

ELIA & AURORA

Written by

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EXT. RHEIN & STEIN - NIGHT

We see the city of Rhein & Stein during Christmas night.

(HYPER REALISTIC TOWN in the 1930S, MIXTURE OF GERMANY, SWITZERLAND, & FRANCE)

CUE TITLE CARD

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - BAKERY WINDOW - NIGHT

Elia (7 years old) is waiting by the bakery's semi-circle window. Behind him is a large firewood oven, where the fire is going. His surrounding is decorated with different kinds of pastries and jars, placed in cabinets hanging on the walls, cabinet's under the bakery window, and on the shelves. It is a chilly but cozy Christmas night.

Elia is looking outside, specifically more to the left, where the narrow street is lightened up by Christmas lights as well as lights coming from inside everyone's home. There's nobody outside, but Elia seems to be anxiously waiting for someone.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - DINING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Elia's mom, Elizabeth (33) sets down a plate of Turkey on to the dining table, already decorated with other traditional European Christmas cuisine. Elizabeth (Eli) turns to Elia who is bent over by the window while anxiously tip toeing.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - BAKERY WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

Elia quickly peaks over the window as if he spotted someone. He then closes the window, before rushing to the front door on the left corner side of the bakery's window. He opens the door, looks up and Noah (45), a dark blonde, tall man in a winter trench coat and fedora hat walks in. Elia looks up at Noah, then looks down then to the right. Noah's right hand holding a bag, and holding his left hand appears Aurora, a blonde, 6 year old little girl. Her hair falls just below her jaw, her bangs curves gently just above her eyebrows. She's wearing a green dress under a plaid, greyish coat, and a Jaxon hat leaning a bit to the side.

ELIA

Hi.

Aurora smiles back.

Elia turns back up to Noah. Noah looks at Aurora, startled for a second, before realizing Elia is looking at him.

NOAH
Oh, ha ha ha.

He kneels down and rubs Elia's head.

NOAH (CONT'D)
How are you, dear boy?

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Eli walks in to the living room from the kitchen, carrying the last dish.

ELIZABETH
Noah.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Noah looks up at Eli.

NOAH
(gives Eli a side hug)
Merry Christmas, Eli.

ELIZABETH
Merry Christmas to you both as well.

ELIA
(removing Aurora's coat)
What took you so long?

AURORA
(expressive gestures)
There was these giant snowballs on the road that was blocking our way.

Aurora explains using big hand gestures as Elia is trying to help remove her coat.

ELIZABETH
Giant snowballs?

NOAH
(puts the bag to the side of the wall, then removes his hat and hangs them on the hangar while explaining)
Avalanche from the mountains. No worries. No one was hurt.

Meanwhile, Elia and Aurora in the background runs off screen to the living room area.

NOAH (CONT'D)
(takes off his coat and
hangs it as he
elaborates further)
Fortunately, we weren't the only
ones heading into town, so we had a
lot of hands moving the ice off the
road without too much work.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

fade out talking noise from Noah and Eli

Elia and Aurora sits under the Christmas tree, to the right
of the oven. Elia goes to pull out a small present box from
under the tree.

ELIA
I got something for you.

AURORA
I do too.

Aurora gets up and runs (offscreen) to the hanger...

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

And reaches inside the bag her father was holding, and pulls
out a small box, before running back...

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Aurora returns to Elia, who is equally as excited as Aurora.

AURORA
Tada.

Aurora hands Elia the present box. As Elia is about to open
his present while Aurora stands in front of him and watch,
Eli interrupts him.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - DINING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Eli and Noah are already seated at the table.

ELIZABETH
Hey. Not right now Elia.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ELIA
What... Can't I open her present
first?

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - DINING AREA - CONTINUOUS

ELIZABETH
Not until tomorrow morning. You
know the tradition.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ELIA
Can't we just break the tradition?
It's made up anyways.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - DINING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Eli lightly glares at Elia while Noah in the back slightly
nods in agreement with Elia.

ELIZABETH
Elia.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

AURORA
Come on.

Aurora pulls Elia up on his feet.

AURORA (CONT'D)
We can just open it "tomorrow".

Aurora hold Elia's hand to the dining table...

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - DINING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Aurora takes a seat beside her father, while Elia takes a
seat next to his mother. They all join hands to say their
prayer to God.

ALL
"Oh, Father..."

EXT. ELIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ALL (O.C)
"...who art in heaven, hallowed be
thy name; thy kingdom come; thy
will be done on earth as it is in
heaven. Give us this day our daily
bread..."

STANDING OUTSIDE LOOKING THROUGH THE WINDOW POV. CAMERA PANS
UP TO THE SECOND FLOOR, LIGHTS FROM THE STREETS TURNS OFF
ONE BY ONE.

THE LIGHTS IN THE LIVING ROOM TURNS OFF, TRANSITIONING FROM NIGHT TO MIDNIGHT.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Noah is dead asleep on the guest bed. Aurora uncovers the blanket and checks to see if her father is completely knocked out. She then gets out of the bed, and quietly sneaks out to the door. She opens it...

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

And creeps her body out the hallway, before quietly closing the door to a near-close.

The hall way is narrow, with two doors to each side, a staircase at the beginning of the hallway, next to the guest bedroom, and windows on each end of the hallway.

Aurora sneaks to Elia's room, located on the right side at the end of the hallway. The floor slightly creaks as she's walking, but not loud enough to awake anyone. She gets to Elia's door, leans near and quietly knocks on it. She hears quiet footsteps approaching the door, and takes a small step back before the door opens, revealing Elia.

ELIA

Hey!

AURORA

Shh.

ELIA

Oh...

(Covers his mouth before
whispering)

Hey.

Aurora smiles.

AURORA

(whispering)

Come on.

She leads the way as Elia quietly shuts his door and follows her from behind.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - FIRST FLOOR STAIRCASE - MOMENTS LATER

The house is dark except for the Christmas tree lights and the moonlight from through the window, creating a warm, ambient atmosphere to the house.

Aurora and Elia appears from the stairs, walking down to the first floor. They get to the first floor, and heads to the living room.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They get to the Christmas tree.

CAMERA FOLLOWS ELIA

Elia grabs the candle and lighter on the counter above the fireplace and lights the candle up, then carries it to Aurora, who's already sitting beside the Christmas tree. He gently places the candle in between the two before sitting down. They both eagerly take out the presents that was given by the other from under the tree. Elia is about to open his present but Aurora stops him.

AURORA

Wait.

She nudge her head towards something high up behind Elia. He looks back and the clock is about to strike midnight. Elia turns back and they both smile. They wait for a few seconds and *DONG. DONG. DONG.*

AURORA

(smirks)

It's tomorrow.

ELIA

(smiles)

Merry Christmas, Aurora.

As both are about to open their presents, the house starts to rumble a bit. Elia looks to the roof and ponders.

AURORA

Huh? Samichlaus is here already?

Elia turns his head to look outside, before he immediately jumps on top of Aurora to cover her as explosion occurs outside, causing the bakery's window to shatter and the pieces of glass to fly towards Elia and Aurora.

EXT. STEIN & RHEIN - SAME TIME

The northern parts of Stein & Rhein is being bombed, fire erupts from the buildings and homes. Screams are heard as the civilians are in panic.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

FLOOR P.O.V

We see Aurora laying on the ground, being covered by Elia.

