

Chapter Twenty-Six

The chapter opens with Tris being abruptly awakened by Christina, who urgently drags her out of bed without explanation. Barefoot and disoriented, Tris follows Christina through the Dauntless compound, recalling a similar incident involving a tragic death. The urgency escalates as they rush to the roof, with Christina revealing that a simulation is affecting certain Dauntless members, including Marlene, who mentioned the Divergent. Tris's fear grows as she realizes the gravity of the situation, sensing that something terrible is about to unfold.

Upon reaching the roof, Tris and Christina find three Dauntless members—Marlene, Hector, and a young girl—standing motionless on the ledge, controlled by the simulation. Christina attempts to reason with them, but Tris recognizes they are unresponsive. The simulation uses Marlene's voice to deliver a chilling message: the Divergent must surrender themselves to Erudite headquarters, or more deaths will follow every two days. The threat is clear, and Tris understands the stakes as she watches the simulation take full control of the victims.

In a heart-stopping moment, Marlene and the young girl step off the roof, while Tris and Christina manage to save Hector by pulling him to safety. The simulation ends, leaving Hector and the girl confused and unharmed, but Marlene's fate is sealed. Tris is overwhelmed with grief and guilt, particularly because she chose to save Hector instead of Marlene. The emotional weight of the decision crashes down on her as she stares at Marlene's lifeless body below, realizing the brutal cost of the Erudite's ultimatum.

The chapter concludes with Tris descending in the elevator, her emotions erupting into a raw, screaming fit before she composes herself and steps out, outwardly calm. The final lines underscore her identity as Divergent and the heavy burden she now carries. The chapter highlights the ruthless tactics of the Erudite and the personal toll on Tris,

setting the stage for the escalating conflict and her inevitable confrontation with the forces targeting her and her kind.

