

Camille's eyes flashed red. "*Sedens sella depositum confringet.*" The chair beneath Tirin splintered, sending him crashing to the floor. Any normal person would be angry or embarrassed over what she had done, but Tirin was far from normal. His expressions rarely changed. He looked up at her as her eyes faded back to normal, and nodded as if he approved.

"Four seconds," he said.

"What—"

Before she could even finish the word, Tirin was up and in the blink of an eye, around the desk and behind her with his index finger on her neck. A long, razor sharp talon emerged from his fingertip and pressed against her jugular.

"It took four seconds for you to cast your spell," he whispered in her ear. "Versus a human, that may be sufficient time, but if you were to ever find yourself face to face with someone who was almost as fast as me-e-e-e-e," He growled. "Outside of becoming invisible..." He took one long, sustained sniff, from her shoulder, up her neck, to the top of her head, and filled his nose with her very essence before exhaling. "Nothing in that book of yours would save you. And maybe not even that."

The talon retracted back into his finger as he released her. She spun around in the chair to face him with a horrified look in her eyes. She quivered as she looked up at him. *Oh my God*, she thought. *He knows*. She could see it in his eyes. But how? Hard as she tried, she couldn't stop herself from shaking as he slowly circled away from her, his eyes locked on hers.