AURORA
Cough, cough.
(turns around to find
Elia covering her)
Elia? Elia, wake up. Wake up.

Elia slowly opens his eyes and finds himself staring at Aurora. He turns back and sees the window shattered, and fire outside the street.

ELIA
(turns back to Aurora)
Are you alright?

Aurora nods. Elia gets up as we see Elizabeth and Noah rushing downstairs.

AURORA
(screaming)
Papa!

NOAH
(firm)
Aurora!

Noah and Eli runs to their kids. Noah helps Elia up.

NOAH
(to Elia)
Are you alright, my child?

ELIA
I'm okay, sir.

Eli checks up on her son as Noah checks on his daughter.

NOAH
(to Aurora)
You?

AURORA
I'm fine, Papa.

ELIZABETH
(in the background)
Oh, my dear boy. Are you hurt?

ELIA
(in the background)
I'm fine.

ELIA (CONT'D)
(stoned-face frightened)
What is happening?

As Elia finishes asking, a giant rumble occurs again.

AURORA
(frightened)
Papa!

Noah gets up on his feet.

NOAH
We must leave, now.
(looks to Elizabeth)
Pack light, necessities only.

Elizabeth gets up and runs to the kitchen.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The house continues to shake.

Elizabeth opens the lower cabinet when a rumble hits, causing her to slip as the foods and dishes also fall over.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - SAME TIME

Noah directs the kids to the front door when the rumble hits, causing them to stumble.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

(In the background) Noah directs the kids to the front door.

NOAH
(in the background)
Hurry.

Eli crouches up, grabs a bag on the side and begins to shove bread and other dry food into it.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

As they are preparing to leave, Aurora stops midway while Noah runs upstairs.

AURORA
Wait.

And goes back to grab the small present Elia got for her. She picks up the present on the ground, before Elia grabs her hand and pulls her away.

ELIA
Come on, Aurora. We don't have
time.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Elia and Aurora gets to the front door and starts putting on their shoes, as Eli drops the food bag at front door before running up the stairs.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM - MIDNIGHT

Noah burst into the room, goes to the closet and opens it, grabbing his and Aurora's coat.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - ELIA'S ROOM - MIDNIGHT

Eli burst in to Elia's room, and opens his closet to grab his clothes.

INT. ELIA'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Elia and Aurora are anxiously waiting, as Elia looks back and forth between the front door and the second floor. They see Noah and Eli running down from the second floor with the clothes in their hand. They get down to the first floor. Noah puts Aurora's coat on her, while Eli gives Elia his coat to put on himself while she puts on her boots, before grabbing the food bag and wearing it across her shoulder. After putting Aurora's coat on her, Noah proceeds to put on his boots.

NOAH
(opens the door and waves
for the kids and
Elizabeth to leave)
Stay close to me.

After everyone leaves, Noah leaves the house, but Elizabeth comes back to take a last look at her house, before Noah shuts the door.

INT. HABSBURG CASTLE - AURORA'S BEDROOM - EARLY DAY

About 8 years later

Transition from Noah shutting the door to Aurora immediately sitting up out of bed, breathing deeply like she was awakened by a horrible nightmare. She now looks to be 16 years old.

fade in background noise of birds singing, the people, the army training...

She looks behind to the other side of the bed. It's empty. Aurora takes a deep breath and uncovers the blanket, revealing herself in a white night gown. She gets out of bed and walks to the window. She opens the window wide, letting the sunlight in.

EXT. AURORA'S BEDROOM - WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

Aurora leans on the window's surface/balcony as a flock of black birds fly by.

CAMERA FOLLOWS BIRD AS THEY FLY ABOVE THE STREETS OF THE CASTLE AS WE SEE THE CASTLE'S OVERVIEW.

EXT. FIELD - CONTINUOUS

CAMERA FOLLOW THE BIRDS AS THEY FLY BEYOND THE CASTLE'S WALL, REVEALING A WIDE SHOT OF THE VAST FIELD BEYOND THE CASTLE, ALONG WITH THE RIVER STREAM THAT FLOWS UNDER THE CASTLE'S BRIDGE. THERE ARE FARMERS OUT ON THE FIELD WORKING, ALONG WITH OTHER ANIMALS. SOME OF THEM LOOK UP AT THE BIRDS.

The birds fly pass a father driving a horse wagon carrying liquor supply, with his son on his lap. The toddler points at the flock of birds as the father picks him up on the shoulder for him to wave at the birds.

EXT. WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

Aurora looks down to her left, where the military training ground is located, and the army's training is in session. A group of soldiers further out are practicing at the rifle range, while a group of new recruits are marching, being directed by the colonel.

COLONEL

(In Swiss-German)

Two, three, four. Hup, two, three
four...

Aurora places her hand under her jaw and peaks a smile at something.

EXT. MILITARY TRAINING GROUND - EARLY DAY

The colonel is directing the new group of recruits.

COLONEL
(In Swiss-German)
Two, three, four. Halt!

The marching soldiers halt, standing in a roll call formation. Amongst the soldier, Elia, now 18 years old, is revealed, standing in the middle right of the group. He is looking straight at the colonel with a "I'm trying to be serious but deep down I don't feel I belong here" look.

INT. AURORA'S BEDROOM - WINDOW - EARLY DAY

Aurora, still with a smile on her face, closes the window and goes to open the closet to grab her clothes. In the corner of the wardrobe, you can see the unopened present Elia had given to her the night they escaped the bombing.

INT. TOWER HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Aurora's bedroom door opens. Aurora runs out to the hall, shuts the door close and makes her way down to the main hall.

INT. TOWER STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Aurora paces down the stairs, passing a couple of nurses who are making their way upstairs.

AURORA
(In Swiss-German)
Good morning.

NURSE #1
(In Swiss-German)
Good morning, Aurora.

INT. 2ND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

BEGINNING OF ONE SHOT TAKE

Aurora gets to the 2nd floor's corridor and stops pacing, trying to walk at a normal pace as a couple of soldiers and nurses walk by.

SOLDIERS
Good morning, Aurora.

NURSES
Good morning.

Aurora gives them a polite nod before continue pacing once she's passed the group.

EXT. OUTDOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

She continues pacing from the indoor corridor to the outdoor corridor. As she's pacing, the new recruits are marching their way to the West gate. Aurora gets to the Southern gate stairs and heads down to the castle's Southern courtyard.

EXT. SOUTHERN COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

The Southern courtyard is filled with people from soldiers hanging around the "wishing fountain" in the middle of the courtyard, to mothers sitting on the benches by the courtyard's corridor, gossiping with each other as their toddlers run around and playing with each other, a mother sitting at another bench holding an infant. Nurses and soldiers are seen walking across the courtyard.

The people, both adults and kids greets her good morning. Aurora bows and waves at the people as she walks her way to the left corridor...

EXT. COURTYARD'S CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Before taking the left door, exiting the corridor...

EXT. CASTLE'S EAST SIDE STREET - CONTINUOUS

Into the castle's east side street. She continues walking towards the armory located straight ahead, on the left side of the street while greeting the people on the streets. Aurora gets to the armory, and gently pushes the gate open.

