

Chapter 76

Elena

“Elena! Elena!” Axton's voice yells through the mind-link, waking me. I blink, my head pounds to its own beat. My vision even feels like it's pulsating, and my ears are ringing.

“Come on, baby. Stay with me,” I try to focus on his voice. Try forcing myself to stay awake.

“I can feel you. We're on our way.”

“Stay with me, babe,” Axton tells me, and my head rolls on my shoulder when someone grips my hair, jerking my head back, and I come face to face with Alpha Cane. Alpha Cane is a strigoi. However, he looks vastly different. The whites of his eyes are blood-red, while his dilated pupils are pale yellow. His skin is pale, and his face is gaunt.

He looks nothing like the man that I've come to know. It's hard to wrap my head around the idea that they're the same person. This man resembles a monster you'd see in your nightmares, not in the waking world. His body is thin and wiry, but I know not to underestimate him because of his size. Strigoi are powerful and strong. His long fingernails are sharp against my cheeks, and his teeth are sharp and jagged. He moves with supernatural speed as he glances over his shoulder, sending a chill down my spine.

It takes a few moments for my memory of what happened to return.

“You with it, Elena?” Cane says, slapping my face. I groan, the slightest tap worsening the pounding in my head. “Is she alright?” I hear a groggy voice.

“I think so.” Cane mumbles, then he lets me go. He steps back, and I dazedly look around to find I'm tied to a chair. It smells rancid down here, and it only takes me a few seconds to learn why. I'm in the tunnels under the city.

The tunnels were dark and damp, the smell of mildew and sewage filling the air. Along one wall was TV screens connected to surveillance cameras located throughout the city, allowing Cane to easily watch over the entire place. It is clear that Cane had set up a base of some sort in the tunnels, with a few chairs and tables scattered around. The flickering of the TV screens cast eerie shadows across the walls. Cane paces, clutching his hair like a madman, muttering to himself.

“What have I done? What have I done? Axton will lose his mind when he finds out.”

“I didn't want it to be this way. I never asked for this!” he growls, spinning to look at me.

He points a long, slender finger at me. “You, this is your fault. You had to snoop. Why couldn't you let things be?” he growls when I hear another voice.

“Just let her go. We can still fix this. We can get you help....” come another voice, making me turn my head to see Soyer. He is also tied to a chair, and he is in a bad way. Blood covers him. He has huge slashes across his chest. Blood is matted in his hair. His face is twisted in pain, and his breathing is labored. Eyes wide and fearful, and he is clearly in shock. His clothing is torn, and his body is trembling, as if he is struggling to stay conscious.

“Shut up. Shut up. Shut up!” Cane shouts, pacing back and forth, talking to himself. I stare at Soyer, who looks half dead, his wounds too extensive as his wolf tries to heal him.

Hearing a groan, Soyer whimpers, and Cane stops his pacing. Turning quickly, it sends my eyes down at Soyer's feet, and my eyes widen when I notice his mate lying on the ground. She groans again, and he starts thrashing in his chair.

“No... Leave her, Cane. She won't tell. SHE WON'T TELL!” Soyer yells at him when he grabs her hair, ripping her onto her knees. She cries out, and Soyer tries to shift in his restraints, but he's too badly injured, his body stops.

“Use me... Use me!” Soyer screams at Cane. Cane turns his head, looking at Soyer, and smiles the most sadistic grin.

He then sinks his fangs into her neck, and I notice the multiple bite marks covering his mate's body and neck. She screams, and Soyer roars, thrashing so much in his seat it tips over. Tears stream down my face, and I feel the mind-link open up.

“Where are you?” Axton urges, and I peer around frantically. Trying to get my foggy mind to work.

“Um... I'm in the tunnel. You need to get here. Bring help! You need to find us.”

“Which ones?” I try to think because I have no idea how long I was out, yet the smell tells me these tunnels are linked to the sewage system.

“The... I think it's the---” Suddenly, Cane is standing in front of me and grips my face, his nails piercing my cheeks, making me cry out.

“Who are you mind-linking?” he growls, blood covering his lips and dripping off his chin. My eyes dart to the side at Soyer's mate's crumpled body on the ground, lying motionless. Her body is covered in multiple bite marks. Several parts of her clothing are ripped, and her pants are missing completely. I hate to think about why her pants are missing.

Her blonde hair is now caked in blood, partly obscuring her face where it has fallen, which is pale, looking like she has lost a lot of blood. Blood is dripping from her neck, and her eyes are closed, so I know she has lost consciousness. Soyer tries to nudge her with his foot, which he manages to get free of his restraints when the chair fell.

“Burn in hell, you fucking monster.” I scream at him. Alpha Cane snarls, all glamour removed. He is the stuff of nightmares as he smiles sadistically, his face covered in her blood when he speaks.

“Wrong answer!” he snarls, and the next second, all I see is darkness.