

Mother:Tribute to Elizabeth

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People don't act a certain way without a reason, and Sissi is no exception. She has felt wronged for a very long time, and now she's ready to apologize for her own wrongs.

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Chapter 1 - Mother

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1 - Mother

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The wind whistled softly, carrying scattered leaves about into the air. There was no sound but the sound of grass brushing against each other. Two figures stood in a graveyard, melancholy broken only by the fluorescent beams of the sun above.

The sound of rustling grass, caused Sissi to turn for a second to see her father walking away, back hunched, fists clenched. She then turned back onto a specific grave marking encrypted with intricate drawings of angels, and other images that symbolized the person buried beneath the earth. She had known this grave for seven years now and she hated to look upon it. She hated it, but at the same time, she was glad it stood where it was. It perplexed her to no end how something like a grave could give her mixed emotions, and they were similar if not a bit more intense than her feelings for Ulrich.

Aimé Delmas. Sissi shivered, as she read the name, not bothering to read the rest for she knew the words on the stone by heart. Aimé stood for beloved and that name summarized everything she was, people who had met her could not help but be charmed. Sissi too loved her, though she blamed her for so much.

A flood of childhood memories came rushing by, everything before Kadic. She remembered her mother had always been there for her at grade school while her father worked. Her father at the time was a normal businessman who “played” with the stock market. Her mother taught at a high school, occasionally volunteering to assist in daycare centers but always ready to pick Sissi up. That’s what Sissi always loved about her mother, she was always there and she loved children. Her mother was always the one able to convince her father to stay home on certain days or take half days off, which Sissi enjoyed very much for on those rare times, she felt like a normal child, she felt she had an ideal family like the ones she often saw on television when it was the three of them spending time together.

As years passed, the Delmas’ possessions grew. By age seven, Sissi had moved into a luxurious mansion with plenty of servants. She instantly got used to the life of wealth, and everyday she’d look into the mirror and compare herself to a princess. Aimé would always remind her to be sweet and generous to everyone she met, and would usually donate excess money than use it to shop. Sissi admired her mother for that, for she was pretty materialistic, and very lonely. It’s been four years of school, and she still hadn’t made a real friend. She’d come home, and wonder what she should change about her self to get people to like her. Sissi would be troubled, that was until her mother came and cheered her up, and whenever her mother made her happy, she would be one hundred percent certain she was more fortunate than any of the princesses she read about.

A year later, all things had gone pretty well, except Sissi still hadn’t learned that no one can buy friends, not real friends anyway. Unfortunately for Sissi, her “generous gifts” became her own enemy; the people she wanted to like her all used her to receive more and more, and they would threaten to cut all

communication with her if she didn't. Too ashamed, Sissi didn't let anyone know, she cautiously kept to her self especially when around the maids. She finally brought the matter up to her mother in the middle of first semester. Aimé had armed Sissi with knowledge that she shouldn't let people use her or push her around. The young ebony-haired girl took the advice and cut the communications between her and the group of children she wanted to play with.

Feeling lonely after the excommunication she resorted observing just about anything. A certain brunette who seemed to love wearing green that always had intrigued her had caught her eye one day. His name is Ulrich Stern and she noticed immediately he was different from the others, he was reserved, and he looked so...mature. It also occurred to her that he wasn't going to approach and talk to her either. So she decided to just watch him from afar. From then on, just looking at him made her day, and this bit of happiness didn't last when she got home. Everyday she noticed her mother looked paler and weaker, her skin losing warmth. She felt her stomach churning chaotically. It was a sure sign that something dreadful would happen. It was inevitable, whatever was to happen and Sissi couldn't ignore the signs.

Aimé died a few days after Christmas. Sissi waited all day, watching as her classmates disappeared slowly one after another. Her eyes would anxiously search the door of the classroom wishing it to burst open with plenty of energy, to see her mother's face with a beaming smile. But she never came, and just as she was going to lose hope, the door burst open. Excited, she turned to find not her mother, but her father, Jean-Pierre. A surprised yet delighted gasp escaped her lips. Her father never picked her up, and she believed this probably meant the family would be spending time together. Sissi ran up to him and wrapped her arms around his middle. He bent down a little to be level with her, wrapping his arms around her as well. The young girl raised her head, and looked really looked at her father when she subtly felt a cool drop of fluid fall onto her arm, and slowly slide off of her skin.

"Elizabeth, let's go," her father commanded, standing straight and removing her arms from his waist.

The young girl nodded, and took hold of her father's hand, she didn't communicate much with her father, but she sensed a softness in the way he called her name, though she liked it, she much preferred her mother's playful taunt. Time seemed to past slowly as they walked in silence from the hallways up to the car. As Sissi put on her seatbelt, she broke the silence between them.