INT. ARMOMRY - CONTINUOUS

OPPOSITE SIDE P.O.V

The soldiers are changing out of their military uniform, most are half naked, some only in their underwears. A bulky and tall soldier named Huber turns to the door and sees Aurora.

HUBER

Hey! Military occupants only!

AURORA

Oh, relax. I've seen more than half of you naked.

All the soldiers look at her with a confused and suspicious face.

AURORA
For treatment purposes.

The soldiers relax and heads back to what they were doing.

AURORA
(to Huber)
Have you seen Elia?

Before she could finish saying Elia, she is pulled away from the back.

EXT. ARMORY - CONTINUOUS

Elia picks Aurora off her feet and pulls Aurora away. She turns back around and sees Elia, before turning her body around and launches herself into him.

AURORA
Hey.

ELIA
Not checking out the soldiers, are you?

AURORA
Well...
(she jokingly peaks back at the armory)

INT. ARMORY - SAME TIME

Huber hears the two laughing outside and tries to ignore it.

AURORA (O.S)
They're all in better shape than you.

ELIA (O.S)
I've barely even started.

Huber and takes a look at his own body.

HUBER
(nodding in approval)
Hmm.

EXT. NORTHERN GATE - BRIDGE - LATER

SHOT OF THE NORTHERN GATE'S BRIDGE

Elia and Aurora each on their horses exiting the castle.

EXT. TERRAIN - CONTINUOUS

MONTAGE OF ELIA & AURORA RIDING NORTH ACROSS THE TERRAIN.

They pass by farmers and animals. They pass by the father and the toddler on the horse wagon. Aurora throws a piece of chocolate to the toddler, which is caught by the father. He hands the chocolate to the toddler, who's eyes light up as he takes the chocolate and opens it.

EXT. HILL TOP - LATER

Elia & Aurora arrives at a hill top, looking down at the horizon where after a far distance of hills and terrains, lies a blurry figure of the ruins of Stein and Rhein (their hometown).

AURORA

It's been almost a decade since
I've seen this place.

Elia looks at Aurora, then turns to the horizon...

ELIA

The military have already began
setting posts there. I'll be
deployed within a week.

AURORA

I don't understand. If there's
already an agreement to keep us
neutral, why still deploy our
soldiers? Wouldn't that risks us
being at war with both sides?

ELIA

The colonel says it's better to be
prepared than trusting a piece of
paper. We've been ordered to open
fire on any and every incoming
soldiers, planes, and vehicles that
crosses our border, Nazi or Allied.
He said "Son. The weak will
eventually be swallowed by the
mighty. We know what's happened to
the other countries in Europe, so
it's better for us to act mighty
than to appear weak."
I trust we'll stay true to our
words, but I wouldn't be surprised
of the opposite.

AURORA

And what if we don't? Will you fight?

After a moment of silence...

ELIA

I won't forgive myself for taking another man's life, but I wouldn't be able to live with myself if anything were to happen to my closest people.

Aurora looks at Elia, before looking back at her home, her eyes visibly sadden and worried.

ENTER FLASHBACK

EXT. STEIN - NIGHT

*Transition for close up of Aurora's eyes to young Aurora's eyes looking at the smoke in the sky.

WIDE SHOT OF THE STREET

The street is in flames. A few buildings have collapsed, civilians scrambling to get out of town. Some are severely injured and being looked after by others. Some are dead.

CUT TO: NOAH

Noah turns to his daughter, takes her close by his side and shields her under his coat to prevent her from seeing the horrific situation.

NOAH

Come on.

Noah, and his daughter are walking down the street, along with Eli and Elia following closely behind. Galloping sound is heard. Aurora turns to her right and sees a small group of wealthy-looking people passes by in the middle of the street on their horses. She looks to her right and sees a couple on the opposite side, loading their possessions onto their carriage/wagon.

HUSBAND

No, leave that back. We don't need it.

WIFE

You don't. I do.

(MORE)

WIFE (CONT'D)

Aurora looks in front of her again.

HUSBAND (O.C)
(in the background)
What are we going to do with that
junk?

WIFE (O.C.)
(in the background)
Easy for you to say. This is my
family's heirloom. I can't just
leave it behind.

She holds her father tighter. Noah looks down on Aurora with a worrying face.

STILL SHOT

They continue walking as we see the damage of the city around them, until they are off camera.

EXIT FLASHBACK

INT. CASTLE - MAIN HALL - EARLY AFTERNOON

The main hall is busy with civilians, soldiers, and nurses checking up on people, cooking and walking in and out of the kitchen, cleaning up plates and dishes...

Eli walks out from the kitchen with a large empty tray. She walks to the dining table where the elders are sitting at. She starts collecting the bowls and utensils from the elders.

THOMAS (ELDER MAN)
That's all we get?

ELIZABETH
Sorry, Thomas. You know how it is.
We have to ration wherever we can.
(whispers)
But don't worry, I'll save you the
biggest portion for dinner.

THOMAS
Okay. Well, don't let yourself be
thrown out.

Eli smiles at the elder. *Sound of entrance open (O.C)*

CUT TO: ELIA AND AURORA

Elia and Aurora walks in the room, chatting and laughing.

AURORA
(sees Elizabeth)
Good afternoon, Eli.

ELIA
Mother.

ELIZABETH
Where have you two been all day?

ELIA
Venturing...sightseeing.

AURORA
Exploring the world.

ELIZABETH
Not at my own expenses, I hope. The
colonel wants to see you.

Elia makes no big deal out of it.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
Immediately.

Elia's eyes open wider.

AURORA
Ooh, trouble.

ELIZABETH
Aurora, I need your help in the
kitchen. The men are out in the
training ground today so we'll be a
little short staffed.

AURORA
Of course, Eli.

Elia gives a gentleman bow to Aurora.

ELIA
Till' we meet again.

Aurora giggles and bows back before Elia takes his leave. He waves to his mother as he's walking away.

ELIA (CONT'D)
I'll see you at supper, mother.

Aurora smiles at Elia, before she heads into the kitchen, walking by Eli and giving her joyous shrug. Eli shakes her head before taking the tray back to the kitchen. Thomas' wife, sitting next to him, smiles.

THOMAS' WIFE
 (reminiscing smile)
 Ah. Remember when we used to be like that, dear? Always so excited to see each other?

She turns to Thomas and finds him slurping on his tea, before he puts it down and looks at his wife.

THOMAS
 Huh?

INT. COLONEL'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

A meeting between the higher ranks is about to conclude.

COLONEL
 I will keep you all updated on any further orders. You have the last few days to train your battalion until you're sent out to your post. Be prepared, lieutenants. I fear there will be a few broken promises in the upcoming weeks.

CAPTAINS AND LIEUTENANTS
 (in Swiss-German)
 Sir, yes sir!

COLONEL
 (in Swiss-German)
 At ease.

The captains and lieutenants leave the room as Elia approaches it. He straighten his posture and salutes the captains and lieutenants as they walk past him. Once they've left, Elia then enters the room where he faces the colonel's back, who's looking at the tactical board.

ELIA
 (Salutes)
 Colonel. You requested my presence?

COLONEL
 I hope I'm not intruding any quality time away from you and your girlfriend.

ELIA

Oh, um, not at all sir.

The colonel looks at Elia for a moment...

