.

My wolf.

I remembered the feeling of companionship one felt after a coming of age. The feeling of something else inside you with their own emotions and needs. This body had never felt that before. In fact, it had never felt much of anything, not even heartache. She hadn't yet fallen prey to the mate bond.

But she was me now, and I was her. A twenty four year old trapped inside the body of a small girl.

As I looked to the left, where I used to keep my daily calendar, I finally saw the date... and my stomach instantly dropped.

I was fourteen.

The Goddess had sent me back ten years. What was so entwined with my future that sending me back this far in time was necessary?

“Aria!” a voice then suddenly called from downstairs.

And memories of Sophie flashed in my mind, making me shiver. How many times had she called for me like that? But, no, that was impossible. I hadn’t met Sophie yet.

I frowned for another few moments, trying to place the voice, but then it finally hit me. I realised who it was.

How could I have been so stupid? I was fourteen. There was only one person that could be.

I threw my door wide open and ran down the stairs as quickly as I could not caring if I tripped on the way. Because this was more important. I needed to see. I needed to make sure it was real.

By the time I reached the kitchen, I was already a sobbing mess. It had been so long and yet I still felt their loss every day they had been gone.

“Aria?” they asked concerned, taking in my crying mess of a face.

“Mama!”

And I launched myself into her arms, crying into her chest.

Chapter Nine

She was actually here, this wasn’t a dream. I couldn’t believe it. This alone had made the whole ordeal with the Goddess worth it. If I’d known I was going to be able to see my mother again I would have agreed sooner,

“Aria...? What’s wrong? Are you hurt?”

I shook my head. No, I wasn’t hurt. I couldn’t be better.

But I could tell she was confused and concerned. I’d just ran downstairs and had thrown myself at her.

She turned her head towards one of the attendants, who I only just realised was in the room

also, and they looked back at her just as confused. I’d forgotten we’d had attendants back then as well. We were, after all, a prestigious Beta household.

“This isn’t like you, something must be wrong,” she said gently and ran her fingers lovingly through my long hair. “You’ve never come crying to me like this before and you’re still in your pyjamas. Are you sick?”

I shook my head again. She was right though. I'd always conducted myself in the ways of someone who would be Luna one day. Never expressing unpleasant emotions, always being organised and prepared. Yet here I was, in my pink PJs, hair a tangled mess and a red snotty face.

"I'm not sick... I just missed you," I said sniffing.

I was cautious about my choice of words since I wouldn't be able to explain what had happened. At least, not without sounding insane. This way I wasn't necessarily lying either.

"But you saw me yesterday...."

"I know... but you're just so busy with the umm... hospital that I don't get to see you often."

She pulled away from the hug just enough to be able to look down at my face properly. I could see her blue eyes clinically inspecting me as if she were examining one of her patients.

"I think you should stay home from school today. I'll have one of the nurses from work check in on you at midday to see how you are."

"No!" I hastily said, though a little too loudly. I quickly cleared my throat and continued more calmly. "No, really, I'm fine. I'm sorry to worry you."

I stepped back and clasped my hands together, smiling politely at her. This was the usual way I had acted around her; respectful and polite.

I couldn't be stuck at home because I needed to start figuring out what I had to do to change the future. I didn't remember much from my high school years but now I had to pay close attention. There needed to be a reason why I was sent back to this specific time.

She sighed, thinking internally for a few seconds before reluctantly nodding her head.

"Well, you're going to be late if you don't get ready soon." She then turned to the attendant again. "Lucy, can you please help Aria get ready for school?"

Lucy? That name sounded familiar.

A young girl with a cute, short bob stepped forward and came to lead me upstairs. She couldn't have been much older than I had been when I died.

"Come along, Miss," she said, smiling warmly to me.

It was her voice that made me suddenly remember.

Lucy. She had been employed with us up until I was around eighteen, having worked for our family for seven years at her time of departure. I think she ended up leaving in the end because she found her mate,

. Chapter Nine

finding him during my coming-of-age party.

I followed behind her up the stairs and back to my room, watching quietly as she picked out some clothes for me and laid them out neatly on the bed. This had always been the way back then. I'd never argued with anything that was chosen for me.

I blankly stared at what she had picked out. It was a bright frilly dress, to which I cringed inside. Had I always worn such childish clothes at this age? Now, I'd rather die again than wear that.

I walked straight past Lucy to the wardrobe behind her and began to sift through all my clothes. Much of it was the same; cute girly clothes that would have looked more suited to a nine year old. Everyone had always expected me to look cute and pretty as a child. I realised now that it was more like they were dressing a doll. 1

I continued to look through the wardrobe until I finally came to my formal wear. Most of it would have been way too fancy to attend school in but I did manage to find a piece that could pass as smart casual. Without further hesitation, I pulled out the simple black flare dress and began to get changed.

"Miss...?" Lucy asked, confused.

I didn't turn

back to look at her though and instead continued getting changed. "You can throw away most of this," I replied, over my shoulder. "I think I'm too old to be wearing that sort of thing now, don't you think? Anything that you wouldn't dress an eighteen year old in can be donated, or thrown out if it's too old."

Lucy looked startled but eventually nodded her head anyway.

Once I was dressed and ready, I was greeted outside by the driver who would take me to school. All the ranked members were driven to school as a security measure. The rest of the pack children usually took the bus or walked. I got in the backseat quietly with my backpack and watched out the window silently for the entire journey.

It was a short drive from home to school. Our house was located in a prime location so we were close to a lot of the important buildings in town. It was strange to see how different everything was compared to ten years from now. Not just some of the buildings, but the atmosphere too.

I had felt in my previous life like everything had always been so serious, so life or death, and a struggle for power. We had waged so many wars on other territories to get to where we ended up.

Deep inside, I had always felt guilty for my contribution to most of those battles; I'd personally strategised the victory for so many of them in an effort to earn Aleric's attention. But here, in this time... ? Everything seemed... peaceful. They hadn't experienced Aleric's thirst for power yet.

As we rounded the street corner, an old building came into view. Greying white stone walls covered in ivy made up most of the heritage site as it stood on a large green field.

It had been seven years since I'd last been here and yet, today, my school's gates were open to welcome me back as if nothing had changed.

A/N: Thanks for reading!

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