

## Chapter 146

Adelaide

Alaric lunged in front of the barrier, then moved at the speed of light, sinking his teeth into several wolves, tearing them apart. Up until now, no one had actually taken the first step to do something, but now he had.

I had no idea where Violet was, but I had no doubt she was someplace safe because I trusted Alaric. Judging by his big entrance, I could only imagine what he had done to those wolves that had followed after him.

By hurting his own kind, he had just set the tone for a big war. A deep growl came from the Alpha King—one that sent chills down my spine—and then he shifted.

The wolves grew more aggressive in their attempts to get through the barrier while the Lycans protected it with all they had. The ground shook as a massive wolf towered over the others—the Alpha King.

Now, Alaric and the Alpha King stood face to face, both large and powerful. Alaric howled loudly, followed by the Alpha King, who was challenging him to attack. His own son...

Suddenly, a loud, high-pitched laugh rang through the air.

It was her.

Mom...

She snapped her wrists in a single motion, breaking the ropes around her. Her laughter didn't stop as she spread her arms wide. "Now I can feel the darkness!" she shouted.

I could feel it too, and it could only mean one thing.

Baelor was here.

Lightning flashed, and the sky darkened as a familiar black smoke surged forward. The impact was strong enough to make everyone stop whatever they were doing.

Everyone's attention was on the black smoke, swirling into the air.

The same smoke I had seen in my nightmares. The same smoke I had been trying to erase from my mind for years.

Baelor.

I had to open the Veil, and I had to do it now. Even though I had spent all my strength protecting Claire and was already at my limit, I urged myself to push through.

This was what I had worked toward for years, and I could not let anyone down.

"Break the barrier!" Mom's voice rang out, causing the coven to unleash their magic. Everything was a mess. While they focused on breaking the barrier, the wolves and Lycans went back to fighting each other.

Meanwhile, my attention was on only two things—keeping the barrier up and opening the Veil. I had never tried to use that much energy at once, but I didn't have a choice. I had to.

I extended my arms, whispering the words Aelius had taught me, over and over, until the ground began rumbling. A white glow appeared in the sky, and I knew it was the Veil.

Apparently, Gloria did too because the smirk on her face vanished. "No..." she breathed, her eyes widening. "That's impossible!"

Yet it was true.

The Veil had opened, and I only had a few minutes to spare before I would have to close it again.

I took a deep breath, pouring every bit of energy I had left into controlling the Veil.

First, I controlled the coven. Mom screamed as she and her followers were sucked into the Veil, fighting with everything they had—but it just wasn't enough. The Veil was too powerful, and they were pulled inside.

Next was the kingdom.

They were too busy thinking about themselves to notice what was happening. Through the chaos, I focused and did the ritual again. It wasn't long before the Alpha King let out a loud roar as the Veil pulled him in.

Only then did everyone begin to realize what was happening. Wolves tried digging their claws into the ground, but it was of no use—just like the coven, they were all sent into the Veil.

If I hadn't drained myself of energy, I would've sent the Lyperians too—but right now, they weren't the real threat. It was that dark cloud circling the barrier.

No matter what, I couldn't let him enter—not when Greg and Claire were still inside.

I watched as the Lycans stepped back while Baelor pushed against the barrier, trying to break it. I had expected him to go after Alaric, who stood with the Lycans—but he didn't.

Why?

Then it hit me.

As long as Alaric remained in his shifted form, Baelor couldn't enter his body. That must've been the reason why Mom and Esther restrained him all those years ago.

If anything, this was my chance. I had to seal him away right now.

A gasp escaped my lips as I felt blood drip down my nose, but I promised myself it wouldn't stop me. Determined, I raised my hands, focusing on Baelor, and then whispered the words.

A sharp pain in my chest made me gasp loudly. Something was wrong. The pain became unbearable, but I forced myself to push through, especially as the Veil began to flicker.

No matter what, I had to seal Baelor before it closed.

Come on, Adelaide, just a little more...

With one last surge of energy, I tried to trap him in the Veil. It was working—Baelor was being pulled in. But before he could be fully sealed away, a part of him managed to escape.

No...

I watched in horror as half of Baelor vanished into the distance. Then, the barrier broke apart, and I fell to the ground, staring at the small gap in the Veil that was still open.

I couldn't do it.

All those years of training, all the sacrifices we had made preparing for this very moment, the moment I had dreamed about—and I had failed.

Half of Baelor was still out there, and I wasn't sure if I even had the strength to keep going. Violet...she could be in danger.

The only thing I had the strength for was to worry for my little girl.

"No...Violet," I breathed, barely holding myself up as I tried to rise from the ground. I was about to fall again, but before I could—something warm pressed against my leg.

A black wolf.

Alaric.

I sighed deeply, digging my fingers into his thick fur. As I closed my eyes, an image appeared. It was of Alaric running through the woods, placing Violet into a den. A white fox stood at the entrance, guarding her.

I knew that den. We had been there before. But why was he showing me...

Once I opened my eyes again, I stared into those red pearls, knowing exactly where this was going.

Tears pricked at my eyes as I followed the wolf's gaze and looked at the Veil, just moments away from closing.

Alaric wanted to go inside the Veil to keep everything under control, to make sure the ones locked inside stayed there, and to give me the time I needed to find the rest of Baelor.

This was his goodbye...