



#### iv. Imminent Betrayal

Auralie allowed Lucian to lead her down the streets, ignoring the growing feeling of worry in her stomach. She would be fine. Her brother would never do her any harm. They were all each other really had le. They loved each other more than anything. Nothing would get in the way of that.

a<sup>3</sup>

Auralie wondered why she felt so unsteady on her feet. It was probably just the shock of what had happened. Seeing Lucian alive had made her head feel dizzy with excitement and confusion, and maybe even a little worry. But it would be fine. She would convince Lucian to come with her, and then Maria would complete the mission and take them to Shield.

Maybe her nerves had something to do with being in a strange city. To be honest, she had felt a little jittery ever since that boy had ran into her on the street. She wasn't sure why, people ran into each other all the time back in New York. She had been knocked down over and over. But maybe, she was just confused because someone had finally helped her up, something no one else had done for her before. It was such a small gesture, but the thought of it was enough to shake Auralie to her core. She wondered who the green eyed girl was, and whether or not she knew just how much she had thrown the light manipulator o her game.

a<sup>8</sup>

Lucian slung an arm around his twin's shoulder. He was happy to have her back, Auralie could tell. That was good. But something was o about him, probably something to do with years of change and pain. It would all be alright again. Auralie believed it, and if she didn't, she would say it in her head until she did. It would be fine.

"Are you alright Ali," Lucian said easily, "you seem a little o."

a<sup>1</sup>

"Yeah," she said, trying to hide her nerves. She needed to be strong when she met her brother's so called "savior" and couldn't a ord to have him fussing over her.

As they walked she told him about the orphanage and all that she had read and experienced. She told him about school, and about how she hated all the bullies and the people who picked on others. She confessed her dreams about how she wanted to do more than steer the victim away from the problem, she wanted to fix the problem entirely.

Lucian smiled, "so then why don't you?"

"Oh I don't know," she said, "because I'm 13, because I don't have the resources, and oh, yeah, because it's impossible to completely change everything just like that. It takes time, and e ort, and even then, it might not work."

"What if you could?" Lucian asked.

Auralie sighed, "if I could rewrite the universe with a snap of my fingers. I don't know. I mean, who am I to decide what's right for everyone? Maybe my method works for me, but there is actually a better way. I can't decide until I have all the facts, and even then, maybe I shouldn't be the one to decide. I'm not better than everyone else."

a<sup>106</sup>

"Sure you are," he teased, "you're my twin. That makes you the best. But seriously Ali, you need to see what my employer can do. She'll change your mind. She's going to make everything better. You'll love it."

a<sup>6</sup>

Auralie felt fear brewing in her bones. She didn't like the sound of this woman, who thought that she had the right to decide the way universe should work.

But maybe she does want to make everything better,part of her argued. The part of her that wanted to save everyone. But she knew better. Auralie would not give in, even if her brother truly believed that it was the right path. She would make sure he realized the truth.

a<sup>1</sup>

Auralie did want to help people, she wanted to make a world where people were treated with kindness and respect. She was tired of seeing people spit on others because of their race, or social class, or religion, or the amount of money they made. She was tired of people who wanted to put her down because of her sexuality, or because they thought women were lesser, or just because she didn't like to follow the pack on most issues.

a<sup>6</sup>

But she would help to create the world she wanted to see through hard work and inspiring others, and not giving up her own fight. She would not make rash choices and foolish actions in a desperate bid for perfection because that would just make things worse.

Auralie had always believed that knowing when to stop, when to not use power, or weapons, or knowledge, or whatever it is someone had, is key to being a hero, or even just a good person. Her brother was a good person, of that she was sure. So he would realize that he had to stop,

a<sup>1</sup>

His employer didn't seem like a good person. Maybe they sincerely believed they were doing the right thing. But Auralie doubted that. If she thought that using Lucian's powers to cause destruction was the way to good things, then they either needed serious help, or were not a good person.

It occurred to Auralie that Maria might have had the same train of thought, trying to figure out the motives behind these attacks and how to best deal with them. Auralie felt her lips curl upward in a slight smile, as she thought of herself in the future as a shield agent. Helping to stop criminals and make the world safer, now that was a good way to change things.

Lucian grinned, "I'll take your smile as a sign that you're interested in what we're doing."

"Very," Auralie said. That wasn't a lie, she was curious.

Lucian replied, "great. You're going to love this."

Auralie once again wondered about her nerves. Everything was going to be ok, once she showed Lucian the consequences of his actions, he would come back to her side, and Maria could handle his employer. Everything was going to be fine. She was with her twin, the one she loved the most, and they were not going to split apart again. He would always take her side. Lucian and Auralie Shadow would never betray each other in any way shape or form.

Right?

a<sup>8</sup>

[Continue reading next part](#) □