

Chapter 6 Shattered

Elena sat on Aba's bed quietly as Lenore lled her in. From the corner of her eye, she could see her guardian pacing slowly. She could tell he was trying to digest this information. Was she really the descendant of a primordial vampire? And if so, did this mean they really were more powerful?

It made sense, though. She knew how particular her grandfather was. He accepted her mother with open arms, even though she was a mix of species. The prospect of having their bloodline mix with a primordial would be exciting for him. It was easy for her to believe, because her relationship with him was already a bit strained.

She had rst seen the different side of her grandfather years ago, when she rst lost control of her shadows. He never tried to comfort her, even though she was upset. She never meant to hurt anyone. Her powers were strong, and they went wild on her. Her emotions controlled her shadows. She remembered how he told her not to make excuses, and to own up to her mistakes. That was the rst time he cut her. He was someone she trusted, and she felt coldness from him at that moment.

Her parents were quick to come to her defense. She remembered how her mother stood boldly next to her. She had put a comforting arm around her and set a challenging gaze on her grandfather. Her father drew a line, saying he didn't give a damn about the crown, and that his family was his rst priority over the vampires. Looking back on it, she thought this was why they had never handed the throne over to her parents.

Elena remembered the wounded look in Alaric's eyes, almost as if he had been betrayed. She gured this incident also made him harbor ill feelings toward her because she put a wedge between him and his own son. To be fair, she didn't put the wedge in. He did that himself. Her dad still loved his parents, but he was protective over his girls. He reacted with normal protective behavior, like her grandfather should have. Everyone else in her family would have acted the same. Hell, her grandmother was ready to roll up her sleeves when her mother told her. Her grandmother, Freya, didn't get the reserved vampire side. She was a erce ghter. Was she really the descendant of a primordial vampire?

"Blabbering fool!" Aba nally snarled out.

"Care to share with the class?" Ashton asked, arching his brow up.

"Alaric was keeping this a secret for a reason. Let's pray that i""t keeps his mouth shut." Aba's worried eyes lifted up to Elena. "The demon king would love to get a hold of your bloodline."

"You think what Silas said is true?" Elena asked, rising to her feet.

"Yes. Alaric would have kept this secret as tight as possible. Remember, I used to work for him. I know how he thinks. The less people that know, the better the secret is protected. It would be dangerous for word to get out about you two, especially when your powers have not fully awakened."

"You don't think he's keeping us here as a power booster?" Elena scoffed, folding her arms over her chest.

"Stop acting like a child," Aba snapped, pursing his lips together in agitation. "When you've been a ruler as long as he has, you learn to play your cards right. He loves you both. He is just very strategic when it comes to ruling."

"I guess Aba has drunk the Kool-Aid," Elena snorted, listening to his low, threatening growl. She snapped her head to glare at him. "It's bullshit. I don't care how long you've been alive. Your family should be your priority. I guarantee my other immortal family NEVER rules like that." She felt Lenore's hand land on her shoulder, a small smile resting on her lips.

"To be fair, our fairy family has a big support system. Our grandfather has had to rule without anyone to support him. If he messed up, there was no one to bail him out. Yes, he might have allies now, but I'll bet that habit has been formed inside of him."

"Say what you want, but it's easier to think that way when you aren't at the end of his disapproving gaze."

"I know it is," Lenore said, wrapping her arms around her sister. "It's his loss that he is missing out on knowing you. You're a better person than me. You control the shadows, but I harbor them inside."

"Nora, that's not true. You never strangled someone—"

"But I probably want to more than you—"

"You both suck, okay?" Colton shrugged his shoulders. "I'm the cool one. Be jealous."

"Why didn't Justice leave him in Elysium too?" Elena smirked as everyone else chuckled, everyone but Colton and Aba. Aba kept a serious expression, as he remained deep in thought.

"We need to let your grandfather know about all of this." Aba sighed quietly.

"I planned to talk to him—" Lenore started to say, but Aba cut her off.

"I think it's best that he's informed immediately, without the emotional aspect. Miral" Aba looked around. "Show yourself. I know you're here eavesdropping. I can feel you."

