

# Chapter 67

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I fainted.

When I opened my eyes, mere seconds had passed. Mor was now hauling away Rhys, who was panting on the floor, eyes wild, fingers clenching and unclenching—

Tamlin yanked off the glove on my left hand.

Pure, bare skin greeted him. No tattoo.

I was sobbing and sobbing, and his arms came around me. Every inch of them felt wrong. I nearly gagged on his scent.

Mor let go of Rhysand's jacket collar, and he crawled—crawled back toward Azriel and Cassian, their blood splashing on his hands, on his neck, as he hauled himself through it. His rasping breaths sliced into me, my soul—

The king merely waved a hand at him. "You are free to go, Rhysand. Your friend's poison is gone. The wings on the other, I'm afraid, are a bit of a mess."

Don't fight it—don't say anything, I begged him as Rhys reached his brothers. Take my sisters. The wards are down.

Silence.

So I looked—just once—at Rhysand, and Cassian, and Mor, and Azriel. They were already looking at me. Faces bloody and cold and enraged.

But beneath them ... I knew it was love beneath them. They understood the tears that rolled down my face as I silently said good-bye.

Then Mor, swift as an adder, winnowed to Lucien. To my sisters. To show Rhys, I realized, what I'd done, the hole I'd blasted for them to escape—

She slammed Lucien away with a palm to the chest, and his roar shook the halls as Mor grabbed my sisters by the arm and vanished.

Lucien's bellow was still sounding as Rhys lunged, gripping Azriel and Cassian, and did not even turn toward me as they winnowed out.

The king shot to his feet, spewing his wrath at his guards, at Jurian, for not grabbing my sisters. Demanding to know what had happened to the castle wards—

I barely heard him. There was only silence in my head. Such silence where there had once been dark laughter and wicked amusement. A wind-blasted wasteland.

Lucien was shaking his head, panting, and whirled to us. "Get her back," he snarled at Tamlin over the ranting of the king. A mate—a mate already going wild to defend what was his.

Tamlin ignored him. So I did, too. I could barely stand, but I faced the king as he slumped into his throne, gripping the arms so tightly the whites of his knuckles showed. "Thank you," I breathed, a hand on my chest—the skin so pale, so white. "Thank you."

He merely said to the gathered queens, now a healthy distance away, "Begin."

The queens looked at each other, then their wide-eyed guards, and snaked toward the Cauldron, their smiles growing. Wolves circling prey. One of them sniped at another for pushing her—the king murmured something to them all that I didn't bother to hear.

Jurian stalked over to Lucien amid the rising squabble, laughing under his breath. "Do you know what Illyrian bastards do to pretty females? You won't have a mate left—at least not one that's useful to you in any way."

Lucien's answering growl was nothing short of feral.

I spat at Jurian's feet. "You can go to hell, you hideous prick."

Tamlin's hands tightened on my shoulders. Lucien spun toward me, and that metal eye whirred and narrowed. Centuries of cultivated reason clicked into place.

I was not panicking at my sisters being taken.

I said quietly, "We will get her back."

But Lucien was watching me warily. Too warily.

I said to Tamlin, "Take me home."



Summaryer

But the king cut in over the bickering of the queens, "Where is it."