

Chapter 79

Osiris and I descend into the basement together, Thomas and Eli go to check the old park amenities out the back of the council to check the tunnels there. Walking down the winding corridors until we reach two massive gates blocking access to the tunnels beneath the council. We could see the old and weathered stone walls, showing signs of wear and tear from years of use.

As we got closer to the gates, we could feel a chill in the air, the wind whistling loudly in the tunnels. Moving toward the back of the basement, we come across the old tunnel system, and it is, as expected, completely sealed off with bars. Osiris shines the flashlight into the dark tunnel, illuminating the ancient cobblestone walls and the thick layer of mold and mildew that has settled over everything.

Peering over his shoulder, I can just make out the old rusted pipes along the ceiling and the occasional rat scurrying around in the shadows.

“Nothing,” Osiris says when I hear the faintest noise.

“We can check.”

“Shh,” I tell him, holding up a finger.

Bending down, I listen. Osiris instantly fell silent, but I thought I heard a banging sound like old copper pipes being banged on. When I don't hear it anymore, I rise to my feet.

We turn for the stairs when Osiris grabs my arm just as we hear it again. We both turn slowly, looking at the tunnel system. Moving toward the bars, I glance around the room, looking for something to break them. Peering into the tunnel, Osiris hands me a flashlight, and I shine it down the tunnel.

“Elena!” I shout. Silence for a few seconds when I hear Soyer's voice. It is faint, but I know I am not mistaken.

“She's down here,” I look at Osiris, and his eyes widen. “Find something to break these bars,” Osiris rushes off, but returns seconds later with nothing. Digging my

phone from my pocket. I ring Thomas, knowing Eli had left to search the old tunnels under the amenities block of the park out back with Thomas. I could feel he was mind-linking with the patrols on the borders.

The phone rings a few times when Osiris grips one bar. “Grab the other. We might be able to open it enough to squeeze through,” Osiris tells me. I place the phone on the loudspeaker, grabbing one bar while Osiris grips the other. We bend the bars, creating a gap when Thomas finally answers.

“Hello?” he grumbles, sounding half asleep.

“Thomas, where are you? Bring some men and flashlights, along with a crowbar, to break these bars off,” Osiris tells him. I place my foot on the brickwork, using it as leverage to pry the bars further apart.

“I'm at home. You want me to do what? What time is it?” My blood runs cold, and it is like a bucket of ice is tossed over me. Osiris' head snaps up, and his eyes meet mine. I can see the question in his eyes. If Thomas is at home, who is upstairs with Eli?

“That's not Thomas,” Osiris murmurs when we hear rancorous laughter.

“Well done, Alpha. You are correct.” A sinister voice has us both turning to find Thomas standing by the stairs. Only he isn't alone, Eli's limp body is over his shoulder. He cracks his neck, and in the distance, I can hear Thomas demanding to know what is going on.

Khan presses beneath my skin, and Thomas' body shudders and ripples. It is like a veil is lifted, and Cane suddenly takes his place. However, this man is not the Cane I spent countless hours in meetings with and grew up with.

This Cane is a strigoi. He walks closer, stalking us like a predator hunting its prey. My skin ripples with the need to shift, and the moment Cane lunges at me just as I lunge at him, giving Khan control. Khan tears into Cane's arm at the same time Osiris shifts to help.