

## Chapter 28

### IVY

Gentle hands move across my skin; tingles rush over me, and the warmth of the King's chest spreads across my back. Opening my eyes, I can see light filtering into the room, but not much. It must be early morning. The sun is just rising and chasing the shadows in the room away.

His wandering hand is now beneath the shirt I'm wearing as he caresses my skin. The King's touch reminds me of last night, and I feel the blood rush to my face at the memory.

His purr is deep, resonating from the center of his chest and vibrating against my back as his light touch moves higher. Kyson moves behind me, and I roll onto my back beside him to find him propped up on one elbow, staring down at me.

He smiles that breathtaking smile, leaning his face toward mine as he speaks. "Morning," he growls before I can reply. His lips are capturing mine.

His tongue traces over the seam of my lips, his hand trails higher underneath my shirt and he cups my breast in his large hand. The pad of his thumb flicks over my hardened nipple as he toys with it.

I gasp and pull away – unsure what to do with his touch – and he chuckles, nipping at my chin and jaw up to my ear. Yet, his hand remains inside my shirt making my skin burn with sensations I've never felt before.

"My King," I murmur. My voice sounds breathy even to my own ears. What is this insane man doing now? The King ignores my words; his only answer is in a low growl that makes me jump as his hand squeezes and plays with my breast.

My entire body feels warm from his touch as his lips move back to mine, swallowing any words I may have wanted to say. My body feels foreign, and his touch brings strange sensations.

The King presses his knee between my legs as he presses me into the soft thick mattress. His leg pushes between my thighs, and an unfamiliar sensation moves through my abdomen, between my legs; a pulse I have never encountered before. Slightly uncomfortable, I jerk away, breaking the kiss. The space between my thighs feels wet and has developed a pulse. His touch sends shockwaves through my body, awakening a part of me I did not know existed. The heat radiates from my core, and the desire to be close to him is overwhelming.

"Ky- son," I stutter out, feeling flustered as his hand trails across my lower stomach.

His hand stops and he pulls back to look down at me. His eyes scan me up and down as he lets out a soft growl, making my pulse quicken. My legs try to snap shut, but his knee prevents them from closing.

The King smirks as he looks down at my trembling legs before his eyes move back to mine. His hand travels across my stomach, then his fingertips sneak beneath the waistband. My hand instinctively moves and I quickly grab his wrist.

"Am I making you flustered? Do you feel warmer?" he chuckles, leaning closer, brushing his nose across my cheek, and inhaling my scent. He purrs, making my grip tighten on his wrist as the throbbing between my legs worsens.

"You smell good enough to eat," he growls, pressing his face into my neck; his tongue tastes my skin before sucking on the same spot. A purr - a noise I've never made before - escapes my lips. My face turns away, offering him more of my neck like it was suddenly commanded to.

"That's it, Ivy. Let your body tell you what it wants," he purrs.

But that was the thing; it doesn't feel like my body; it feels foreign. I can't explain any of the things he's making me feel as he keeps nipping and licking my skin—only that I want more, but I also don't because I know it's wrong for him to be touching me like this.

This is wrong.

He is a King, and I am nothing but his servant; I shouldn't even be in his room. The difference in our titles, what we are doing, and the trouble I will be in all fills me with anxiety. It goes against everything I have ever known.

"My King," I stutter as a violent rippling shiver rushes up my spine when he sucks at the spot where my neck meets my shoulder.

He growled. However, the noise sounds annoyed, and the shiver turns to a frigid chill as his aura rushes over me, crushing the air from my lungs.

"What did I say about calling me that? I let the first time slide, Ivy. Once more, and you will be punished." I stare at him horrified. "Is that what it will take to get you to use my name? Do I have to punish you?" he growls.

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean to upset you," I blubber. The mere thought of punishment from a King causes my heart to race. My blood turns to ice in my veins as my stomach drops deep inside me, forming a deep pit of dread. I swallow, and he growls again, but this time I'm unsure why he's angry now. He suddenly sits up and turns away from me.

My fear becomes more intense when I watch the muscles in his back flex and tense. His spine ripples. Is he fighting the urge to shift? I don't understand how calling him by his title could anger him so much.

"I have told you not to call me that, and you still continue to." His words come out slowly, and the firmness behind them makes my hands tremble when he growls. The noise sends a tremor through my entire body.

Images flash behind my eyelids with each blink: the times I have been punished; the darkness in the cupboards that Mrs. Daley would lock me in; the feel of the whip on my back; the countless times I received the strap across the back of my knees; the weakness that would come from hunger when she would punish us by depriving us of anything to eat. Then the sound of the sword across the stone where it should have ended.

I squeeze my eyes shut as they burn with tears that want to fall.

"I have asked little of you, but if I ask for one thing, it is for you to use my damn name," the King snarls. I can hear the anger in his voice, and feel his aura pressing down on me, threatening, promising the violence of his wrath. "Are you listening?" he snaps, and the whimper I tried to suppress breaks past my lips. I feel the sudden motion of the bed as he moves.

Don't make noise. Don't let them hear your pain.

The mantra we lived by for years echoes through my head.

‘Tears won't help you, so why waste them? Tears help nobody, they only make you look uglier,’ Mrs. Daley's voice booms in my head.

"Ivy?"

My entire body trembles and tenses as I try to fight the urge to tuck tail and run as he scolds me. I feel his hands run up my arms.

"Shhh, Shhh."

A yelp slips past my lips when I am ripped across the bed. My eyes fly open at the motion, expecting to be tossed like garbage, but I don't hit the floor. I don't feel any pain. Instead, I find myself on his lap.