"I don't take orders from you," her quiet voice snapped out, as she manifested above them.

"This is information your master will want immediately. I'd rush to him—"

"I already know that." Her tone returned to normal as she stared at Aba.

"What's that look for?" He watched her slowly move her head to the side.

"You still feel loyal to him because of the soul bond. It might have been severed, but a part of you can't help yourself."

"Just go, amateur psychiatry hour is over." Aba watched as a tiny smile reached her lips before she faded away. Even when they were souls together, she was creepy. A ercely loyal guard dog that was capable of anything.

"Is that true?" Elena asked, causing his dark eyes to rest on her.

"No, not really. I understand things, and I know his objectives. However, my loyalty rests with you. To put it into perspective, I'd kill him if you asked me to. Not to be morbid, but..." He shrugged with a slight smirk spreading over his lips.

"Where else do your loyalties lie?" Ashton asked as he plopped on the bed. A playful smile spread over his lips.

"Leave it alone." Aba's voice held an almost lethal tone to it. His dark eyes settled on Ashton as if backing up an unspoken threat.

"I don't know why you're keeping it a secret." Ashton shrugged, rolling to his back.

Lenore shot Elena a quick glance. For once, her sister's face looked blank. Usually, she could see the ame in her eyes at the mention of Aba having a potential love interest, which meant she probably wasn't listening to the conversation. If that was the case, who was she talking to?

That was when the growls nally reached her ears. Two presences paced between the two women, swarming around them as if they were waiting to pounce.

Elena. The snarling voice of Yin whispered between them. From what the twins had learned, Yin could be more aggressive than Yang, though both wolves seemed to be getting impatient with them lately.

Lenore, a choice will be made soon. Yang's voice echoed in their minds.

They could almost visualize the white wolf and black wolf weaving around them, eyeing each woman carefully before they made their picks. They were being very selective about the master they chose. A partnership that would eternally connect them to their person. It was also the decision that would seal the twins' fates. It would reveal which future each woman would be faced with.

This was one of the few things that actually terried Elena. She never wanted to get her wolf, because she never wanted to be separated from her sister. She felt her shadows creep around her, protectively shielding her from the presence of the wolves. How long would the separation last? Would it be decades? Centuries? Even longer? No one knew the exact answer, but it all sounded horrible. How would she go that long without seeing Lenore? Would they still be able to communicate? Or would there be silence between them until the world is saved? She couldn't bear it. It hurt. It wasn't fair.

Suddenly, the shadows made a strange hissing sound and began to retreat. Elena snapped her eyes over to Lenore.

"I feel it again," she breathed out, as the shadows slowly returned. "It already happened." Her worried gaze moved to Aba.

"I'll check things out." Ashton jumped up and ran out the door.

"Elena." Aba walked up to her, cupping her cheek in his hand. He lowered his head to look into her eyes. "Don't be afraid. I'm here."

She wasn't afraid of the shadows. The fear in her eyes was from the future she couldn't escape. However, she was getting concerned. If something was happening because of her, it was when she started getting emotional again. Was she causing this? Her ngers curled into tiny balls as she looked down at the oor. The sound of the door opening and closing again made her jerk her head upright. She was met with Ashton's worried eyes.

"Did something happen?" Lenore asked, moving closer to Elena.

"One of the inrmay workers is suffering from the same aictions. They're already afraid it's a cursed plague." His eyes moved to the oor. "Just from what I've heard, they think Elena has cursed the vampires."

"WHAT?! It's too soon to even suggest a plague. Two people had this happen to them. And it's automatically my sister's fault?!" Lenore was furious. What the hell was wrong with them? They were supposed to be their people!

Elena took in a slow breath as pressure built up inside of her. A shadow plague? Was that a thing? She vaguely remembered something about such a plague, but it was only brief mentioned. The ailments weren't even detailed. However, if there was information, it would most likely be buried in the catacombs. She had to nd it. It would be the only thing that would clear her. Not just for them, but for herself. Things were getting serious. At this rate, her parents would be summoned home.

"Lena." Aba rubbed his hand over her back. "We all know you didn't do anything." She looked up into his dark eyes and gave him a small smile. His touch was ngers. His eyes brought her out from her darkness.

