



464 Black Crystalline Composite

This chapter is dedicated to Mada_mim, I am so happy my book gives you some comfort on the bad days. I hope you furry baby is happy where ever he is up there and that he watching over you ❤️ 1

Eve

The lab felt different with everyone crowded into it.

Montague was seated clicking his cane apprehensively on the tile, watching everything with that calculating stare. Gallinti had claimed a stool by the observation window, radiating nervous energy. Silas leaned against the far wall, sceptic hope written all over his face. Kael hovered near Thea, his eyes followed her every motion.

"Everyone ready?" Dr. Maya asked, snapping on latex gloves.

"As ready as we'll ever be," Montague said. "Let's see if this miracle composite actually works."

I sat on the medical stool and extended my arm. The alcohol swab was cold, the needle barely a



pinch. My blood filled the syringe in steady pulls —dark red, ordinary, nothing special to look at.

Thea took the sample, already moving toward the centrifuge. "Fifteen minutes for isolation, maybe twenty for full distillation."

"And if the marker doesn't survive the process?" Silas asked. "Dr Maya says it denatures quickly."

"Then we start over," Dr. Maya said simply. "But it will."

"Your confidence is inspiring," Silas muttered.

The centrifuge whirred to life. I pressed gauze to my arm and stood, moving beside Hades. His hand found mine immediately, cold fingers threading through warm ones.

"Nervous?" he murmured.

"Terrified," I admitted. "What if goes wrong?"

"It won't,"

Silas laughed from where he leaned. "That's not comforting, Hades. You say everything with that same certainty."

"Because I'm always right."

"Arrogant bastard."



"Accurate bastard."

Despite everything, I felt my lips twitch. The banter helped. Made this feel less like we were gambling with everyone's survival and more like... I don't know. Science. Experimentation. Something we could control.

The centrifuge stopped. Thea transferred the separated plasma to the distillation setup—a maze of glass tubes and beakers that looked like something from a fantasy novel. Flames flickered beneath the apparatus.

"How pure does it need to be?" Kael asked, watching Thea's hands move with the precision of someone that had gone through the motions a thousand times.

"Completely," she said, adjusting a valve, swallowing thickly. For a second her eyes darted to his before shifting back to the task at hand. "Any contamination and the lattice won't form properly."

Montague shifted. "And the lattice is critical because...?"

"Because the marker alone is useless," Dr. Maya said, monitoring temperature readouts. "It degrades too quickly. But locked inside vampire



blood's immortal structure?" She glanced at Hades. "It becomes permanent."

We watched liquid travel through coiled tubes. Colors shifted—red to pink to something almost translucent. My chest tightened with each passing minute. This had to work. It *had* to.

Finally, Thea held up a small beaker. The liquid inside was barely there, colorless except for the faintest blush of pink.

"That's it?" Silas asked,

"That's immunity," Thea said softly, placing it in the vacuum chamber. "Pure, unprotected, and yet so incredibly fragile. Like a glass shield, all we need to do is make an unbreakable crystal.

Through the transparent walls, I could see the liquid sitting perfectly still. It looked so... insignificant. Like it couldn't possibly be the answer to everything.

"Phase two," Dr. Maya announced.

A lab assistant opened the large containment vessel in the corner—cold vapor rolled out, and inside were dozens of canisters filled with black liquid. Completely, impossibly black.

The assistant pulled one out. Hades' blood,



frozen solid.

"Here we go," Hades murmured beside me.

The canister moved closer to my specimen.

Three feet away.

Two feet.

The black blood **exploded** into motion.

Not even gradually but instantly. It liquefied and began churning violently inside its container, slamming against the walls like something alive and furious.

My specimen responded. The pink-tinted liquid started pulsing, glowing faintly, pressing against the vacuum seal.

"Holy shit," Silas breathed.

"They're reacting," Kael said, unnecessarily.

"To proximity alone," Thea added, voice filled with awe. "They haven't even touched yet."

