

~CLARA~

I was restless waiting in the truck on Carter. It's been ten minutes, and there is still no sign of him.

I knew we shouldn't have done what we did. The right thing to do was to wait on the others. But I was just as desperate as him to get my sister back, and it felt like the others were taking too long.

I look behind me when I hear the sound of vehicles coming closer. My eyes widen, and I jump into the driver's seat.

If those were the Cage brothers, we were in some deep trouble.

One of the jeeps passes the truck and goes straight for the gate.

However, the second one stops right next to me.

A guy with red hair jumped out and knocked on the window.

My heart was racing as I lowered it so that I could see his face more clearly. He was surprisingly good-looking but in a terrifying way.

"What are you doing here, miss?" He asks me. His voice was rough and I knew his intention was to intimidate me. "Are you here to see one of us? Do you have an appointment?"

An appointment? Did he think I came here to hire them for a job? He was insane!

I shook my head and tried to keep a straight face. "My truck is giving me some trouble." I lie. "I'm waiting for someone to fix it for me."

He quirks a brow, "I can check it for you now if you'd like."

I wave my hand to dismiss his offer, "That's fine. I don't want to bother a stranger I hardly know anything about."

I pretend to look at a message on my phone, "he just said that he will be here in ten minutes."

The man nods, "All alright. If you experience more problems or change your mind, ring the bell. I'll let the security escort you inside."

I nodded even though my feet were shaking uncontrollably.

I sigh with relief when he finally gets back into his jeep and follows the other vehicle through the now-opened black gate.

My hands are trembling as I search for a number I'd recently added on my phone.

Carter was in serious trouble now. I needed to call for help before things blew up.

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~ALARIC~

"Where the fuck is Carter?" I roar when I don't find him anywhere in the house.

"You were supposed to keep an eye on him!" I growl at Apollo.

"I'm sorry, brother." He apologizes. "I got caught up in something, and I lost track of time."

"Fuck." I hiss. I knew he had his own problems now but damn it. Where the fuck did Carter go?

"I'm sure everything is fine," Nicole says as she enters the room. "I don't think Carter is stupid enough to go to the Cage's residence alone."

"I don't think he went alone," Ares tells us.

"What do you mean?" I demand. "Who else would he have taken with him?"

"Look around." He orders me. "Clara isn't here either. They're both missing. They've been missing for some time now."

My entire body turns to stone at his words. Before I knew it, my feet were moving forward.

"Clara!" I shout as I move from room to room, searching everywhere for her.

"What are you doing?" Nicole asks as she rushes after me.

"Did you see Clara anywhere?" I demand from her.

"Why would I be looking out for Clara?" She demands. "Why do you seem more worried about her than your brother?"

I ignore Nicole as I barge into the room where Atticus and everyone else are still discussing the plan. They were close to finishing and were wrapping everything up.

"Did any of you see Carter or Clara?" I demand. "I can't find either one of them anywhere."

Austin looks at me, "Don't tell me they both left without us."

"I think there's a high possibility that they did," Ares says as he walks in. "Carter's truck is no longer in the garage. They're both gone."

"Fuck!" I hiss.

There's a moment of silence before we all realize the grave danger ahead. Not just for Carter and Clara but for all of us. We had little time left.

"How long did they leave?" I ask Ares.

"I don't know but it's been a while since I've seen them. We don't have much time," he answers me.

I knew I should have never taken my eyes off my brother. This was all my fault!

"We have to move quickly," Hunter says as we all rush for the door.

I felt my phone vibrating in my pocket, and I quickly pulled it out in front of me. My eyes zero in on the caller ID on the screen.

"It's Clara!" I shout to inform everyone.

They all stop moving and surround me.

I quickly answer. "Clara!" I shout. "Where the hell are you?"

My heart drops when I hear her first word.

"Alaric." She cries. "We're in trouble."

"Where are you?" I demand. "Tell me. Where are you, Clara?"

"We're at the Cage's residence." She gasps. "Carter is here with me. Well, he isn't exactly here with me. He's inside their home. He went to look for Scarlett to bring her home, but he left me in the truck to call for help if needed."

Motherfucker.

I knew I should have locked him in a bloody room to stop him from doing something this insane.

"Listen to me, Clara, we're coming. We will be there shortly. Please stay in the truck, do not leave it. Do you hear me?" I ask her.

"Alaric," she cries. "I'm scared. I just saw the Cage brothers return home. I know it's them from the camera footage. They've all returned, and Carter is still inside of there!"

I close my eyes in frustration at her words.

"We have to move!" I informed the others. "Now!"