

To ruin an Omega

Chapter 264: Sight for sore eyes 2

CIAN

We left the morgue. The sunlight felt too bright after the cold darkness inside. I led them to the garage where the wrecked vehicles had been stored. Two cars sat in various states of destruction. The sentinel's vehicle was the worst, crushed and twisted beyond recognition. The other car looked almost intact from certain angles, though the front end was completely demolished.

That was the car Fia and Garrett had been in. The metal was bent and scarred. The windows were completely shattered. The passenger side caved in where the impact had been strongest.

The delicate approached the sentinel's car first. She placed her hands on the mangled door.

Then she shook her head. "It is just echoes of what I already felt. Their fear. Their pain. Their deaths."

She moved around the car, feeling for something more.

Her fingers traced along the hood, following the crumpled metal. But again, she got nothing.

"There's nothing here," she said. Frustration tinged her voice. "It is just ordinary metal and ordinary glass. There is no linger of magic. No intent beyond the mechanical act of two vehicles colliding."

"Try Fia's car," I said.

The delicate moved to the vehicle. She stood before it for a moment, studying it like it was a piece of art in a museum. Then she reached out and placed both hands on the driver's side door.

Her entire body jerked.

"Wait," she breathed. Her eyes went wide. "I can feel myself in the car."

My pulse quickened. "What do you mean?"

"I'm sitting in the back seat. I feel something cloying take over my nose. Sweet but wrong. Chemical like." Her voice had changed again, becoming lighter. It was younger and much more feminine. She was channeling Fia. "My head feels heavy. My thoughts are sluggish. Something's wrong. Something's very wrong but I can't think clearly enough to understand what. It worked. Whatever was done to me... It worked."

She moved along the car, her hands never leaving the metal. Her fingers traced the dents and scrapes with disturbing intimacy.

"The world is tilting," she said. "Or maybe I'm tilting. I look forward and I see a figure. A girl. Frail and young. I believe we will kill her. So I try to save her. I turn the wheel. The car's drifting and I start to realize I am wrong. There is no girl. I try to correct it but my hands won't respond properly. Everything's happening too fast. I see lights ahead. Bright lights. Coming toward me. Towards us."

Her hand continued to trace the car's body. She moved to the front, placing both palms on the crumpled hood.

Then she stopped again.

"There's another presence." Her voice dropped to barely a whisper. "Wait. I can feel them."

"Who?" I took a step closer. "Who do you feel? The imaginary girl?"

"Me," the delicate said. She spoke the word like she was discovering it for the first time. "I am in the corner. But I am mentally touching the car. Touching the passengers. I know what I am to do."

The hair on the back of my neck stood up. "What?"

"I am in great pain." The delicate's face contorted. Her body began to shake. "My body hurts. My soul hurts. Even my heart is breaking. It's all wrong. Everything's wrong. It's glitching. But I know... I don't want to do this."

"What?" I moved closer, my heart hammering. "Go on. Tell me what you see."

The delicate's shaking intensified. Her knuckles went white where they gripped the hood. "I don't understand. I can't see more. There's something blocking it. Something pushing back against me. It's worse now."

"What?" I snapped. "Look deeper. You just said you felt them. Push through it."

"Cian," Ronan said. His voice carried a warning. "I don't know. She seems distressed. Perhaps we should go to the accident scene instead."

"She found something," I said without taking my eyes off the delicate. "I'm sure she can unravel it."

The delicate's grip on the hood tightened even more. Her whole body trembled now, vibrating with some invisible force. Sweat beaded on her forehead despite the cool air.

"I can feel it," she gasped. "The pain. The confusion. The desperation. But I can't see the face. I can't see who it is. Something's preventing me from seeing clearly."

"Try harder," I urged. "Concentrate. Break through whatever's blocking you."

Her breathing became ragged. Harsh gasps that sounded painful. "I'm trying. I'm pushing but it's pushing back. There's something protecting this memory. Something strong."

"Protection magic?" Ronan asked.

"I don't know!" The delicate's voice rose to a near shriek. "I've never felt anything like this before. It's like trying to see through fog made of thorns. Every time I reach for it, it cuts me. Gods... This is not magic."

I didn't like the implications of what that could mean.

"Keep trying," I said, even when knots were starting to form in my stomach.

And it was at that moment that the delicate screamed. It wasn't the scream from earlier when her handler had shocked her. This was different. Raw and primal. Her eyes flew open, completely white. She had no iris. No pupil either. What was there was just pure white beads that seemed to glow in the dim garage.

Then her eyes literally caught fire.

Actual flames burst from her eye sockets, blue and white and impossibly bright. She screamed again, the sound tearing from her throat as fire spread across her face.

"Help me!" The words came out strangled, barely human. "HELP ME!"

Her handler lunged forward but the flames intensified, forcing him back. Ronan grabbed my arm, pulling me away from the delicate as she collapsed to the ground. She writhed there, flames consuming her eyes, her mouth open in a silent scream.

The smell of burning flesh filled the garage.

Then, as suddenly as it had started, the fire went out. The delicate lay motionless on the concrete floor, smoke rising from her face.