

Chapter 2: After Shower Problems

Twenty minutes later and freshly dressed in leggings and a tank top, I walked out into the living room with a glass of red wine on my mind. When I turned the corner, my sister's face came into view.

"I thought you would have gone by now," I admitted, passing where she sat headed towards the kitchen.

"Wow, hoping to get rid of me? I said that I would go, for now."

"Well, that was the hope, Claire. Why are you still here?" I replied, irritated.

Grabbing a goblet from the nearest cupboard, I tried to ignore her presence. Perhaps if I was cold enough, she would nally get the hint. Then again, that was always wishful thinking.

"I need to make sure you come back with me. Mom's words, not mine."

Snapping my gaze to Claire, I pulled the cork from the already opened bottle and frowned. "I said I would consider it. I'm damn sure not going right now, and you can't stay here."

The pout that appeared on her lips grated on my last nerve. She tried to pout her way out of everything and it may have worked on my mother, but it wouldn't work on me. Giving her a pointed, indifferent glare, she crossed her arms over her chest. "Fine, but I'll be back in two weeks. I have to go take care of some stuff in New York anyways. Make sure you're ready."

Taken back by her comment, I glared at her. "If you have to go there, why the hell did you come here? This conversation could have been a phone call or better yet, a text."

Standing, she xed her designer clothes as if she had to look perfect everywhere she went. If we didn't look similar, there was no way anyone would ever know we were related. She and I were complete opposites. "Two weeks, Taylor."

Two weeks, my ass...I wasn't going.

"Yep. Call rst before you come back."

The sound of the front door closing was a blessing. I wasn't sure how she had gotten in since she didn't have a key, but I wouldn't be surprised if she hadn't charmed the building manager at some point.

Pouring my wine to the rim, I sipped it as I headed towards my lush gray sofa. The white, furry throw blanket called my name as I made myself comfortable and picked up the remote. Late night binge watching of my favorite shows was on the top of my to do list, and as I ipped on the TV, the news came on, causing me to frown.

First, she breaks into my place, and then she f***s with my TV.

I never watched the news, and the fact it was on meant my sister had purposely made sure to put it on this channel. In an attempt to ignore it, I went to hit the guide button, only to stop when they started talking about a string of murders in Salem.

Salem was the closest major town to where I lived—Marblehead—and my hunting grounds. I chose the opportunity to work in Salem while living outside so as to not draw attention to myself. The small book and alchemy shop I owned was a cute attraction for the tourists who ocked to Salem every year for its witchy atmosphere.

Their desire to obtain a special remedy for illnesses, or broken hearts, was endless.

It was also something I loved. I was gifted in making herbal remedies and the art of alchemy. My remedies have helped so many people since I had moved here—even if it was slightly tainted with real magic, something most of the tourists wished they had.

I had made a few friends here, but none of them knew what I was, and that's how I stayed safe. Stay mysterious and sweet and never let anyone in.

Was it lonely?

Sometimes.

I made do as I always did.

But being low key was how I had been able to stay hidden for so long. As the news anchor talked about the many men killed over the past year, I kept listening. They hadn't been able to connect the murders in the past, but after the latest one, they nally had clues to close in on the killer.

I wasn't sure what supernatural creature had done this, but it wasn't good. The last thing I wanted was this kind of attention being drawn to the area I fed. There was no way the mundane law enforcement would be able to nd this creature. As much as I liked to stay to myself, it dawned on me I was going to have to help them in the long run.

I couldn't lose the only thing allowing me to stay in one place.

With a groan, I pulled out my phone and texted my sister. "It wasn't me."

It didn't take but a moment for her to reply, and her text made my brows knit together in confusion. "Are you sure? Keep watching."

"Keep watching? The hell is her problem—"

The last thing I expected was for a picture of the guy I had fed from tonight to pop up on the screen. Hewas labeled as the last murder victim of this pristine serial killer, and my heart sank. When I left him, he was alive. The fact he was dead shocked me.

"It wasn't me...he was alive when I left him," I replied with frustration, trying to understand how this happened. "Someone is framing me."

The bubbles showed my sister was typing a long message, which made me worry even more. She wasn't usually one with a lot to say unless she was in your face. Dealing with her in this kind of situation made things more complicated. She was playing the middleman between my mother and I, and this latest stunt would make it even easier for my mother to get me home.

"I'm not sure what to tell you, but Mother has seen this and we are both concerned. You're making a mess of things and getting sloppy. If this isn't a wake up call to come home, then you're more delusional than I thought."

Fuck...if I didn't gure out what the hell was going on—my future here was done.