COLONEL

I've just received an update from the Chief of Armed Force this morning. The Nazis will be crossing our terrain as a supply route. Our job is to protect them from any inconveniences from the Allies.

ELIA

I don't understand. I thought we were only supposed to guard our post? Now we've been ordered to assist the Nazis?

COLONEL

Correct.

ELIA

Wouldn't that defeat the purpose of us being neutral? They're speaking as if we want to be apart of this war.

The colonel interrupts Elia.

COLONEL

We are a part of this war, Elia. The whole world is a part of this war. This isn't just a war between the Allied and the Nazis. This is a war for world domination...for global control. And if we don't choose the right side, we'll lose our country, just as you've lost your city.

ELIA

Sigh. Why are you telling me this personally?

COLONEL

Because I want you to be aware that there is a great chance you could die. And you need to be prepared for that. And so does your girlfriend.

Erik tenses up.

COLONEL (CONT'D)

Death is nothing to be feared of.
It is only a natural part of life.
We don't get to decide the date of
our death, life does.

(after a moment of
silence)

She's already lost her father. She
could lose you as well. You have to
prepare her for that.

Elia stands in silent.

INT. MAIN HALL'S KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Eli and Aurora, along with the other nurses are prepping for dinner. Aurora is cutting and dicing vegetables along with Eli by the right corner's station. Aurora brings the pile of cut up vegetables and brings it over to the opposite corner. Eli turns to Aurora as she dumps the vegetables into a large pot. Eli turns back to her cutting board as Aurora walks back. They continue dicing vegetables. Eli peaks at Aurora as she's dicing, then looks back at her board.

AURORA

(dicing vegetables)

Is there something you wish to tell
me?

ELIZABETH

Nothing you should be concerned
about.

AURORA

I can tell you're worried, you
know. I see the way you look at us.

Eli stays quiet for a second before speaking.

ELIZABETH

He's very fond of you.

AURORA

(smiles)

Is it that obvious?

ELIZABETH

And you're fond of him.

AURORA

Yes.

ELIZABETH

I'm just concern that the boy you love may soon turn into the man you'd never expected him to be.

AURORA

What do you mean?

ELIZABETH

I mean...all these ideas you're putting into his head. Love, compassion, forgiveness. It's fine for us women to think like that, but Elia, he's a boy, soon becoming a man, living in a treacherous reality. They are not like us, men. They thrive through war, survive through chaos, respected by being warriors.

AURORA

(turns to Eli a bit annoyed)

I did not put any ideas into his head. He's already had them, long before you could recognize, and it's the reason why I fell in love with him.

ELIZABETH

I'm just saying, sooner or later, your fantasies will have to come face to face with reality, and reality is not a kind one.

AURORA

(agrees)

Men are toxic, always fighting and killing, centuries after centuries, no end to it.

ELIZABETH

Out of necessity. Your father was a great soldier not because he wanted to fight, because he needed protect. He's the reason you've been able to afford the life that you had.

AURORA

A fatherless one.

Eli immediately stops what she's doing and raises her voice at Aurora.

ELIZABETH

Do not dare to speak ill of your father. If it wasn't for him, half the people in this town wouldn't be here, and neither would we.

Eli turns and realizes everyone was now staring at them. Eli looks back at Aurora with an upset face, before taking her pot of ingredients out to the main chamber. Aurora goes back to her task, visibly saddened.

INT. MAIN HALL - NIGHT

It's currently supper and everyone is gathered around the dining tables. Elia is sitting next to Aurora with Eli facing him. Aurora is still visibly sad and barely touching her food. While Elizabeth is only focusing on eating her dinner. Elia looks back and forth between the two confused.

ELIA

Did something happen while I was gone?

EXT. CASTLE'S EAST SIDE STREET - LATER

SHOT OF THE LIT UP STREET WITH LAUGHTERS AND CHATTERS BEING HEARD.

EXT. TAVERN - SAME TIME

The tavern is filled with civilians who are eating, drinking, chatting...We see behind the bar is the tavern's owner (same person on the horse wagon) serving alcohol.

EXT. CASTLE - NIGHT

Elia and Aurora are on the hill grass, just outside the castle that's beautifully lit up. Elia is throwing rocks into the river while Aurora is sitting next to him.

ELIA

(relief)

Ah, it's not as bad as I thought.

Elia throws the rock and it skips on the river.

AURORA

Not as bad as you thought? I insulted my father and disrespected your mother.

ELIA

Don't worry about her. She knows you didn't mean it.

AURORA

How do you know if I meant it or not?

ELIA

Um...I guess I don't.
(sits down next to Aurora)

Do you want to talk about it?

AURORA

Sigh. No.

Aurora curls up to herself. Elia is a bit surprise. He thought about saying something to her, but instead he gets closer and wraps his arm around Aurora, who leans her head on his shoulder.

AURORA (CONT'D)

I spent the last decade trying to forget what this war had done to us. How it took away our home, our friends, our family...how it took away my father. But everything about today just brings me back to that night.

ELIA

Yeah, same. All this military stuff, seeing our hometown again. Certainly refreshes one's memory. Well, at least we're both still alive, right? Mother is healthy. People are getting by. The war is taking a turn. It'll be all over soon. I promise.

Aurora turns to look at Elia and subtly nods.

AURORA

(whispers)

Okay.

Aurora rests her head on Elia's shoulder again.

EXT. CASTLE - LATER

MEDIUM SHOT OF CASTLE AT NIGHT

INT. SOLDIERS' CHAMBER - NIGHT

The soldiers are fast asleep in their chamber (a large collective room with bunk beds). Amongst the soldiers, Elia is in one of the bottom bunks.

Alarm sirens go off

CLOSE UP SHOT OF ELIA'S EYES

Elia opens his eyes wide.

ONE TAKE FOCUSING ON ELIA

And pops up out of bed, as all the soldier are already scrambling to get out of bed and exiting the chamber. Elia rushes out of bed and grabs his coat and hurries out without putting on his shoe. He runs out of the chamber...

EXT. CASTLE STREET - CONTINUOUS

Into the streets where people are scrambling to get to the underground bunkers, while the soldiers are helping and directing them.

ZOOM IN ON ELIA'S SIDE FACE

Elia looks left and right to find aurora and Eli...

STILL SHOT OF THE STREET, STILL ONE TAKE FROM ELIA

Before taking off running up the street, opposite of where everyone else is heading.

EXT. EAST TOWER - NIGHT

FAR SHOT OF EAST TOWER

INT. AURORA'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

The tower is shaking fiercely, as Aurora is helping Eli exit the room, who due to her age, can no longer run like she used to. Aurora opens the door and leads Eli out to the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Aurora keeps the door open for Eli, who has exited the chamber. After Eli exited, Aurora runs to her closet to grab Elia's present box. As Aurora runs to the door is about to step out to the hallway, a bomb strikes the other side of the chamber, taking down majority of the room. Aurora slips off the edge but is caught by Eli...

EXT. SOUTHERN COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

The room crashes down onto the castle's southern corridor, collapsing the corridor, which destroys the Southern gate as well.

Parts of the room falls down onto the courtyard.

RANDOM SOLDIER

MOVE!

The soldiers pull the civilians out of the way before the parts hit the ground.

