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Once he's disappeared into the forest, I turn to Bodie. "What was that about?"

Bodie is gazing in the direction Keane took. "A cop was asking about bodies found in a house in Texas."

My eyes widen. "In Texas? Why would Keane know anything about that?" I hesitate. "Did they think he did it?"

Bodie shifts his focus from the forest to me. "No, just that they found a phone at the scene and Keane's phone number had been called multiple times."

It hits me then who it must be.

Keane was telling someone to stop calling. That killing was easy. So did the guy die, or was he the one who killed a bunch of people?

"Briar?" Sera says, pulling me from my thoughts.

I glance at her. "Yeah?"

"We have to talk."

I nod. "Yeah. Let's sit." I glance over at Bodie to tell him I'd rather Sera and I talk alone, but he's stalking toward the grocery store. While not unattractive, his appearance isn't what interests me. Is he Keane's friend? Or is he in Madden Grove for something else? "Who is he?"

She shrugs, but I can tell she doesn't care as she tugs me toward the forest. "Don't know. But we should get out of here before Keane Destin comes back."

"That's not a good idea, Sera. And anyway, where would I even go?"

I stop beside a tree and sit down. After hesitating, Sera drops beside me. "I don't know. You could hide with me until we've cleared your name."

I wrap my arm around her shoulder and draw her closer. "I don't know what I did to deserve such a good friend, but whatever I did, I'm glad I did it."

"You didn't do anything. You're a good person, and I'm the one lucky to have you."

I sigh. "I don't know about that. Look how much trouble I've gotten myself into. But what I really want to know is, where did you get such a powerful spell?"

Sera's gaze slides away from me.

Uneasiness settles in my belly. "Sera, what did you do?"

She huffs. "Layla Markham wasn't at her house when I went over to tell her you weren't responsible for Calla's Cauldron."

"So?"

"I might have had a peek in her grimoire."

"Sera!"

Her eyes return to mine, with not a small amount of guilt. "She's so busy turning everyone against you without even considering it might be someone else. She doesn't care about the truth, just about looking good to everyone else."

"It wouldn't have mattered if she'd believed I was innocent. You must be the only one who didn't think it was me. Even Keane did at first."

Her brow creases. "Why would he think that?"

Since I have no desire to tell her about the Calla sister's usual venom, I shake my head. "It doesn't matter."

"But people have to believe you weren't responsible now. I mean, no one is going to think that you..." her voice trails off.

"Blew up the tearoom with Aunt Mel inside?" I murmur, lowering my gaze to the ground. "I don't think I'm ever going to forget that for the rest of my life, Sera. They had a stretcher..." My eyes fill with tears.

She wraps her arm around me and pulls me even closer. "I'm sorry, Briar."

It takes a long while of us sitting quietly before I beat back my need to cry. “How did you know I was here?”