"Daddy, what's wrong?"

Jean-Pierre removed his glasses, wiping the tears from his eyes and the fog from the square spectacles.

"I'll tell you when we get home," he mumbled, driving them away from school.

They continued to sit in silence. Sissi wanted so much to talk, but she didn't know what about. She only knew the little things her mother would tease her father about, how he snored when he slept, his favorite color, how he buys three of the same outfit... As they drove towards their home, she watched the scenery past by, sometimes in blurs depending on if she really paid attention. She snapped back to reality when she realized the car stopped and she was at home. Jean-Pierre buried his face down onto the steering wheel tears flowing quickly and freely like a river. Sissi watched him in disbelief. What was this all about?

"Elizabeth... your mother."

That got her attention quick. She immediately put her hands to her mouth, eyes wide in horror.

“Mommy? What about her?”

“She... She has left us.”

Sissi let out a strangled sob, punched the red button to remove the seat belt, bolted from the car to her front door--which was locked. From the car Jean-Pierre wept miserably as he watched his daughter punching, kicking and yelling at the door in desperation. She gave her father a helpless glance and then turned back to the fastened door. Jean-Pierre had no desire to open the door to the image of pure devastation for Sissi. The maids eventually opened the door, scurrying about worriedly and frantically as the ebony haired girl stepped into the house.

Heart racing with anxiety, Sissi bit her bottom lip and pushed forward, past the jumpy maids, past all the priceless trinkets that adorned her house. She held her breath as she climbed up the stairs onto the second floor. With each step she grew more courageous and less hesitant.

She walked through the hallways still determined. She swallowed upon reaching her parent's door, slightly cracked open. Her eyes shut tightly and she deeply breathed in and out consecutively.

“Here goes.”

Her hand landed on the doorknob, and she gave it a little push. The door opened wide enough so that Sissi could see most of the room. She stepped in, taking in the scenery and then her eyes caught a form on the bed, she lost all the power, all the courage she harnessed from the hallways, her knees gave in, and she collapsed onto the floor.

“M-Mommy?”

She inched toward the bed apprehensively, grabbing her mother's pale hand and upon the contact, Sissi felt a rush of cold she never felt before, internally as well as externally.

“Mommy...”

Sissi's lips quivered, sniffled, whimpered, tears dribbling from her face, and soon she was bawling uncontrollably on her mother's lifeless hand.

“You had a smile on your face, on your death mask. You didn't seem to fear death.”

Sissi rubbed her arms to warm up a little, eyes still focused on the grave.

“What were you thinking of when you died?” The young girl questioned glancing up at the sky as if she would receive an answer from above.

Young Sissi cried, and cried, just unable to stop. Her hands tightly clasped her mother's lifeless hand, wishing, hoping, that the hand would squeeze back. The sound of footsteps reached her ears but she didn't care to look. She turned when she felt a hand squeeze her shoulder.

“Elizabeth.”

“What was wrong with Mommy...?”

Her voice was barely a whisper, broken and weak. Jean-Pierre shook his head, and took out a letter from inside his shirt pocket. He gave the letter to his daughter.

“I will explain to you when I think you’re ready to hear it.”

She nodded, unfolding the piece of paper within her hand. Even with all of her bawling and the unfortunate situation, she smiled when she saw the paper. It was a cute little stationary with her favorite cartoon character on it; that was so much like Aimé. She looked at the date and she noted that her mother also did things ahead of time, her mother expected the unexpected and she prepared for whatever was thrown at her.

*My dearest Elizabeth,
I've been preparing for this for a long time. I couldn't possibly tell you, I didn't want to even imagine the expression on your face if I put death and myself in the same sentence. All I wanted to see was your smile. I've been fighting with my own immune system for a while now, and it killed me more to take the medicine to help me get healthy than to just let things happen. I want you to know you're very dear to me, and I don't regret anything I did in my life, however I do regret leaving you so early, and at your time of need. Don't despise your father for not being around so much, all he could think of was providing for us and giving us a great life. It might not have seemed that way but that was his intention. You will face a lot of situations in your life, some that will make you laugh, cry, smile, and even some that will break your heart, but be strong and I know you will come out a fine young lady. I love you very much.*

*Your loving mother,
Aimé*

Despite the feeling she could no longer shed tears, a few droplets managed to squeeze themselves out and trickle down Sissi's red and swollen face.

“Elizabeth, you’re my greatest treasure. I will do whatever I can to keep you happy.”

The young girl encircled her arms around one of her father's legs, leaned her head against it, and shut her eyes tightly.

The shrill ring of the dismissal bell hit Sissi's ears, she gathered her things, and stopped at the teacher's desk.

“Daddy told me to wait for him outside.”

