Wylde Night

I wander into Nana Wylma's closet with tears in my eyes, but I refuse to allow them to fall. Trying on Nana's clothes was a treat when she was alive. She'd say her clothing gave her the power to face any challenge that came her way as if it were armor. I slip on a silk-laced cerulean dress, her favorite color, it falls against my skin, fitting like a glove. Using a silk hair tie, I pull my long black locs, up for once. Showing my face was not something I was comfortable with, but Nana always begged me to try.

"Wylde, Baby, please let your Nana see those honey-brown eyes. Oh, Girl you are my twin in disguise," she'd say. I smile inwardly savoring the nostalgia. I search for a mirror, despite Nana's weird hatred for them. She never told me why, when I would ask, she'd say I was the only mirror she needed.

Though not my favorite, I'd always gotten many compliments on looking like my grandmother. For most of my life, I made attempts to curate my image. Never felt like I knew who I truly was. I pierced my face and loc'd my hair all in protest, but nothing ever worked. I still looked just like Nana.

Oddly I find a full-length mirror tucked away and hidden behind a black sheet.

"Hm, Nana, why are you hiding a mirror in your closet?" I wonder to myself. The mirror is oval shaped with a black frame. I ran my fingers along the edge, it was engraved with panthers. The dress looks stunning, curving around my hips and breasts, slightly snug, but still comfortable. My silver locket sits on my chest shining, I place my hand on it and heave a deep sigh. As I look down, I see my brown feet bare. A pair of dark blue shoes sat perfectly underneath the mirror, though I don't recall them being there a second ago. The slippers fit perfectly. I step back again peering at myself, turning my head, left and right. I smile at myself knowing I at least carry her with me in my reflection, despite my younger protest. My locket glimmers, as if light was inside. I open it and the tears return. Inside my father and Nana sit smiling up at me.

"I wish I'd gotten to meet you, Daddy. I hope Nana's being nice," I whisper to myself, as my tears fall like rain. No one ever speaks of my dad. Nana's first and only son was murdered before her eyes.

“Wylde!” Mama yells.

“Shit. Oh goodness I am too old for spankings, but she might get me tonight,” I curse to myself. I know I was not to be in Nana’s closet, but it was my safe space. Our safe space.

I scramble clumsily to grab the black sheet, but trip and fall into the mirror. “Ah!” I scream, bracing myself for the crunch of broken glass, but I’m met with blue flowers instead.

“What the—” I pause as a blade is placed under my chin in an instant.

“Move and I slice you like cake, Lady,” hisses the voice in a thick accent. “I’m so sorry, I don’t know how I got here, please. Allow me to explain,” I plead with the unidentified voice. The woman comes from behind to stand in front of me. My locs fall into my face, the tie lost in the fall. I move to brush them back so I can see my attacker.

She gasps, “Oh your majesty, I do apologize!” She quickly drops to one knee head bowed.

I wonder who she means, but confusion only grows as I glance around this new world. The sky is dark, and Neptune glows bright instead of a moon in the sky. In the distance, a floating castle where a waterfall flows from the entrance. I gasp at the sight and step back to be met by something furry. I whip around to see a panther staring up at me, he bows his head.

“Your majesty, how lovely to see you. Yet, you do not smell or look like yourself,” he says tilting his head to the side to peer at me.

“I think you may have me confused. I am no one’s majesty,” I say astonished. The woman matches the panther in appearance. Her eyes are the same golden color, and she has cat ears poking out from her hair, a sleek black tail flick behind her. “What is your name, Girl?” she purrs, stepping closer. I stiffen and take a deep breath. I may not know where I am or what I am seeing, but I refuse to falter in my armor.

“I am Wylma Leona Night, granddaughter of Wylma Night,” standing tall, as I look between the two creatures, “But you both can call me Wylde.”

The panther strides, circling me before standing next to the cat-like woman. They seem to speak telepathically, and we stare at each other silently for a moment.

“Why are you here, Wylde?” asks the woman.

“I am not sure, but I’d love to know myself,” I smile as they stare back blank and unblinking. “Okay, well may I at least know the name of this place and your names?” questioned to make sense of this strange dream.

“I am Rollin, and she is Rue we are siblings,” says the panther. A smile creeps back onto my face.

“If you are truly who you say you are, Wylde Night,” says Rue “You are truly in danger, we must go before your father senses your presence.”

“My Father? He’s dead!” my voice cracks.

“Yes, your father, King Leon,” growls Rollin.

“Unless you want to meet his majesty’s sword, I suggest we go, Wylde,” purrs Rue.

It’s my turn to stare blankly. Hysterical laughter overcomes me, but neither Rue nor her brother reacts. Instead, Rue blows blue dust into my eyes, and the world goes black.