

Chapter 32

IVY

The King leads me downstairs, and I fight the urge to run so I can race to the servant's area to pee; I have been busting all morning. As we step down the last step, Clarice waits with an insulated bag in her hands.

"Good morning, King Kyson," she exclaims cheerfully. She smiles at me, and Damian takes the bags from her.

"I can carry them," I tell him. Beta Damian shakes his head. My brows furrow. I don't know what to do with myself as the King speaks to the guard that was waiting with Clarice.

I notice the upstairs guard standing behind me when I hear chattering and look up the hall.

Abbie walks out of the billiard room down the corridor, and my eyes light up. I try to run to her when I realize the King has a hold of my hand. Abbie's eyes also brighten as she suppresses her urge to do the same.

I remain still, however, when the King feels a tug on his hand. He glances down at me before bringing my hand to his lips. My eyes widen, and I look away when Clarice smiles at me.

Shouldn't she be scolding me? She scolded Ester for the way she carried on around the King. Here I am, the lowest of the servants, and she smiles and says nothing?

The guards don't even bat an eyelash at his outrageous affections.

"What is it?" the King asks, and I shake my head; only he grips my chin, tilting my face up toward his.

I am pretty sure all the blood runs from my face when he brushes his lips on mine briefly, and dread fills my stomach. There are around twenty guards stationed along the walls! Yet, none move to kill me.

"What is it?" he repeats.

"It's Abbie, my King," Clarice answers for me, and he lets my chin go and looks over my shoulder. He nods to her and lets go of my hand.

"Go see her if you want to before we leave," he answers, and I bounce on my feet. I look at Clarice, who nods to me, letting me know it's alright.

I must look like a child in a candy store with my excitement as I rush toward her. A sob bursts from Abbie's lips when I crash against her, smothering her with my hug. She squeezes tight like she can't bear to let me go, and I never want her to.

Her hands fussily wipe my tears and mine hers. "I was so worried when I didn't see you for a few days. I thought they got rid of you," she says, holding me at arm's length. I grip her arms when she looks me up and down.

"Where is your uniform?" she questions.

"I have to go with the King somewhere. He told me to wear this."

"You're leaving the castle?"

I nod to her, feeling nervous seeing her nervousness. She also knows it isn't normal for a rogue to be taken places.

"But you're coming back, right?" she says, and I watch the blood drain from her face. She glances down at my clothes again.

"Yes, I will bring her back, Abbie," the King tells her, and she instantly straightens, letting me go. She bows to him, glancing between us and I feel his chest press against my back while his hand brushes my side.

"It's time to leave," he says, placing his hand on my hip. Abbie's eyes dart to his hand before her gaze meets mine. The King pulls me away from her.

"I love you," Abbie blurts, and the King stops when I look back at her. I escape his grip and quickly hug her. She squeezes me tighter when I kiss her cheek.

"I love you too," I whisper to her. I don't care if I get scolded for it or even whipped. I need that last hug if it turns out to be my last one from her.

"More than my life," Abbie whispers in my ear, her voice breaking.

"More than my life," I whisper back before letting her go. The King's brows furrow as I approach him. He resumes his grip on my hand, tugging me toward where Damian and Clarice are waiting. Glancing back at Abbie, I see Gannon approaching her. King Kyson stops talking to a guard while I turn to see what Gannon wants from Abbie, hoping she isn't in trouble. However, he cups her cheek. She seems quite comfortable in his presence, which is shocking because Abbie is wary of men in general.

Eavesdropping, I hear him tell her he left a present in his room on his bed for her. Abbie blushes, glancing around, and I drop my gaze to see a servant drop a suitcase beside the King and wander off.

Leaning down, I attempt to grab it when the guard usually stationed upstairs does. He nods to me, and I look at the King, but he just continues walking out the double-arched doors pulling me with him.

I really hope the drive isn't long, or maybe there's a gas station on the way; I really need to pee. He stops beside the limousine, and the driver opens the door. I look back at the castle while he speaks with the driver and two men, one from each of the black cars parked nearby.

I see Ester walk around the side of the castle with a basket of apples. Oh no, I think. That particular side of the castle is full of fruit trees; the trees run along the fence line alongside the castle. She pauses, also noticing me, and glares in my direction.

I don't understand her issue; I have done nothing to her, yet she is always nasty. She stalks inside quickly, and I look back at the King only to see this Beta watching me. He glances at Ester's retreating form before looking back at me again. I drop my gaze.

Pressing my legs together, I berate myself. Why didn't I ask to use the bathroom when speaking with Abbie? I know I will have to ask. I just hope I don't anger the king. Or maybe he will leave without me; then I could stay with Abbie, though that thought upsets me for some reason, too.

I go to address him before settling for tapping on his arm. I know if I use his title, he will become angry, yet I also can't bring myself to say

his name with so many people listening. The King stops, and I move from one foot to the other. I am about to burst or wet myself—either one.

"One second, love," he says, and I chew my lip.

Beta Damian steps closer and leans down. "What's wrong?" he asks, and my face heats as the King lets my hand go to look at some maps the two men are going over on the hood of the Limo.

"Ivy?" Beta Damian asks, stepping closer to me.

"I need to pee," I whisper.

"Why didn't you use the bathroom?" he asks with a heavy sigh.

"Go on," he says, and I dart back into the castle. I run to the servant's bathroom. I must have looked like a mad woman running through the halls.

Racing into the stall, I rip my pants down, cursing them. Not only were they giving me a wedgie, but I nearly peed myself while trying to get them off.

When I finish, I flush the toilet, feeling lighter now. My bladder isn't screaming at me, and I no longer feel like I will explode. I unlock the

door and step out to wash my hands, only to find Ester leaning against the sink, looking evil as usual. I try to step out of the stall when she shoves me so hard that I slam into the wall. I grunt, rubbing my arm.

Choosing to ignore, I move for the sink.