



*Through every city shall he hunt her down,
Until he shall have driven her back to Hell,
There from whence envy first did let her loose.*

DANTE ALIGHIERI , *Inferno*, Canto I

Anything can happen in the blink of an eye. Anything at all.
One. Two. Three. *Blink.*

A girl is laughing with her friends.

Suddenly, a crater splits apart the earth. Through it bursts a man in an ink black chariot forged in the deepest pits of hell, drawn by stallions with hooves of steel and eyes of flame.

Before anyone can shout a warning, before the girl can turn and run, those thundering hooves are upon her.

Now the girl isn't laughing anymore. Instead, she's screaming.

It's too late. The man has leaned out of his ink black chariot to seize her by the waist and pull her back down into that crater with him.

Life as she once knew it will never be the same.

You don't have to worry about that girl, though. She's just a character from a book. Her name was Persephone, and her being kidnapped by Hades, the god of the dead, and taken to live with him in the Underworld was how the Greeks explained the changing of the seasons. It's what's known as an origin myth.

What happened to me? That's no myth.

A few days ago, if you'd told me some story about a girl who had to go live with a guy in his underground palace for six months out of the year, I'd just have laughed. You think that girl has problems? I'll tell you who has problems: Me. Way bigger ones than Persephone.

Especially now, after what happened the other night in the cemetery. What *really* happened, I mean.

The police think they know, of course. So does everyone at school. Everyone on the whole island, it seems, has a theory.

That's the difference between them and me. They all have theories.

I know.

So who cares what happened to Persephone? Compared to what happened to me, that's nothing.

Persephone's lucky, actually. Because her moms showed up to bail her out.

No one's coming to rescue me.

So take my advice: Whatever you do?

Don't blink.