She had a group here that she trusted. If she talked to them, they would help her get to the catacombs to search them. As a bonus, she knew her sister was dying to see the hidden secrets there. It was as if she was being drawn to that place. Although, admittedly, she was intrigued too.

Elena was about to bring it up when the door opened. She could hear arguing the moment the door opened.

"It isn't safe for you to come here right now." Joel's familiar voice entered the room.

"I have to! If Aba can't come to me, then I'm coming to him!" A beautiful, exotic woman walked in. She had black, wavy hair and deep brown, alluring eyes with ecks of honey. The moment her gaze met with Aba's, she smiled.

"Aba." She whispered, and he dropped his hands from Elena's side. He turned to face her as her bottom lip trembled. "I'm sorry about what I said before. I didn't mean it. I don't want us to ght."

"You didn't think you hurt my feelings, did you?" A condent charm radiated from Aba's voice.

Elena swallowed the lump in her throat as she watched Beryl dive into Aba's arms. She buried her head in his chest as his arms wrapped around her.

"Hey now," Aba cooed to her. TO HER! The tone he always used with Elena was now being used with Beryl. His eyes were soft as he smoothed her hair with his hand. "What's all this about?"

"Can we—can we talk somewhere?"

Elena felt as if a knife had stabbed into her abdomen. Pressure raced through her limbs, washing away thought and reason. There was only the thudding of her heart and drumming in her ears. The shallow gasps she took could hardly ll her lungs with the oxygen she needed. He wouldn't leave her side now, though. Not with everything that was happening. His eyes found hers for a hesitant second before he said, "Yes, let's take a walk."

Aba didn't want to leave Elena, but he knew that this must be important. She looked like she was alright, but it was always hard to tell with her. For Beryl to leave Elysium, it must be important. Her parents didn't like her leaving the safety of the fairy barrier. It went against everything in him to walk away from Elena, though. But he wouldn't leave for just anyone. It was only because it was Beryl. Still, his feet felt like lead as he took a step toward the door. She would be safe in his room until he got back. "I won't be long," he murmured, before looking at Ashton and Colton. "Don't leave her side."

Tightness gripped her chest as bile rose into her strained throat walls. She curled her ngers together. Whiteness consumed her knuckles as her nails dug into her palms. She watched with unbelieving eyes as Aba escorted Beryl out of the room, his hand resting on her shoulder. He murmled something to Joel as he passed, but she couldn't hear it. The only sound she heard was the door closing and her heart shattering. Hearing about it was one thing. Seeing it was soul-crushing.

"If you guys need me, link me immediately," Joel said, his eyes resting on Elena. He looked like he wanted to say something, but instead quickly turned and left the room.

"I freakin' knew it!" Ashton laughed, slapping his knee. He had no clue about Elena's feelings. "I knew they were hooking up!"

"Lena." Lenore moved over to her sister. "Len?"

"Who's up for a dangerous mission?" Elena blurted out, looking up at everyone. "I recall something about a plague before, but it was very vague, as if it had been covered up. However, there is one place that might have information." She looked at her sister, who had a big smile spreading over her lips.

"The catacombs."

"The catacombs."

They both said, then looked up at Ashton and Colton.

"Isn't that area forbidden?" Ashton grinned, hopping to his feet.

"No, it is for Bidden, right? We assumed they meant the Bidden family, and it was for them." Colton beamed with a wink.

"Eh, works for me," Ashton said, as excitement lit up his eyes.

Lena. Lenore's voice echoed into her mind.

I don't want to talk about it. I just want to clear my name. Elena grabbed her hand with a smile. The truth was, it was impossible to talk about. She had to stop thinking about it because it was making her physically ill. Aba didn't do anything wrong. So why did she feel betrayed? Her mind was swirling, and she couldn't handle going down that road. Not when her emotions could turn into a dangerous shadow of destruction.

"So, what's the plan?" Lenore squeezed her sister's hand, showing her her support.

A smirk rose on Elena's lips as she looked over at Colton and Ashton. "How do you feel about cross-dressing?"