

## Frozen Star 151

### Chapter 151: Ice Against the Storm

[POV Liselotte]

The roar of the rift kept echoing as if the sky itself were tearing open again and again over our heads. Every second was a mixture of icy wind, suspended dust, and flashes of light that illuminated the ruins of the village with colors that shouldn't exist in our world. Leah was breathing heavily beside me, leaning against a half-destroyed wall, trying to stabilize her mana while Chloe stayed alert, her fur bristling and her fangs slightly exposed.

I didn't take my eyes off the village center. The ethereal elemental was still destroying everything in its path, obeying every gesture and every shout from Marcus, who looked more like a deranged priest worshipping a forbidden god than a human mage. The swirling rift behind him cast distorted shadows over the ruins, stretching each movement and making it even more sinister.

"How long do you need before you can move properly?" I asked Leah quietly, without looking away from the elemental.

"A few more minutes... maybe ten... if I can get my mana to circulate correctly..." she murmured, panting. "My body is still reacting to the rift... I don't know how long I'll be able to... stay conscious."

Chloe growled softly, lowering her large head toward Leah as if she could measure her temperature or her pulse. I stroked her back to calm her, though I was the one who needed calm the most right now.

"Hold on a little longer, Leah. Just a little," I said.

But just as I said it, I heard fast footsteps approaching.

Two soldiers.

They were running desperately, not even looking around, just trying to get away from the center. Their armor rattled, their swords clanged against the plates as they breathed like they were about to collapse. One leaned against the wall next to us, unaware of our presence.

“He’s destroying everything! That monster—!” one shouted.

“Don’t look at it, just run—!” the other answered.

He never finished.

The elemental turned its head. I saw its ethereal torso shift toward our side, as if it had smelled their fear. The air went cold, then hot, then vibrated like a storm about to break.

“Oh no...” I muttered.

The elemental charged toward us.

“Chloe, up!” I yelled.

Chloe understood immediately. She crouched, and I grabbed Leah by the shoulders.

“I’m sorry, I’m sorry—” I said as I lifted her onto the great white wolf’s back.

Leah barely managed to hold onto the fur.

“Lotte—what—?!”

“No time, it found us. Chloe, run!”

Chloe shot forward like a white arrow, fast despite the extra weight. I ran behind them, keeping pace, though each step kicked up clouds of dust and shards of stone.

The elemental fired its first attack.

A ray of pure fire, brighter than natural flame, more concentrated than any normal spell. It hit exactly where we had been seconds earlier, melting the stones and leaving a smoking crater.

“Lotte!” Leah shouted from Chloe’s back.

“I know!”

The next attack came without warning.

A blue bolt fell from the sky, thin as a needle but so fast I barely saw it. It fell straight toward us.

I instinctively raised my right hand.

The air froze.

A wall of ice rose from the ground, thick, crystalline, as large as a wagon. The bolt struck it and pierced through, but lost most of its force. What came out the other side was little more than a spark.

Chloe zigzagged between the ruins, dodging the debris.

“You’re still practicing well,” Leah murmured with a tired smile.

“Shut up and hold on tight,” I said, panting.

Another attack.

Fire. Again.

But it wasn't normal fire. It was a bluish flame, almost translucent, moving like liquid. I recognized it immediately. Corrosive magic. It burned more than natural fire. It could evaporate even metals.

“Careful!” Leah shouted.

My hands were already moving. Two circles of ice formed before me, spinning until they merged into a curved barrier. The blue flame slammed into it. I heard a horrible hiss, as if the ice were screaming. The barrier melted partially... but it protected us enough.

We kept running.

The elemental released a piercing sound like shattering crystal. It had passed over the two soldiers without even touching them. Its energy had simply disintegrated them.

A chill ran through my entire body.

“Chloe, faster,” I whispered.

She growled in affirmation and sped up, running among the remains of houses and walls. Leah clung as best she could, her uneven breathing mixing with the barking wind.

A new bolt came from the right.

I moved my arm and created a slanted ice shield. The bolt bounced off and shot upward, exploding in the air.

“How can you deflect them like that...?” Leah murmured.

“Because you taught me how to react fast,” I answered without looking at her. “And because your magic is similar. Somehow... I’ve always known how to deal with it.”

She smiled faintly.

But we had no time for more words. The elemental lifted one of its ethereal hands, and the ground began to shake. I saw waves of energy running through the stones, raising dust and debris.

“Jump!” I yelled.

Chloe leaped just before an explosion of light tore through the ground. The shockwave hit my legs and almost threw me back, but I stayed on my feet.

We kept running.

It had been years since I felt fear like this. Not fear for myself. But for Leah. For Chloe. For everyone still alive.

The elemental chased us, though it wasn’t as fast as Chloe. But its range was enormous. Every attack it fired collapsed an entire house, sending clouds of dust and fragments that grazed our arms and faces.

“Left, Chloe!” I shouted, seeing another explosion forming.

The wolf turned before the bolt struck the ground.

We ran through a narrow street full of broken doors, shattered furniture, burned bones, and stones blackened by demonic fire. The shadows of the destroyed houses moved over us as the elemental lit everything in white and blue.

And then, suddenly...

It stopped.

I felt the change. The air behind us stopped vibrating. The wind stopped pushing. I heard no more explosions, no more roars, no fire, no lightning.

Only silence.

Chloe skidded to a halt.

I stopped too, panting.

I turned slowly.

The elemental was standing still in the middle of the village. Motionless. Its ethereal body fluctuated as if it had lost interest in us. Then it turned slowly toward the rift. The bond with Marcus seemed to tighten, pulling it back.

Leah breathed shakily.

“He... he let us go... why...?”



“He didn’t do it for us,” I said. “Marcus is drawing more power. The elemental is forced to follow him.”

Chloe let out a low growl, as if wanting to attack immediately, but she knew it was impossible.

“We have to use this time,” I said quickly. “We can’t stay here.”

“Where to...?” Leah asked, still dizzy on Chloe’s back.

“To the shelter,” I answered. “The cave. I need to find something to help you recover your magic faster.”

Leah blinked.

“Lotte... we don’t know if they have—”

“I don’t care,” I interrupted. “They must have something. Magic stones, tonics, crystals... even magical tools. Something to help you.”

She lowered her gaze, running her fingers through Chloe’s fur.

“Thank you...”

“Don’t thank me yet,” I said. “We’re still in danger.”

Chloe started running again, this time toward the village outskirts, where the hidden forest path led to the shelter cave. I followed behind, constantly watching the sky, the ruins, any sign the elemental might attack again.

But it didn’t.

For now.

Still, every shadow seemed to move. Every stone felt like it vibrated. Every gust of wind charged with magic could be the start of a new attack.

The destroyed village slowly faded behind us as we pushed into the trees.

“Lotte...” Leah said weakly. “Do you really think... something in the cave could help me?”

“Yes,” I said. I didn’t know if it was true. But I believed it. “I won’t let you fight like this again.”

She rested her forehead on Chloe's neck.

"Then... I trust you."

I took a deep breath, feeling—for the first time since all this started—a bit of warmth in my chest.

"Let's go. Before Marcus loses what little control he still has."

And together—Leah exhausted but alive, Chloe running with silent determination, and me trying to control the trembling in my hands—we entered the forest, heading to the shelter.

The elemental had stopped the chase.

But the rift...

...the rift kept growing.

And we knew the true horror had only just begun.