

# IMPOSSIBLE (PIERCING THE VEIL #3) EXCERPT

## Prologue

Sargon stood on the edge of a precipice. He was somewhere in the Andes mountains, thick fir trees at his back and sheer rock descending to a ravine below. He could not even see the bottom.

In one hand, Sargon held the Philosopher's Stone. It was blood-red, and cut in a spherical shape. In the other, he held the fragments of a golden sword: Excalibur. He closed his eyes, a blissful smile curling his cruel lips, creasing the jagged scar across Kane's right cheek.

*You're going to lose, Kane snarled. Peter will destroy you.*

*You know that is a lie, Kane, Sargon replied calmly. I have the Philosopher's Stone, and the fragments of Excalibur. I am invincible.*

*But you don't know how to reforge Excalibur. As long as they are fragments, you have no hope of fulfilling the prophecy!*

Sargon shook his head, still smiling. Kane was right, of course: he did not know how to reforge the sword. Yet. But he knew how to find out.

In a ringing voice, Sargon cried out, *"An sprioc, inis dom do speisialta!"*

Instantly the Andes disappeared, and the world became silent and luminous. Kane felt himself locked in a rigid lattice structure of purest, deepest red, the light of the sun bouncing all around and through him.

A thousand flashes of the Stone's memory bombarded Kane at once: the impossible, dizzying, unimaginable heat from the inside of a volcano; the crushing pressure; the explosive force, propelling him down the edges of a mountain amidst running lava.

*Excalibur must be reforged, Sargon told the Stone. How can this be accomplished?*

Kane felt, rather than heard, the Stone's answer. He watched without eyes as men slaughtered one another, their blood running like the lava had done seconds before. It was both a memory and a reply.

*Blood, thought Sargon with satisfaction. Of course. It is so simple. Had not the Stone required him to spill his own blood in exchange for his immortality?*

The red luminescent world disappeared, and Sargon blinked, again standing on the edge of the precipice. *Of course, he thought again. He consulted Kane's memory of the prophecy with a flash: Both shall fall, but the One who holds the blade that was broken shall emerge victorious.*

In order to reforge Excalibur, someone must die.

*There are three candidates, Sargon thought. I have already taken the body of one; only two yet remain. One will serve the blood sacrifice. Then, with Excalibur restored, I shall kill the other.*

Sargon felt Kane's quiet despair. A cruel smile curled his lips once more.

*It is a beautiful symmetry, Kane. Is it not?*

