

Chapter 2

They're not dead," Favon said as he grabbed my shoulders and steadied me. "They're just unresponsive," Bora finished, pressing a vial to my lips. I downed the strange serum, coughing and sputtering as it hit my throat; it tasted like gritty saltwater—unpleasant but not terrible. I breathed deeply as my heart rate slowed to normal. "What do you mean by 'unresponsive?'" I asked. "Well, it's complicated," Favon told me. "Like I said for you, I've never seen anything like this before. It's like they're breathing while dead, but their vital signs are completely normal." Bora spoke softly. "They're staying here, aren't they?" I asked, trying not to get my hopes up, of course they're staying here. I can't take care of them. "Yes," she said. "Okay," I whispered because I knew if I spoke any louder my voice would crack. Then I would start crying in a way a fourteen year old definitely shouldn't. "Can you and Austin heal them?" I asked. Austin was my father's healer and Bora's husband. "We'll try our best," Austin said, coming into the room. I started the winds back up and they resumed the images. Bora kissed him affectionately on the cheek. It broke my heart seeing them so close, and I wished my parents were okay. "But first we need to figure out what is happening to them." Bora finished. Austin, like always, spoke without thinking and said, "Except that we have no leads or clues or..." he trailed off as I realized what he meant. It could be weeks, months, even years before I could hear my parents' voices and feel them hug me. The dam broke and the tears I've been holding back spilled over, and once they came they could not stop. I curled into a ball feeling small and helpless. Less than a minute later I felt three pairs of arms around me holding me as I cried. "Eislyn," I croaked, wanting a sedative to ease my pain for at least a little while. I felt a needle in my arm and slipped into a dreamless sleep.