

Chapter 1

I awoke to a heavy feeling of dread, shaking off dreams in which I ran through a huge house full of windows, turning frantically from one to another, seeing Tristan smirking at me through every one.

Though it was a cloudy day, the room seemed too bright, and when I sat up everything went round in circles. I held still until the dizziness passed. I kept intending to stand up, but the effort seemed beyond me. I couldn't be sick—not now—we didn't have time. Sheer frustration made tears come to my eyes.

Fiona peeked in, looking fresh and pretty and wide awake. "Oh, you're up," she said, coming the rest of the way into the room and studying me critically. "You look awful."

"Thanks." It came out as a sort of croak.

Fiona's face grew alarmed. She hurried to my side and laid a cool hand against my forehead.

"You're feverish," she said. "And you look like you're about to fall over. Lie back down."

I let myself fall back down against the pillows.

"Did you sleep restfully, or did you have nightmares about Tristan all night?" Fiona said.

"Nightmares."

She nodded knowingly. "And before last night, how long has it been since you got a full night's sleep? A refreshing night, not one when you were worrying about something?"

I shrugged. It wasn't a very good shrug, since I was lying down, but I didn't care.

Fiona shook her head at me. "You haven't had a good night's sleep since you arrived on this island. And before you came—you had, what, two nights in that boat?"

I nodded. It might have been three nights, but what was the point of sorting that out? She was right, I was tired.

"And before that you were wandering around in the dark woods with wild men and Guardians and wardens all chasing after you?"

I nodded again.

"And before that you were being terrorized by city meetings?"

This time I didn't bother to nod. Was she going to ask me questions until I begged for mercy?

Fiona frowned. "No wonder you're exhausted. And being exhausted lowers your resistance. You've probably got a virus that will wear itself out soon enough, but I'll send Angus after the doctor just to be sure."

My eyes were heavy. It was all I could do to keep them open. Mostly open.

Occasionally open.

"Stay here," Fiona said, sounding very far away.

Maybe I slept some more, or maybe I was in that twilight world of half-sleep. Sometimes I heard noises, voices, but they seemed very far away. Once I felt a hand on my forehead and heard a man's voice. Someone raised me up and put a glass against my lips, and I came awake feeling panicked, trying to turn my face away, but Fiona urged me to swallow and I did, or dreamed I did.

Then a door shut and everything was quiet.

The next time I awoke, the house was dark and silent. It felt very late.

I put my hand out—Fiona wasn't in bed with me. She must have been sleeping in another room. I hoped I hadn't given her whatever illness I had.

When I swung my legs over the side of the bed the room spun. I waited, and the dizziness passed. Quietly, carefully, I made my way to the door and out into the hallway, holding on to the wall for balance. I could hear the clock ticking in the main room. Somewhere someone was snoring gently. I felt weak and unsteady, and I didn't want to fall and wake anyone up.

I made it to the bathroom and then stood leaning against the sink, drinking water from the faucet. I was very thirsty.

Though I felt wide awake, when I finally made it back to Fiona's room and lay down, I fell asleep immediately.

Distantly I heard someone I knew, someone from home.

"No, you may not," Fiona said. "The last thing she needs is for you to catch it, too."

"Just let me see her," he said. "That's all I ask. I won't even go into the room."

My sister's voice grew gentle. "She'll be all right. I promise. But she wouldn't want you to see her in such a state. Wait until she's feeling better and can sit up and brush her hair and put on a fresh nightgown."

But I didn't care about any of that. If he were here, he wouldn't let Tristan find me, or the wardens, or—I couldn't remember who else frightened me. That was bad. It was dangerous not to know the enemy. He could be watching me and I'd never know it, not if I didn't know he was the enemy.

I tried to call out for Farrell Dean and tried to sit up, but the air in the room was so heavy, pressing down on me like water, pushing me back under into sleep that felt more like drowning.

Then it was dark, and then it was daylight again, or maybe I dreamed the changing shadows in the room.

"The watchmaker watches all the time," Angel said. "That's what watchmakers do. He watches the watch."

I sat bolt upright in bed. The room reeled, and I shut my eyes tight until I thought maybe it had stopped moving. Then, cautiously, I opened them again. The first thing I saw was a note on the bedside table.