

Chapter 10

Elide Lochan faces a harrowing confrontation with a monstrous creature born from dark nightmares in a dense forest clearing. The creature, towering and predatory, threatens her with deadly intent, its claws and teeth ready to strike. Despite her fear, Elide recognizes that she must rely on her wit and resourcefulness to survive. She observes its unsettling, human-like eyes and senses the terrible mind behind its monstrous form. Her immediate goal is to avoid death while understanding the creature's intentions, which are driven by its instinctual hunger and perhaps darker commands from her enemies.

In a tense moment, Elide employs psychological warfare, invoking her connection to a powerful figure, Manon, and hinting at her own dangerous magic. She subtly manipulates the creature's perception, using her knowledge of its fears and her own concealed weapon—a shard of stone imbued with otherworldly power. Her calm defiance causes the beast to hesitate, giving her a crucial moment to assert dominance and threaten it with consequences from her dark master. This strategic confrontation highlights her courage and cunning amid overwhelming danger, emphasizing her determination to survive and outsmart her foes.

As the creature retreats in fear, Elide seizes the opportunity to escape, but her relief is short-lived. She stumbles and vomits, overwhelmed by fear and exhaustion, before she is suddenly confronted by a man from the stream—bloody and threatening. His presence complicates her situation, revealing that he is also entangled in the dangerous chase and possibly aligned with her enemies. His suspicion and aggressive questioning force her to reveal her escape from Morath and her goal of reaching safety, further escalating the peril she faces. The encounter underscores the perilous environment she navigates, where trust is scarce and danger lurks behind every shadow.

In a swift and brutal move, the man from the stream injures her slightly and then introduces himself as Lorcan. Without warning, he seizes her and carries her away from the forest, indicating that her survival now depends on his unpredictable actions. This abrupt shift underscores the fragile alliances and constant threat of betrayal in her world. Elide's realization that she is now in Lorcan's power marks a turning point, emphasizing her vulnerability but also her resilience. The chapter ends with her understanding that her journey is far from over, and the perils she faces are only escalating as she is pulled deeper into this dangerous, unpredictable landscape.



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