

Chapter 90

I flew out of the car and rushed to the house but Jabari caught me before I took five strides, pulling me back.

“My friend is in there. Your mate is in there!”

I yelled at him when he stopped me. “Do you know what he is doing in there?” I asked but his expression was unreadable.

“Stay in the car. Whatever is going on in there is a potential danger to you. I’ll deal with it.”

He tried steering me back towards the car but my feet were quicker than his. I dashed past him and raced through the familiar front doors into Celeste’s home.

I was surprised to see her wrestling her brother to the ground. She was beating a bag into his face but he gained the upper hand in a matter of seconds, struggling weakly against her.

“Just listen to me for a second!” He called in a harsh voice. “I am still your brother.”

They both noticed my presence at the same time. He paused, looking up at me. Celeste took that time to push him off her with a violent force. She scrambled to a stand and in a flash, he was after her.

“Stay back,” Lucien said but his words were not directed at me. I felt Jabari’s presence behind me as Lucien hustled to his feet. Jabari took a step forward but my hand shot out on instinct as I watched, horror-

struck, as Lucien grabbed his sister and used her as a shield between himself and us.

“Stay back or I will – I will cut her.” He held a small knife to her throat and looked like he would stab her throat if any of us dared step forward.

“Lucien, that’s your sister,” I said slowly.

It was mind-boggling that I still expected anything from Lucien. It was even more mind -boggling to witness how far he had fallen from the sweet boy he once was. He was holding a knife to his sister’s throat and he didn’t look like he was bluffing. If any of us took a step forward, he would hurt her without a second thought or remorse.

I’d watched Lucien go from a caring friend to a stone-cold killer in just a few years.

“I know that!” He snapped, his scratched voice still conveying his irritation. “Do you think I want to do this? Do you think it’s fun holding a knife to my sister’s throat? You all have left me no choice!” He almost screamed, his eyes darting around the room wildly. Celeste quivered, frozen to the spot with her eyes wide open in obvious disbelief.

“You are not going to make it out alive,” Jabari said, his words calm yet tight.

“Oh, I am if you want your mate in one piece,” Lucien proclaimed, pressing the knife closer to Celeste’s throat. I almost took a step forward when I saw how close the tip of the blade was to her throat.

“What do you want?” I asked when I saw the sweat gathering on my friend’s forehead. “Let her go and you’ll get whatever you want.”

“I may not be the smartest person, Aysel, but I am not stupid!” I took a startled step back at the ferocity of his scream. “You think you can deceive me? You ruined my life, you bitch. You think I will still believe a word you say!?” He snorted, his voice loud.

“I didn’t ruin your life. You did that yourself,”

I answered, forcing him to talk long enough for us to get Celeste away from him.

“You were my mate but you chose to mate with that bastard who had the guts to imprison me after he stole from me!” The knife touched Celeste’s throat. Tears spilt from her eyes.

“You rejected me,” I reminded him.

“It didn’t matter! You were supposed to be mine forever.” I felt a spark on the tips of my fingers. I tightened my fist.

My magic was still raw, still out of control. I could not direct it yet and I didn’t know the full extent of the damage it could cause.

Celeste was too close to Lucien to try anything.

I didn’t want to risk hurting her. I’d never forgive myself.

“What do you want, Lucien?” I asked, getting back to the subject at hand.

“I can’t continue to stay in this pack now, can I?” He asked. “I’m leaving but I have nothing.

How am I supposed to survive without any money? Celeste has refused to give me money but since you two are here, you can help her out.”

“I don’t-I don’t have any money My friend choked out.

“I don’t have any cash with me but I have my card – and – and Valens’. Please, just let her go,”

I pleaded with him.

“Do you think I’m stupid? I should take your card so you’ll be able to track me?”

“We don’t need -I elbowed Jabari to stop him from aggravating Lucien.

“I- what can we do then? I can – do you want me to go make a withdrawal?” I looked around.

Yes, you can go and return with a troop but I’m not sure you’ll meet her alive.” He nodded his head at Celeste. “You have to come up with something better than that, Aysel. I’ve lost everything because of you. You owe me at this point.”

“You really shouldn’t have come here,” Jabari hissed but he thankfully didn’t take a step forward.

I have I touched the hoops around my ears.

Valens had give them to me for my birthday.

Solid diamond earrings. I took them off my ears and held them out to Lucien. These are diamonds. You can have them. Just let her go.”

“Drop them.” He pointed at a spot a few steps away.

I walked cautiously to the spot and dropped the earrings. He motioned me away with hand gestures and I walked backward.

“Here is what will happen,” he started, swallowing thickly. “I’ll take her car and you will let us go.”

“We can’t let you take her, Lucien,” I said in a steady voice despite the increasing shiver dancing through my spine and making my hands shake.

The hell I can’t. She’s my sister! Our parents are out there somewhere, displaced because of you and your stupid mate,” he hissed. “You know, I’ve always known that underneath the façade you put on, you’re just a whore like all the other girls.” I swallowed, my throat clogging. My vision was starting to get blurry, tainted with red. “You pretended you wanted me all those years but a more successful man comes around and it doesn’t take you a second to spread your legs for him like the slut you are.”

His words were scathing, spittle flying out of his mouth as he uttered them with vehemence.

“I can’t believe I loved you!” He laughed like a maniac. “I loved you but you cheated on me and had me thrown into the dungeons. You are a bitch, Aysel, but I still love you. You are going to regret choosing a finished prince over me.

He dragged Celeste suddenly and she let out a small squeak, still petrified.

He picked up the earrings and walked backward, still holding Celeste as his shield.

“I ‘ll drop her at the borders. You better not follow me. Tell your people to let me pass, else she’s dead.” I raised my hand in a show of surrender.

I watched as Lucien dragged Celeste with him out the back door of the house. I closed my eyes for a second, the sight of my friend frozen in her brother’s arms as he held a knife to her throat made my stomach churn. I felt a burning fire sign my palms as I clenched my fists even tighter.

The back door closed behind them and Jabari turned to me. “Go back to the car,” he said, starting forward.

You – You are going after them?” I asked.

“I’d be stupid to let him take her.”

“But he could hurt her He didn’t wait for me to finish. He raced after them.

I paced the house, thinking of what to do. I decided to follow after Jabari, my heart in my throat. By the time I made it to them, Lucien was surrounded by a squad of warriors.

“Tell them to let me go else she’s gone.” His voice was shaky and I saw fear in his eyes. He hadn’t finished speaking when we heard a shot. I looked, horror-struck. Someone had shot his shoulder. He stumbled

backward and Celeste wrenched out of his grip but he'd cut her. It wasn't a deep cut but bl**d beaded her throat.

"You bastard -" I ran to my friend while Jabari charged Lucien. I caught up with Celeste just as her legs gave out, releasing her full weight on me as she fainted.

Jabari tackled Lucien to the ground, slamming his head into the ground. There was a loud crack that gave him pause, his hand freezing in mid-air.

"Well shit," he muttered as bl**d started to sip out from underneath Lucien's head.

I swallowed down bile.