INT. EAST TOWER'S HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The other nurses come and helps pull Aurora up, who immediately gets up on her feet once she climbed up the platform. Elia arrives at the same time and goes to Aurora.

ELIA

Are you okay?

She gives him a nod before he picks his mother up on his back while telling the other nurses,

ELIA

I got her. Ladies, go.

The nurses run (o.c), followed by Elia and Aurora.

INT. STAIRCASES - MOMENTS LATER

LOW FRONT SHOT

The group of nurses are running down the stairs, before Elia, Aurora and Eli appears following behind them.

INT. BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS - MOMENTS LATER

The group of nurses arrive at the main corridor and runs out to the East street.

Elia, Eli and Aurora is about to arrive at the main floor, but the ground rumbles heavily, causing Elia to almost lose his footing and fall, but Aurora was able to catch him before he could. Aurora stays in front as they make their way out to the East street.

EXT. EAST STREET - CONTINUOUS

The street (and castle) is damaged and in flames now. The Eastern gate has also collapsed, forcing Elia and Aurora to run North. As they're running, a voice of a crying child is heard in a building he just passed. Elia stops running and turns his attention to the house. Aurora, seeing Elia stopped, runs back to him.

ELIA

I think there's a child in there.

Aurora goes to take Eli from Elia, carrying her on her back.

AURORA

I got her. Go.

Elia runs to the house as Aurora continues running North with Eli on her back.

EXT. BUILDING'S FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Elia barges into the home, knocking over the door without hesitation.

INT. TAVERN - CONTINUOUS

The building turns out to be a tavern, where all the plates and bottles have been knocked over and splattered on the floor, along with the knocked over chairs and tables. Elia makes his way to the second floor...

INT. TAVERN - 2ND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

The guest floor is empty, so he continues up the third floor.

INT. TAVERN - 3RD FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

The third floor is the owner and his son's bedroom. Upon arriving, Elia sees the roof has a giant hole, and the parts have collapsed on to the owner next to his bed, rendering him deceased, with his toddler sitting next to his corpse crying. Elia gets startled but quickly snaps out of it and runs to the kid, picks him up and carries him out of the room. Just before exiting the room, Elia takes one last peak at the father's corpse.

EXT. NORTH BUNKER - NIGHT

People are entering into the bunker, held up by a couple of soldiers. Aurora with Elizabeth on her back, approaches the bunker. Aurora lets Elizabeth down and helps her get into the bunker, with the help of a soldier (the same one in the armory).

HUBER
Come on, Eli.

After Eli has gone into the bunker, Aurora runs back towards the castle to find Elia.

HUBER (CONT'D)
HEY! GET BACK HERE!

EXT. CASTLE'S NORTH SIDE STREET - NIGHT

Elia, carrying the toddler on one arm, is sprinting towards the Northern gate. He gets to the gate, and begins crossing the bridge. Aurora appears far on the other side.

AURORA
Elia!

Elia is more than half way across the bridge, when a bomb strikes near, knocking Elia back.

EXT. NORTHERN BRIDGE - SAME TIME

Aurora is near approaching the bridge, when the bomb strikes, knocking her over as well. The bomb destroyed part of the bridge, leaving a gap between Elia and the end of the bridge. Elia gets up, takes off his coat, and wraps the child tightly to his back. He takes a couple steps back, as Aurora has also gotten up and is standing near the edge of the ground, waiting to catch him and the kid. Elia sprints and jumps across the gap and is caught by Aurora, but still slips on the edge of the ground. He trips but is still able to hold on to the grass and Aurora, who also slipped with him. Elia crawls back up onto the grass as Aurora pulls him up. They both then runs across the terrain, towards the Northern bunker.

EXT. NORTH BUNKER - MOMENTS LATER

Huber is still holding the bunker up, as Elia and Aurora appears running towards him. They approach and quickly gets into the bunker, before Huber shuts the bunker down immediately.

INT. NORTH BUNKER - CONTINUOUS

The bunker is dimly lit by a few flashlights. Eli greets Elia and Aurora as they enter.

ELIZABETH
(checks on Elia)
Elia!

Elia falls on his knees, before unwrapping the child and giving him to Eli. He sits back with Aurora as they both breathe heavily. Huber turns around towards Elia and Aurora.

HUBER
Are you crazy? You could've been killed.

Elia barely looks up to Huber due to being out of breath, as Huber sees appearing behind Elia, the child in Eli's arms.

HUBER
Hm. Alright. Sit back and hang tight folks.

Elia and Aurora catches their breath as they look at the Elizabeth carrying the child.

ELIZABETH
Shh. There, there.

Elia and Aurora looks at each other with relief but also the "I hope we don't have to do this again" face.

INT. BUNKER - MOMENTS LATER

People are in the bunker recovering. We see the younger adults taking care of the elderlies. We see parents comforting and feeding their children. We see children helping parents with their wounds and bandages.

Aurora is sitting and leaning on Erik's shoulders, as he's leaning against the wall. She's looking around at the people. Then, she turns to look at the baby sleeping, still in Elizabeth's arms who's still looking after the child.

AURORA
(to Erik)
The child's father?

Erik turns to Aurora and gently shakes his head. Aurora then looks back at the baby. The camera zooms in on the baby, then zooms in on Aurora carefully watching the baby.

HUBER
Alright. Lights off. Try to get
some sleep.

The light goes off. Aurora's face is still seen in the dark,
looking at the toddler.

ENTER FLASHBACK

EXT. TOWN'S SOUTH BRIDGE - LATER

Transition from Aurora looking at the toddler to her being a
toddler herself, carried by her father as they arrive at the
town's bridge (the only exit to the city other than the
Northern passage). Many citizens (About 1/3) have already
cross the bridge. After crossing the bridge half way, Noah
puts Aurora down.

NOAH
Eli. Could you please take Aurora?

Elizabeth is confused.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Half of the town are still stuck
there. I'm going back to help them.

ELIZABETH
No, Noah. I won't let you do it.

NOAH
I'm sorry, but you know I have to.

ELIZABETH
Noah, you are not a soldier
anymore. You don't have to do this.

Noah shakes his head subtly in silence.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
Please, think about your daughter.

Noah doesn't respond, instead turns to Aurora, who's
standing next to Eli.

NOAH
(smiles and being non-
serious)
Papa's going to be back soon, okay?
Eli will look after you in the
meantime. I want you to behave
properly, and help her out whenever
she needs you, okay?

Aurora subtly nods with a confused look on her face.

AURORA

Okay.

Noah then turns to Elia.

NOAH (CONT'D)

You're a good lad, Elia. I want you to make me a promise, okay?

(gently grabs Elia by the shoulder)

I want you to take care of your mother, alright? She's going to need you while I'm gone. Do you understand?

ELIA

Yes sir...

NOAH

And look after my daughter for me. You're all she has in this world. You mean very much to her, to both of us, and I'm very thankful to have you in our lives.

ELIA

Yes sir.

Noah places his hands on Erick's head.

NOAH

Good man.

Noah then wraps Aurora around his arms.

NOAH (CONT'D)

I love you, my dear.

Noah hugs Aurora tightly, then gives her a kiss on the cheek. Noah stands up, gives a last smile to Eli, before taking his leave.

AURORA

Papa? Papa? PAPA!

