

FOUR HEIRS. THIRTY DAYS.
ONE LIE THAT WOULD NOT BREAK.

SHATTER PROOF

— A GLASS DYNASTY NOVEL —



— PART ONE —

ADELINA VESPERI

READER PREVIEW

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THE OPENING CHAPTER

CHAPTER ONE

The Ferryman

THE BOAT CAME for them at dusk, the way it had come for every Veyra heir since the founding: low and black and silent on the water, one lantern throwing a coin of gold across the lake.

Marguerite Veyra did not wait for the ferryman's hand. She stepped onto the dock in heels that had cost more than his boat, and she did not look back at the city behind her, or at the three people who followed.

"Even dead," said her brother Dario, "the old man can't send a car."

"He didn't send a car," said Lena, the youngest, pulling her coat tight. "He sent a message."

Across the water, the island waited. Veyra Glass had been born there before any of them: the foundry with its domed furnace-house, its windows glowing like banked coals; the broken colonnade where the first workers had burned their sand into glass; the old bell tower, silent for a decade; and above it all, the Tower, forty floors of glass that had made the family rich and the family name a synonym for *unbreakable*.

Tonight every window in it was lit.

"Someone's turned the lights on," Lena whispered.

"No one has been in there since the funeral," said Marguerite.

The ferryman pushed off. He had not spoken since they boarded. Hood up, face to the far shore, he poled them across the black water with a slowness that felt deliberate, as though he were counting something.

Halfway across, Dario's phone buzzed. He glanced at the screen, and the color left his face.

"What?" Marguerite said.

He turned it toward her. A photograph: one window of the Tower, one pane of a thousand identical panes. And in the glass, a hairline crack, thin as a thread, spreading outward from a single point.

Beneath it, three words. *It has begun.*

"That's impossible," said Marguerite. "That glass does not break. That is the entire point of us."

At the stern, Teo—the fourth heir, the one who had left and the one who had come back—made a small sound that might have been a laugh.

"Shatterproof," he said softly. "We've said it so long we forgot to ask who it was ever true for."

Nobody answered him. The pole dipped and lifted in the dark.

On the island, the great doors of the foundry swung open before the boat touched shore, and a man in a gray suit stood in the light with four envelopes in his hands.

"Mr. Corvin," said Marguerite. "Of course."

"Miss Veyra." The family's lawyer inclined his head. "Your father asked that I read his terms the moment all four of you set foot on the island. I'm afraid the clock began when you stepped off the boat."

"What clock?" said Dario.

Corvin passed out the envelopes one by one. Each was sealed with a drop of black glass.

"Thirty days," he said. "At the end of which, one of you will inherit everything. And one of you will have told the truth."

"The truth about what?" said Lena.

Corvin looked up at the Tower, at its thousand lit windows, and for the first time that evening he looked afraid.

"About the lie," he said, "that built it."

Out on the lake, the ferryman's lantern went dark.

TO BE CONTINUED

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The full story is waiting.



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by Adelina Vesperi

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Thank you for reading.