With that she walked out of the room. She stopped at the parking lot, adjusting her hair ornament, rubbing her gloved hands together then she shoved her hands in her pockets and looked around, trying

to ignore the cold winter wind chilling her already frozen cheeks, eyes searching for a familiar car within it an aged looking man with a mop of gray hair that would blend in with the flurry of snow.

“Hey.”

She kept her back turned to the person who called her, an eyebrow raised in question as if the person was before her. Her tongue stroked her lips moistening them as she tried to match the voice to a face. Who could that be? For all she knew it could have been a kidnapper or worst... she didn't even want to think that. Something told her that it wasn't anyone so threatening for he would've grabbed her in a heartbeat.

Fearing the person would just leave all of a sudden she turned. A gasp escaped her lips and her cheeks grew warm.

“Y-You! I mean... Uh... Ah...”

“Ulrich.”

The brunette said his name in a slightly hurt manner. Well, at least it sounded that way to Sissi.

“Ulrich,” she repeated in acknowledgement, the name sounded so sweet as it left the tip of her tongue.

A look of pure puzzlement and wonder appeared on the female's face when she noticed that the brunette started burrowing in his pockets. Bashfulness and glee filled her when Ulrich finally detached his hand from his pocket and revealed to her in his palm a cake inside a little plastic bag. Sissi's eyes marveled at the small but sweet gift, it was square, decorated cutely with pink and white cream.

“I was saving it, but looks like you need it more.”

The boy's head was tilted, truly observing Sissi's face. On her face were traces of dried tears and slight bulges underneath each eye. Her face grew hotter, and her cheeks turned a darker shade of red if that were even possible. All the girl knew was that she was glad he wouldn't be able to tell if she did blush because of the weather.

“T-Thank you!”

“I'm not going to ask what happened. Seems personal. See ya.”

Sissi watched Ulrich stride off. As his figure got smaller and distant, a small smile tugged on her lips, and her infatuation for him grew into something a little more. He seemed so cool and charming at the same time, she couldn't help but find it attractive.

The day of Aimé's funeral there was a lot of crying among those who attended, Sissi was not one of them. She had been all cried out from the previous days and had already been coaching herself to be an independent, hardened individual. She and her father were the last to leave. Her father was going on and on, his words sounding only like quiet exhaling breaths. Sissi looked blankly at the grave, reading and rereading it, and when it got too overwhelming she turned, heading towards the vehicle parked nearby.

“In many ways you’ve been affecting my life from the grave. I remember rereading your letter many times, and for a long time thought of what a selfish woman you are”

The girl trailed off, pacing in front of the tombstone.

“You lead me to believe in fairytales in those beautiful stories I often wish I could be part of, and just as you were the one who lead me to love them, you destroyed that love.”

Sissi suddenly remembered a conversation she had not long so long ago with William. He had on such a dreamy expression as he asked,

“Don’t you believe in ‘love at first sight,’ or destiny?”

“I don’t believe in such things.”

She sighed remembering her outright and truthful declaration. It had been so long since she believed in fairytales, and she fully considered herself to be a realist. Many people from afar, and even her two cronies wouldn’t agree with her. Nicolas and Herve who knows and claim to know Sissi the best still truly don’t know her, especially when it comes to how she views Ulrich. The blonde and blue haired kid would always wonder why their “leader” would take so much brushing off from one guy. The reason Sissi still pursues Ulrich isn’t because she’s in her own little fantasy, it’s because she knows that even if some people may find it impossible, there is a probability of her getting at his heart.

“It took me a while to find out for myself, but you were always the one I wanted to emulate. You were loved, respected and kind. I couldn’t do that and I realize it’s because of my childhood. Look at me now...”

The girl dropped to her knees, the gesture expressing shame.

“I try so hard to be liked and I know I’m probably disliked because of this. I blamed you for almost everything... Not daddy... I’ve loved him before and I love him more now... I realize... I realize I’m wrong for blaming you.”

She remembered how her father came to be the principal of Kadic. He had donated a large sum for the production of the school and he requested to be the principal to honor his deceased wife, to do what she did. The maids spoke in hushed tones how glad they were that it was a boarding school and that “mistress” would be away. The ebony haired girl ignored this, for she was glad that she’d finally be able to show how independent she could be.

For the first time since discovering her mother passed away, Sissi cried.

“I want to be forgiven... Forgive me...mommy.”

The young girl wrapped her arms around the tombstone, letting all her past grudges, guilt, and sadness fall with her tears.

For even Aimé inflicted upon her daughter a deep pain, she had made up for it, and to Sissi she will always be her mother.

The End

A/n: This is my very first Code Lyoko fanfic ever. It's made up of some facts and my own assumptions summing up what I've analyzed and explaining Sissi's behavior.