Aurora screams as Noah runs further and further. Aurora tries to run after her father, but Eli quickly grabs hold of her.

AURORA

PAPA!

Aurora struggles to get away from Eli's grip as she and Elia continues heading across the bridge. Elia looks as Aurora struggles, before turning his head to look to Noah's direction, who is now gone..

STILL SHOT OF THE BRIDGE - ELI, AURORA, AND ELIA GOING ACROSS THE BRIDGE, BEFORE DISSAPEARING O.S.

THE SCREEN FADES AND GOES TO BLACK.

INT. BUNKER - DAY

TRANSITION FROM BLACK SCREEN SCREEN TO THE BUNKER OPENING, REVEALING THE MORNING LIGHT.

Huber looks around for signs of clearance.

EXT. BUNKER - CONTINUOUS

In the background, people from other bunkers begin coming out.

HUBER
Alright. Coast is clear. Everyone
out, one at a time.

Huber waves for the people in the bunker to come out.

INT. BUNKER - CONTINUOUS

SIDE SHOT

2 guards stand on both side of the entrance, directing as people line up one by one to come out.

EXT. BUNKER - MOMENTS LATER

Half the people in the bunker are outside, while the rest is still getting out. Then appears Elia, Aurora, and Elizabeth holding the child who's still asleep.

SIDE SHOT OF ELIA AND AURORA

Elia and Aurora look devastated.

EXT. CASTLE - CONTINUOUS

LOW POV SHOT - ELIA AND AURORA IN THE MAIN FOCUS FRAME, ALONG WITH THE OTHER CITIZENS AROUND THEM, LOOKING AT THE HEAVILY DAMAGED CASTLE.

EXT. GRASS FIELD - CONTINUOUS

SIDE SHOT OF ELIA AND AURORA

Elia and Aurora remain in silence. A peak of the colonel can be seen in the background.

THE COLONEL (O.S.)
Get me in contact with the Chief.

LIEUTENANTS (O.S.)
Yes sir.

CLOSE UP SHOT OF AURORA

Tears begin to appear on Aurora's eyes as she looks on.

Huber walks up next to Elia.

HUBER
(complains)
Tsk. Great. Just when we're about to be deployed. Now there's this mess to add on top of it.

A couple of soldiers walk up next to Huber.

SOLDIER #1
Better than standing still in one place for 12 hours.

SOLDIER #2
What's the difference? Here. There. We'll have to fight sooner or later. There's no escape to this war.

Elia turns from the conversation back to Aurora.

CLOSE UP SHOT OF AURORA

SOLDIER #2 (O.C.)
Not anymore.

EXT. CASTLE'S EASTERN GATE - DAY

The soldiers are finding their way into the castle. Some are trying to climb the walls, while a few standing below looking on.

EXT. CASTLE'S SOUTHERN GATE - DAY

The soldiers and civilians are checking on the Southern gate, which has been demolished to the ground with parts and pieces of the East tower laying on top. They walk on the demolished gate, into the castle.

INT. CASTLE - DAY

People are cleaning up the castle, lifting rocks, stones, wooden parts from houses and buildings.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Soldiers are cutting down trees, loading them on to the trucks, and driving back castle.

EXT. NORTHERN BRIDGE - DAY

A wooden surface is placed across the gap of the Northern gate's bridge, as the civilian construction workers work on repairing the bridge and filling the gap hole.

EXT. EASTERN GATE - AFTERNOON

The debris on the Eastern gate is almost cleared, and the citizens, including Elia, Aurora, Eli holding the toddler who's now awake, begins walking in.

EXT. EAST STREET - AFTERNOON

People are returning to their home, looking at the damaged done by the bombs, checking on their properties. Voices and hisses are heard (background noise).

EXT. TAVERN - MOMENTS LATER

Elia, Aurora, Eli holding the toddler's hand, walks near the tavern, when the child points his finger to the third floor.

TODDLER

Papa.

Elia and Aurora turns around and looks at the child, before Elia looks to his mom.

ELIA
 You take care of him. I'll go
 handle this.

AURORA
 I'll come with you...

Elia stops Aurora before she could finish her sentence.

ELIA
 No. I don't want you to see this.
 Stay and help Eli.

Elia walks into the tavern. Aurora turns around, walks to Elizabeth and holds the child's other hand.

AURORA
 (to the toddler)
 You hungry?

TODDLER
 Yea.

AURORA
 Let's go get you some food, okay?

Elia, Aurora holds the toddler's hands as they continue walking. Aurora is poking the child, making him laugh, seemingly forgotten about his father.

INT. TAVERN - THIRD FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Cold and quiet atmosphere

Erik is standing in front of the father's dead corpse. His face is blank and he is breathing deeply.

INT. MAIN HALL - NIGHT

The main hall (among a few other buildings) remains almost undamaged, only minor cracks here and there. Everyone is now gathered in the main hall for supper. Elia, Aurora and Eli are sitting in the same spots. Eli has the toddler on her lap while she's feeding him. Eli looks at the child with endearing eyes, one only a mother would give her child. Aurora and Elia are eating and watching Eli and the child.

ELIA
 What do we do with him?

AURORA
 (to Elia)
 Does he have a mother?

Elia turns to her and shakes his head while shrugging his shoulder.

The main hall's entrance opens, and a soldier walks in.

SOLDIER

Attention. Sergeants and
Lieutenants, please report to the
colonel's office immediately.

The sergeants and lieutenants in the room begin getting out of their seat and walking out.

Elia turns to his left, watching the lieutenants as they walk. He then turns to Aurora and Eli...

ELIA

I'll be back.

Elia gets out of his seat and follows the lieutenants. Aurora looks on, while Eli takes a quick peak at Elia before focusing on the toddler again.

ELIZABETH

I'll take care of him.

AURORA

(surprised look)

What?

ELIZABETH

I'll feed him, bathe him, teach him
how to read...

AURORA

Are you sure? Aren't you busy
enough already?

ELIZABETH

Well how about you two take care of
him?

AURORA

Uh...Elia will be deploying in a
matter of days. I on the other hand
have no such experience of raising
a child.

ELIZABETH

Then you would know that we don't
have much of a choice.

She looks down at the toddler for a while as she feeds him.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

You were fortunate to be old enough to remember your father, have memories of him, felt his love for you. This boy is too young to even have a single lasting memory of his father.

AURORA

(looks at the child while whispering to herself)

Fatherless.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The sergeants and lieutenants are making their way to the colonel's office. As they're walking forward then off camera, Elia appears in the back, hiding behind the corner of a building.

INT. CORRIDOR TO COLONEL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

FRONT FAR SHOT OF THE COLONEL'S OFFICE DOOR AS THE COLONELS ARE APPROACHING IT. MAIN SIDE FRAME OF ELIA HIDING BEHIND THE CORNER.

Elia peaks his head out as the colonel's door is opened.

COLONEL (O.C)

Lieutenants. Have a seat.

Elia waits for all of the lieutenants to walk in and for the door to close.

Once the door has closed, Elia quietly sneaks up to the door and places his ears against it.

LIEUTENANTS XHAKA (O.C.)

A tragic mistake?

INT. COLONEL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The colonel is sitting at the head of the table, with the lieutenants sitting around the table.

