

## Chapter 67

“Derrick, Please, give me our grandson,” Mom sobs, holding her hands out for him, her steps slow as she approaches him. Luke has a gash down the side of his face, and I can tell he has met my father’s claws.

“No, you’re coming with me,” he tells her. I have never seen my father look so...so...feral. He looked like a rogue, every part of it; he was dirty and shaking, insane. That is what happens to rogues when they’ve been on their own for too long, but my father hasn’t been missing long for it to have this effect.

“Just let me take him. You’re scaring him, please,” Mom pleads, while my heart races as I figure out what to do.

“Luke, I need you to take Kyan out to the car and call Axton,” I mind-link him, and he looks over his shoulder at me. The moment he does, my father’s eyes dart to me, and he clutches Bane tighter.

“I’m taking her. She is my mate! You have taken everything from me, but you won’t take her!” he says, rushing up the steps as he snarls at me, and I hold my hands up in surrender. Nodding my head.

“No one’s taking her, but you need to give me my son, Dad,” I tell him. Mom nods her head.

“Please, Derrick, I’ll come. Just hand him over, please,” she begs and sobs.

“Luke, go!” I snap at him when I see he is paralyzed by his fear. He jumps and races from the room and runs outside.

“You don’t want to hurt him? He’s just a baby,” Mom pleads from the bottom of the steps. Only then do I notice the slash marks down the side of dad’s ribs when he twists slightly. My eyes dart to my mother’s fingers, which are coated in blood before they dart back to my father holding my son like he is a football and not a baby.

“Stand down, Lexa!” I snap at her, knowing we risk hurting our son if she shifts right now. The hairs on my arms rise as she presses against my skin, making it ripple.

“Dad...” I call out to him, stepping closer and Bane screams when dad moves too quickly, his eyes calculating my every move as I try to move closer.

“Come any closer, and I will drop him,” Dad threatens, moving his arm over the banister. My heart nearly stops, and my breath hitches.

My mother shrieks, racing to the side to catch him, but Dad just holds him out in the air.

“I’ll give him back, but she leaves with me,” Dad says, eyes trained on me.

“Luke...Luke. We can give him to Luke. Then we can leave,” she tells him, and Dad’s eyes dart to her.

“I just want you back. I want everything back.” Dad breaks down, huge hiccupping sobs wracking his body as he drops onto the step clutching Bane to his chest.

My entire body is trembling, and Lexa is filling in Axton while my mother climbs the stairs, and I can see the violent shaking of her hands as she reaches out for him. The moment she does, he latches onto her, and she has to grab the banister to stop him from crushing my son. I shriek in panic when I hear my mother murmuring. Consoling my father, trying to calm him down.

I hold my breath the entire time until she gets Dad to stand, and I find Bane is still in his arms. He snuffles and smiles. I can’t hear what my mother is saying over the pounding of my heart in my ears. Yet whatever she says seems to work as he comes down the stairs.

I back up with my hands in the air and walk backward toward the front door, which is where my mother seems to be leading him when he breaks down again, only this time, she convinces him to give her my son. The moment I see him in her hands, I suck in a breath, finally able to breathe when I get the scent of gas in the air, making me confused.

“Love, I have to give him to El, so she can change him. He needs his mother.”

My mother talks to him like she is talking to a child that she is trying to calm down when he clutches onto her, drops to his knees and hugs her. Hesitantly, she holds Bane out to me, and I shakily step forward before snatching him from her.

“Axton is on his way. I will be back...” I tell her through the mind link, and she smiles sadly, tilting her head while my father rambles. She gives me a brief nod

turning her gaze back to my father and sucking in a shaky breath, her bottom lip quivering as tears trek down her face.

She runs her fingers through his hair, trying to calm him, and I back up, turning for the door when the waves in the air catch my gaze, the same potent stench reaching my nose, making me turn my gaze to the stove where my mother was cleaning to see the knobs turned on.

It is gas.

My father roars, becoming angry, and I know I need to get my son out first, so I can come back for her. I race to the door and open it, the door slamming shut behind me, then I run to the car where Luke stands outside, peering in through the huge bay windows that line the porch where I can see my mother trying to calm him back down.

“Luke, get in the car and lock the doors,” I tell him, but his grief-stricken face is on our mother when I hear a car racing up the driveway. Turning my head, I see the dust and know it’s Axton. We just need to bide our time.

“He came out of nowhere. I...I went to get the bottle and returned, and he had him. He came out of nowhere,” Luke sobs. I try to console him, but I have to get inside to help mom.

“Luke, I need you to listen to me,” I tell him, shaking him gently. “Axton is on his way, but you need to watch the boys until he gets here,” I tell him when I hear the mind link open.

“He will never stop, Elena,” my mother says, and I pivot looking at the house, my eyes going wide when I see her pull the long stove lighter from her pants pocket.

“Take care of your brother for me,” she tells me.

“No!” I gasp, stumbling toward the house, hearing the mind link open further.

“Be good for your sister, Luke. I love you both,” she tells us, and Luke screams, also catching onto what she means. He cries a blood-curdling scream while I race toward the house, and I can see her standing in the living room, seeing my father clutching onto her when she looks at me.

“Love you, sweetie,” she says, clicking the lighter when I am a few feet from the porch steps. The spark turns to flame before the air inside the house ignites instantly,

making it so bright my eyes burn when the house explodes. The shock wave throws me backward, knocking the air out of my lungs as I hit the dirt. The sound of the car windows bursting in the distance rings out loudly, along with Luke's broken scream.

I barely get to my hands and knees when I see him rushing toward the raging inferno. I scream for him, racing to stop him when Axton snatches him, catching him around the middle. I didn't even hear him pull up, but the frantic look on his face told me he had witnessed everything. Luke wails and thrashes in his grip, and I clutch my ears, unable to listen to him scream for her.

"She's gone, buddy. You can't save them." I just hear Axton tell him while my heart breaks for them. She sacrificed everything for us, and now she sacrificed her life.