

Symphony of Death

Chapter 2

I rubbed my temples, glancing between Nat and Angie. We'd exhausted our day's complaints.

Same boat, same bosses. It was a catastrophe in motion.

Angie took a loud sip of her iced tea. "Three brothers and one sister. I always thought powerful families were fractured, but these four? They're tight as hell."

I groaned again, rubbing my face in exhaustion.

"I met the worst man on earth," Nat muttered, staring up at the ceiling like a zombie.

She had been sprawled across the couch ever since she came in. The Moonlight was also swallowed whole by Blackstone Co.

Her boss—Xic Black.

Angie patted her shoulder.

"Honestly, we're lucky compared to what Ana's dealing with. Cain Black, of all people."

Silence fell between us.

"Is he really that bad?" I looked at Angie. "Cain Black. He looked like walking doom."

"Their empire's vast," Nat tried to reassure me. "You probably will barely see him."

"Fingers crossed," I muttered.

"Aeron's decent enough. Cold, but not a nightmare." Angie sighed.

"Maybe it's all an act," Nat mused.

"They all act. That's why they are there, at the top." I stood, stretching. Then I slipped into my room, closing the door behind me.

I leaned against it, eyes dropping to my wrist.

Cain Black.

I felt a tingle under my skin just from the mere thought of him. I heaved a silent sigh and walked toward the window.

Outside, the sky was unusually beautiful tonight.

"It's a full moon," I whispered.

Something in the air shifted—like a breath held too long.

Suddenly, the lights flickered, blue shadows danced on the walls—and then everything went black.

Voices hushed in the dark, slow and close.

"No—Angie? Nat?!" My heart thundered as I stumbled backward, eyes shut tight.

I didn't want to see it. Them. Never again.

"Hey." Angie's voice was steady as she caught me before I fell. "Relax, Ana."

"The lights—turn them on!" I gasped, panic rising.

"Calm down," Angie urged, sitting on the floor beside me. "You have to breathe."

"There's a power outage," Nat's voice soothed, brushing a stray strand of hair from my face. "I lit candles. You're safe."

Reluctantly, I opened my eyes. Soft candlelight flickered.

Shadows moved gently along the walls.

"It's okay," Nat said quietly.

Angie caught a glimpse of my wrist before I could hide it.

"What is this?" she asked, her voice tight with concern.

"I don't know," I admitted, staring at the mark on my skin. It wasn't hurting anymore, but it was still more visible than it had been in years.

"You have to tell Laurel," Nat said firmly. "We can be there for you when you have nightmares, but this... this is different. We can't help you with this, Ana. Laurel can."

"Maybe that's why she's been trying to reach you," Angie added. "In any case, you shouldn't be alone tonight."

"No arguments," Nat said, standing. "We're camping in your room."

When I stepped out with them, I couldn't resist glancing back at my window.

A pair of ghostly eyes were still lurking in there, watching me from shadows only I could see.

A sensation clawed at the edge of my senses, cold and familiar. Just a ghost of the past—yet venom stirred in my veins like it had never left.

"Why did you have to live in such desolation?" Aeron poured whiskey into two glasses and approached me. "You're missing all the fun."

"I don't need fun," I said flatly, taking the glass without looking up. "The fewer people I encounter, the better."

"They've done a fine job renovating. I can hardly see any traces of our past lives." Aeron admired the grand hall.

I turned toward the window.

Our estate lay on the city's outskirts, hidden among thick foliage and towering trees. No life stirred—only perpetual darkness.

As it always had.

This was our ancestral home, painted with blood and death. Aeron and Xic left after our parents died. Clarissa stayed until she came of age. They rarely returned after that night.

I never left. I couldn't. I wouldn't.

Leaving this place meant forgetting everything that happened and moving on.

And I swore on my life that I would never do that.

Not until I have claimed their blood—her blood—and taken back what was mine. They took it through deception, but I will reclaim it over their bodies.

I clenched my fists when the past whispered in my ears like a cursed lullaby.

"Is Xic back?" I asked coldly.

"Not yet." Aeron sipped his drink. "You let him control the club and hotel. Clary's not happy about it. She wanted that hotel."

"It was necessary," I said, studying the liquor.

"If you say so." Aeron shrugged. "The world has changed a lot, hasn't it? After your last visit. Two decades ago, was it?"

I remained silent.

"How are you feeling? You were gone for so long."

"I came out in this era because I chose to," I muttered darkly. "Eons could have passed for hell's care. What matters is what lies in this timeline."

I glanced at him sideways. "Any disruptions?"

"You mean Harold?" Aeron raised a brow. "He won't screw up this time. He knows what happens when they cross us now that you're back."

"And the Blue Bloods?"

"They won't attack unless we strike first."

I chuckled bitterly. They might not attack first—but they won't hesitate to strike from behind.

"Keep an eye on their activities—and Harold." I examined the rings on my fingers. "That snake can't be quiet all this time for nothing. He's like his father—wants the same thing."

Aeron nodded.

"Did you sense it?" His voice was cautious.

My jaw tightened.

"How do you plan to end—" The replacement flames licked upward. Aeron looked at it briefly, then turned back to me. "Your anger will unravel your truth, brother."

The window shattered, shards flying toward Aeron.

"My bad!" he said casually, touching a cut on his cheek that healed instantly.

His indifference was amusing, really. Where Xic was an open book, Aeron was a layered void. One could never know when his calmness would turn to chaos.

"I'll leave you to your privacy." He finished his drink and headed toward the doors of my study. "We have some mundane businesses to sort out."

"Tell Xic to end me," I called after him.

He only nodded and let the doors fall shut behind him.

The silence fell around me once again. I was used to it. It was my serenity, where it was a haunting nightmare to many.

I walked closer to the shattered window and looked out at the sky. The moon peeked from behind clouds, illuminating the garden. The shadows swirled, curling like a cursed eye—watching, whispering.

Screams of agony rippled through the air, and I smiled.

"It won't be long," I whispered, the room rattling as lights faded.

She's close.

I could feel her. I had felt her once...twenty years ago.

Her fear—it was singing to me like a beacon through the dark.

I looked down at my hands. Three rings gleamed. Two on my right and one on my left. A skull with blue sapphires sat on my index finger, an obsidian stone embedded inside a dragon skeleton adorned my ring finger, and a black tourmaline rested on the middle finger of my left hand. The stone was crafted inside the frame of a snake.

The one on my index finger—black steel carved into a skull—was our family's legacy.

A mark of who I was.

Of what I was born to become.

"You'll be in my hands very soon."