LIEUTENANTS XHAKA (CONT'D)

How could they possibly label this as a mistake?

THE COLONEL

The allies thought we had given the castle to the Nazis as a supply base.

LIEUTENANT ISAK

A mistake. It's intentional, and purposeful.

LIEUTENANT XHAKA

They're clearly tempting us to get involved.

CAPTAIN ZIELER

What good would that do? The Allies are currently losing the war. Why would they want the Nazis to gain another ally?

LIEUTENANT ISAK

Perhaps it was a warning strike. They must know about our negotiation with the Germans.

THE COLONEL

(raises his voice)

LIEUTENANTS! We don't know what their intentions are in bombing us. All we know is, if we remain silent, it won't be the last time that this will happen. We must stand our ground against all oppositions.

(stands up)

Ready your soldiers. You deploy tomorrow, first thing at noon.

EXT. COLONEL'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Elia is shocked. He quietly takes a step away from the door to process what he'd just heard. Elia then slowly walks away, until it was safe for him to run without noticing the lieutenants.

INT. AURORA AND ELI'S NEW CHAMBER - LATER THAT NIGHT

Since their old chamber was destroyed, they've since moved into a new chamber, located on the 2nd floor of the West Tower. The room looks quite similar, with minor differences, but the one major difference is that the toddler is now staying with them. His bed is located to the far left corner of the room, beneath a window.

Aurora is sitting on her side of the bed, brushing her hair. Eli is in the corner, rocking the toddler to sleep. The toddler's eyes blink slowly, and before you could count to 5, he was fast asleep. Eli puts him in the cabin gently, as Aurora walks over to the at the same time, still brushing her hair.

AURORA
 Hmm. He doesn't seem to be too difficult.

ELIZABETH
 (jokes)
 You want to try raising him then?

AURORA
 (smiles)
 Oh, I do no dare.

Knock Knock Knock

Eli and Aurora turns their attention to the door, before Eli quickly turns back to see if the child was awoken by the knocking, while Aurora walks to the door. She quietly pulls the door open, just enough to poker her face out and sees Elia behind the door.

AURORA
 (whispers)
 Elia?

Aurora steps out to the hallway.

EXT. WEST SIDE TOWER - CONTINUOUS

AURORA (CONT'D)
 (gently closes the door
 behind her)
 What are you doing here at this
 hour?

Elia stands anxiously for a second.

ELIA
 I'm deploying, tomorrow.

Aurora stands in disbelief for a few second.

AURORA
 (softly)
 Really?

Elia nods while taking a long breather.

ELIA

I overheard them in the colonel's office.

AURORA

That's where you went.

ELIA

I didn't think it was true. Well, I was hoping it wasn't true. But the lieutenants came by our chamber and gave us the official order, not too long ago. That's why I didn't tell you immediately when I came back.

Aurora remains silent again for a little bit.

AURORA

When tomorrow?

ELIA

Noon.

The door opens and Eli steps out. She notices the expression on both Elia and Aurora's face and gesture.

ELIZABETH

What's going on?

ELIA

We're deploying. Tomorrow, first thing at noon.

ELIZABETH

(confused)

I thought you were going to stay and help rebuild the castle.

ELIA

I thought so too. But we're swimming in the deep ends now. The colonel wants us to be on our feet. He has a feeling this war may turn for the worst.

Elizabeth takes a second to digest Elia's words.

ELIZABETH

Okay. Well, I suspect you two will be wanting some alone time.

She tries smiling after making a light hearted comment.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

I'm going to go back and look after
the child. Don't stay up too late.

Elizabeth returns back to the chamber. Elia smiles at her mother as she leaves, while Aurora with her hand cross, slightly looks back - down with a smile. The door shuts and Aurora turns back to Elia, her face still looking down, before she glances up to look at Elia.

EXT. 3RD FLOOR CASTLE BALCONY - LATER

SHOT OF THE MOON AND IT'S REFLECTION FROM THE RIVER.

Elia and Aurora are standing on each side of the open window, both leaning against the wall, looking out at the full moon, floating above the river.

Elia turns to look at Aurora, who turns to him and reaches her hand out. Elia holds her hand.

ELIA

(looks out to the moon)

The window reminds me of the one
from our old bakery. Every weekend,
every holiday, I would stand right
there, bent over on my toes,
watching the streets, turning back
and forth, waiting for a little
blonde girl in a beret to show up
at the end of the street.

Aurora smiles softly.

AURORA

I could always tell when we were
close just by the smell in the air.

ELIA

Fresh bread out of the oven.

AURORA

The torches that lit up the
streets. People just walking,
chatting, laughing. Sigh. I miss
it.

ELIA

When your father died, you couldn't
stop crying.

AURORA

Yea, I know. I made it difficult.

ELIA

No. What you didn't know was that when you were asleep, mother would stay up all night crying. It was devastated to witness that pain. But, eventually, you stopped crying. Then she stopped crying. And then we moved on.

AURORA

Well, maybe you two have. I'm still trying to work that out.

ELIA

If there's one thing I've learned from this, it's that nothing lasts forever. Not us. Not our parents. Not this castle. Not even our emotions. This tragedy, this nightmare, it will pass too.

AURORA

I hope so too. Years after years, decades after decades. Just seems like the bloodshed never stops.

ELIA

And when that time happens, you have to be willing to let your attachment go, because the longer you keep it, the more you're resenting something that simply can not be brought back. Death is not just for us, death is for all things. So, why hold on to something for dear life, when death will eventually take it?

AURORA

Maybe you're right.

ELIA

Forgive yourself Aurora. There was nothing you can do.

(after a moment of
silence, Elia smiles)

You know, I was in love with you before I even knew what love is.

AURORA

You're 18, Elia. I doubt that any of us really understand what love is.

ELIA
Doesn't hurt to act like we do.
Especially when the world seems to
have forgotten about it.

AURORA
(after a moment of pause)
Do you ever think about running
away? Me, you, and Eli, away from
all this chaos?

ELIA
(jokes)
We're leaving the baby behind then?

AURORA
(giggles)
I forgot. Alright?

ELIA
Mm. Seems a lot worse on the other
side of the border. I'm just
thankful we're not in the situation
our neighbors are in right now.
(takes a few second of
silence)
Besides, where is there to run?

AURORA
I don't know. I'm just scared.

ELIA
(contemplates for a
second)
Yea. So am I.

A few seconds pass before the conversation continues.

AURORA
I miss home. We made such good
memories there.

ELIA
Like all those times, when you came
over, and we would sneak downstairs
in the middle of the night...

AURORA
And steal from Eli's pantry so we
could compete to see who can make
the tastiest cake.

ELIA
Until we were caught and she'd make
us finish the whole cake by
ourselves.

AURORA
In one sitting.

ELIA
(laughs)
We made some terrible cakes too.

AURORA
(shakes his head)
Never thought I could ever hate
eating cake so much.

ELIA
It's been a while since we've had
cake.

AURORA
(smiles and daydreaming)
Yea...

Elia turns to Aurora with a "bright" idea.

ELIA
How about we celebrate our last day
before I deploy then?

AURORA
(looks at Elia confused)
What do you mean?

Elia smiles and says nothing while stepping back with his
palm open.

AURORA
Elia?

Elia starts pacing away backward.

