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When I am fairly sure the coast is clear, I pop my head up and look around the clearing. I can hear men shouting in the distance and I remain hidden amongst the long grass, too scared to move. Too scared to even breathe as I hear them get nearer to the clearing. Their voices grow louder, lucky for me though they ran that fast and the snow and grass masked my scent. Sitting upright, I scan my surroundings once again before running in the direction they came from, hoping they wouldn't backtrack.

Once hidden by the high trees, I keep running straight, looking for any sign of the barbed wire fence that surrounds the entire city. With the trees up above, the dark got darker to the point, even with my heightened senses and eyesight I struggle to see. As I run, I can only just make out the trees before I run into them. I keep running. What I fail to notice is that there is a pond. When it's far too late, my feet hit air suddenly before I drop into the icy cold water, breaking through the thin layer of ice. I flail about, gasping, I didn't know how to swim. Panic seizes my body as I swallow mouthfuls of dirty water. I cough and splutter. This is it, I think, I'm going to die.

I reach around for anything, trying to move the water and keep my head above the water line. My hands come in contact with some sort of vine or tree growth, and I manage to pull myself out and drag my freezing cold body over the bank. My clothes are drenched, and the cold air of the night pierces my skin, making me even colder. I fight against the urge to give up and let myself die. My muscles scream, locking up from the intense temperature change, my teeth chattering so hard I wonder if they're going to break.

I force my legs to move, willing myself to go faster. I don't know how long I ran for, but I nearly weep in relief when I see the fence line just on the other side of the trees; I am nearly there, so close I can almost smell my freedom.

Just as I think I am about to break through the tree line, I run full force into somebody, bouncing off their chest. I fall back on the ground and feel all breath leave my body. Scrambling backwards on my hands and knees, I try to get away from the dark figure, who is now coming even closer to me. I see menacing, snake-like eyes looking down at me that seem to glow with an evil light, I scramble to get to my feet. Only when I stand up and turn to run, I run into someone else. Only this person's glowing eyes makes my blood run

colder than the icy pond. My veins turned to ice as he looks down at me. Nothing but gold and green glowing orbs staring at me.

I hear nothing except the violent pounding of my heart in my chest. The man with the evil eyes grips my arms, his hot fingers digging into my arm before I feel his claws break through my flesh, making me whimper. I suddenly feel air rush around me and his grip is gone as I am tossed violently into a tree. My back smacks against the tree trunk, knocking the air from my lungs again. I scream when I land on my side, a stick stabbing through my palm.

I pull the stick out and I can smell my blood oozing out and running down my hand and arm. Hearing the crunch of twigs and branches, I look up to see him stalking toward me again, like a predator about to kill his prey. His aura is menacing, I can almost feel the rage radiating off him.

"You dare think you can leave me, that you can run from me," his voice bellows, making me flinch.

I jump to my feet. He was faster than me and he reaches to grab my hair, yanking me towards him. I scream out at the feeling of my hair ripping from my scalp. His hand wraps around my throat before he flings me, like a ragdoll into the ground, my head smacking the ground first, making a sickening crack on impact. I fight against the urge to succumb to the darkness. My head pounding to its own beat, my ears ringing loudly, and I can't catch my breath as I feel his foot press onto my chest.

I hear a familiar voice echo in the dark before I feel the weight lift off my chest suddenly. I hear growls and fighting as I crawl onto my hands and knees. Half conscious, I try to stand but my head is spinning so fast I couldn't get my balance, only stumbling back toward the cold hard earth at each attempt. When I feel hands grab me again, I scream loudly fearing he would throw me again.

"Shh, Elora, it's just me," the familiar voice of Dragus says, pulling me to my feet. I feel my body go limp as I lean heavily against him. His arm wraps around my waist tightly, holding me up as my fingers grip his shirt. I hear the fighting get louder before I suddenly feel myself being ripped away from Dragus. His grip tightens pulling me back to him.

"Let her go Dragus," the man yells, and I scream when I realize it's the same man who just threw me around like I was nothing.

"Leave her Silas, she is barely conscious."

"She sounds conscious enough, hand her over."

I grip onto Dragus, knowing I stand a better chance at survival with him.

Silas grabs my hair, making me scream and I feel tears run down my cheeks.

"Silas, she can't take anymore, let her go now."

"She should have thought about that before she ran from us. I will make sure she doesn't fucking run again" he bellows, before punching Dragus in the face. Dragus stumbles backwards before landing on his back. I feel Silas grab me and adrenaline kicks in as I kick and struggle to get out of his grip. He pulls me closer to his chest, his arm wrapped around my chest, his hand on my throat tightening like a boa constrictor while his arm across my chest squeezing the air from my lungs, and cutting off my air.

"Fucking Aziza's thinking they can always get away with everything" I hear him growl into my ear. I claw at his arm, trying to get him to let go. My attempts are getting weaker as my body slowly becomes deprived of oxygen.

When I am once again thrown to the ground, I gasp for air. My entire body feels limp and heavy as I lay face down on the dirt. I give up, welcoming death. Please let me die quickly. I feel his foot come down on the centre of my back.

"Please, just kill me" I breathe. Closing my eyes, waiting for death.

"Silas please no more," I hear Matitus say, and I realize he was the one that attacked Silas. He pushes me onto my back and my entire body feels bruised and battered. I lay there as he continues to look down at me. Kneeling beside me, Silas grips my face and growls.

"Run again and I will fucking kill you, understood?" he snarled at me.

"I won't run," I tell him, my voice barely a whisper as it felt even hard to talk. His arms go underneath my back and knees and I feel myself being lifted. I brace myself, waiting to be tossed again only this time he pulls me closer, hugging me tight to his chest. After a few minutes, I realize he won't throw me again. I relax, going limp against him and giving into the darkness that had

been trying to envelope me. Praying to the fates I wouldn't wake back up to this nightmare that is my life.