Hades' grip on my hand tightened. Our eyes met.

This was us. Our bond, distilled down to its essence, and even separated into containers they were trying to reach each other.

"Open them," Montague said quietly.



Dr. Maya and Thea moved in tandem. The vacuum seal released with a hiss. The black blood's container opened with a soft click.

And then—

The specimens didn't spill.

They **leaped**.

Both liquids shot upward, meeting in mid-air, intertwining in impossible spirals. Black and pink weaving together, floating three feet above the table, defying every law of physics I'd ever learned.

"Jesus Christ," Gallinti whispered.

The dance was mesmerizing—fluid and purposeful, like watching silk ribbons caught in an invisible wind. They weren't just mixing. They were **bonding**. Finding each other, wrapping around each other, becoming something new.

"The affinity," Thea said, voice shaking slightly. "It's strong enough to overcome gravity."

"This is what a true bond looks like," Dr. Maya added. "At the molecular level."

Silas stood from his stool, moving closer. "I've never seen anything like this."



"No one has," Kael said. "You should have seen my shock."

I couldn't look away. Couldn't breathe properly. That was *us* up there. Our bond made visible.

Hades' thumb traced circles on the back of my hand, and I realized he was just as transfixed as I was.

"Now what?" Montague asked, practical as ever.

"Now," Thea said, tearing her gaze away, "we accelerate the combination."

A lab assistant brought forward a new vessel—strange-looking, with three distinct chambers. Top and bottom held chunks of shiny reddish-brown rock.

"Copper?" Silas guessed.

"Copper," Thea confirmed with a twitch of her lips. "It is the element of life, found in our bodies, in plants. Copper is essential to all aerobic organisms. It is particularly associated with oxygen metabolism. Yet it can conduct electrical energy. It is a catalyst for numerous chemical reactions. We sandwich the specimens between copper nodes to speed up the bonding."

"How long without the catalyst?" Gallinti asked.



"Weeks. Maybe months."

"And with it?"

"Minutes."

Dr. Maya and Thea worked together, carefully guiding the floating mass toward the middle chamber. It resisted at first, the specimens seeming reluctant to be contained again, but eventually they settled inside. The vessel sealed with a pressurized hiss.

"Everyone," Thea said, suddenly urgent.

"Goggles. Now."

A lab assistant distributed protective eyewear. I pulled mine on, the world tinting slightly green through the lenses.

"Why?" Silas asked, but he was already putting his on.

"Light emission," Dr. Maya said. "The bonding reaction releases energy as photons. Enough to cause retinal damage."

"Fantastic," Gallinti muttered, adjusting his goggles.

The vessel sat on the counter, innocuous-looking. Inside, I could just barely see



the specimens still moving, still intertwining.

We waited.

One minute.

Nothing happened.

Two minutes.

Still nothing.

Gallinti shifted uncomfortably. "How long should this—"

"Patience," Montague said.

Three minutes.

The specimens continued their slow dance, but there was no light, no dramatic reaction, nothing to indicate the miracle we'd been promised.

Gallinti's jaw tightened. "Are we certain the calculations are correct? Because if this is another theoretical dead end—"

"It's not," Thea said, but even she sounded uncertain now.

Four minutes.

"Perhaps the lattice theory is fundamentally flawed," There was no malice in his tone despite



his words, he rambled on due to the apprehension that was now written on his face. Gallinti continued, voice rising. "Immortal blood or not, you can't force molecular bonding through sentiment. This is chemistry, not romance—"

Light ***exploded*** from the vessel.

Brilliant, blinding, white-hot light that filled the entire laboratory despite our goggles. I threw my arm up instinctively, squinting through the protective lenses.

The vessel was glowing like a miniature sun.

And inside, where two separate specimens had been, there was now only one substance—gleaming, crystalline, pulsing with contained power.

The composite.

Black crystals that now sat in the containment, seeming to crackle with energy, hope and endless possibilities.

They'd done it. **3**