EXT. WEST ENTRANCE OF MAIN HALL - MOMENTS LATER

CAMERA PANS DOWN TO ELIA & AURORA ARRIVING AT THE MAIN
HALL'S WEST SIDE ENTRANCE.

AURORA
(whispers)
Elia! I don't think stealing is
such a good idea.

ELIA
(moves closer to Aurora
while enticing her)
Nothing we can't afford to lose.
Just some bread, some cheese, maybe
a little bit of fruits, and jam,
and honey, some wine...

AURORA
And what if we get caught?

ELIA
(exaggerated hand
gestures)
Then worst case, we get thrown out
of the castle, be forced to live in
exile filled with shame and guilt,
and spend the rest of our lives
running away from all the chaos of
this world. Just like you wanted.

AURORA
That's a bit of an exaggeration.

ELIA
So?

Elia offers Aurora his hand.

INT. STAIRS - LATER

Elia and Aurora appears running up the stairs, quietly
giggling while carrying the food they just stole.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

As they enter the hallway, Aurora turns around to signal
Elia "shh" so they don't awake anyone. They slow down from
running, before picking up the pace midway, unable to
contain their excitement.

EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

CAMERA PANS DOWN TO ELIA AND AURORA HAVING A PICNIC ON THE
GROUND, IN ONE OF THE CASTLE'S HIGHEST BALCONY, OVERLOOKING
THE WEST OF THE LAND.

Aurora holds in her hand an open bottle of wine, as Elia
dines in glory with his bread, cheese, jam, and ham. Aurora
takes a sip of the wine.

AURORA
(complains after
swallowing)
Yuck. People like drinking this
stuff?

ELIA
(takes the bottle from
Aurora)
I enjoy it.

Elia takes a big sip.

ELIA (CONT'D)
Takes the pressure off of you.

Elia takes a quick look at the bottle after drinking it,
before handing it back to Aurora.

AURORA
I guess we could all use a bit of
that right now.

Aurora takes the bottle and takes another sip. Elia smiles
at Aurora before looking at the overview of the West land.

ELIA
Why did you run back for me?

AURORA
Hmm?

Aurora turns to Elia.

ELIA
The night of the bombing, you chose
to come back for me. Why?

AURORA
(struggles to put
together her sentences)
Uh... I'm not going to say I love
you if that's what you're looking
for.

ELIA
No. No, that's not what I meant. Do
you remember the day we evacuated
our home?

AURORA
(nods)
Almost everyday.

ELIA

Noah was a great man.

AURORA

Well, losing him is already hard enough. I can't imagine if I'd lose you as well.

ELIA

But you haven't even brought it up since, as if you're perfectly fine with it.

AURORA

Is that not what you want? Letting it go?

ELIA

Letting go of your attachment is not the same as suppressing it.

Aurora stays silent.

ELIA (CONT'D)

(makes a lighthearted
joke)

You know if you can't talk to me then there's no one else for you to talk to.

AURORA

(remains silent for a few
second)

I don't know.

Elia turns back to the view, exhales gently, understanding he had just put Aurora in a difficult position.

AURORA

I don't resent my father for doing what he did. I resent myself.

ELIA

(reaches and places his
hand over hers)

You know it's not your fault. You were a child.

AURORA

I loved my father because he was willing to sacrifice himself to save others, just like how you were willing to give your life to save that child from the tavern.

(MORE)

AURORA (CONT'D)

It's the same reason why I love
you.

Elia is taken back by Aurora's comment. Aurora, realizing she just said she loves Elia, is taken back a little bit as well. Elia looks at Aurora, before laughing it off.

AURORA

(subtly smiles)

Just promise me you won't try to be
a hero on the battlefield.

Elia gently smiles, then slightly nods. Aurora then leans in to kiss him. They both lay down and continues kissing.

EXT. NOTHERN STREET - DAY

It's the morning of deploying day. The soldiers are loading up the equipment and weapons on to the trucks. There are a few trucks lined up on the Northern street, where everyone has gathered to send off the soldiers. The colonel waves instructions to the soldiers loading the trucks.

THE COLONEL

Come on, lads. Move along!

Throughout the street, families are bidding farewells to their husbands, brothers, sons... Amongst the people gathered, Eli and Aurora who's carrying the toddler, are standing in front of the crowd, waiting for Elia. Elia appears on the opposite direction Eli and Aurora are looking at.

ELIA

Hey.

Eli and Aurora turns to the other side and sees Elia dressed in his military uniform, with a rifle strapped around his shoulder.

ELIA (CONT'D)

It's time.

Elizabeth goes to give Elia a hug.

ELIZABETH

Take care, my son.

ELIA

You too, mother.

Elizabeth gives Elia a kiss on the forehead, before taking a step back and takes the toddler from Aurora, who then steps closer to Elia. They hold each other's hand.

AURORA
Come back to me, yeah?

Elia smiles. They give each other a tight and long hug.

AURORA
Well I suppose there's no better
time to give this to you.

Aurora grabs a present box from behind her and presents it to Elia.

ELIA
(confused)
What's this?

AURORA
(smiles)
Merry Christmas, Elia.

ELIA
(realizes what the
present box is)
The night of the bombing.

AURORA
(nods)
Been saving it ever since. Plus,
obviously, you grew up so I had to
made to some adjustments.

ELIA
Thank you.
(Gives Aurora another
hug)
Take care of mother for me.

Aurora nods. Elia goes to rub the toddler's head, before walking away from them while waving goodbye. Elia walks past the colonel, where they made eye contact.

EXT. MILITARY TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Elia hops into the open back of a military truck, already filled with soldiers, and sits by the truck's panel, next to Huber.

EXT. NOTHERN STREET - CONTINUOUS

As all of the soldiers have entered their designated vehicles, the colonel turns around and faces the crowd of citizens.

CUT TO: CITIZENS

The people are all focused on him.

CUT TO: COLONEL

The colonel contemplates on saying something motivational, but instead he straighten his form and salutes the people.

CUT TO: AURORA

Aurora begins singing, before Eli, then the crowd joins her.

INT. MILITARY TRUCKS - SAME TIME

Elia, along with the soldiers in the trucks begin to sing along with the people.

EXT. NOTHERN STREET - CONTINUOUS

After the first chorus ends, the colonel walks back to his truck and gets into the passenger seat. The citizens continues singing. The trucks begin to one by one drive through the gate, across the bridge, and out of the castle. As the trucks are driving off, the citizens move closer to the gate while singing, bidding farewell to their fellow military men.

EXT. ELIA'S MILITARY TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

The trucks are now on the road, just a few hundred feet outside the castle, where they're still able to hear the citizens singing. Elia looks back at the castle for a while, before looking at Aurora's present. He opens it and finds a small square case. He opens it, revealing a silver necklace with a tag in it.

HUBER

(looks over at the gift)

Charming.

Elia takes out the necklace and checks out the tag, which opens up to small family photo of a Aurora, Elia and both their parents during Christmas when they were younger.

Elia's facial expression changes from sad to determined. He closes the tag, wears the necklace around his neck, and pays attention to the road ahead.

EXT. TERRAIN - CONTINUOUS

A high angle shot of the army trucks driving off to the horizon.

FADE TO BLACK.

FIN

MINNIVINCT