

Chapter 142

Adelaide

Squeals filled the hut as Alaric tossed Violet into the air. “Who is my little princess?” he cooed, catching her.

Although Violet obviously couldn’t reply, she responded with loud giggles.

“That’s right, you are,” Alaric grinned, pressing a kiss to her cheek. “And Daddy loves you so so much.”

This was nothing new in our small household. Alaric throwing Violet into the air while I watched and occasionally warned him to be careful—but today was different. According to Claire’s words, today would be the day that they would attack, during the full moon.

The Lyperians, the coven, the kingdom...and Alaric still did not know a thing.

I swallowed hard, the corners of my lips trembling as I tried to maintain my smile. Truthfully, it felt as if a rope had been tied around my neck. That’s how tense I felt.

The imaginary rope felt even tighter each time my mind went back to Elyx and the way he had betrayed us. I could handle it, but I wasn’t sure whether Alaric could.

That was his brother, his best friend, and I could only imagine the pain he would feel when he found out.

“You should spend as much time with her as you can,” I murmured.

Alaric’s smile faded. “What do you mean?” He blinked, nervously.

“Just...” I sighed. “Take in every moment. She adores you.”

There was so much more I wanted to say, so much I wanted to warn him about—and I couldn’t. I just couldn’t tell him that the friend he would die for would ultimately be the one to ruin our lives.

A sudden knock on the door made me flinch. Alaric and I shared a look before I decided to open it. Once I did, I was met with Aelius.

“Violet, look!” I gasped, brightly. Violet, who was always eager for her grandpa’s attention, threw her head back, screaming in excitement. Her tiny arms were already beginning to stretch.

As soon as Aelius stepped inside, he accepted her invitation and scooped her from Alaric’s grip, holding her close. It was unusually strange that he wasn’t smiling at the sight of his beloved granddaughter, the one he loved more than anything in the world.

No.

His face was tensed...too tensed.

Something was wrong.

“Grandpa?” I asked cautiously.

Aelius didn’t look at me, but I could see him swallow the lump in his throat. “She will be here any minute now.”

Alaric frowned. “Who?”

Then several loud knocks pounded against the door.

“Addy, open up—it’s me!”

“Claire?” Alaric whispered, his eyes confused. “What is she doing here? They’re not supposed to be here until next week.”

I rushed to the door and opened it. Claire stumbled inside, completely out of breath. She shoved the door shut behind her and leaned against the frame, her blue eyes wide with panic and her hands resting on her big belly.

“Plans have changed,” she gasped. “The Alpha King lied to all of us. He doesn’t want Alaric back, he wants all three of you dead.”

“W-What?” Alaric froze, still unaware of anything. “What do you mean?”

“I...couldn’t tell Elyx...because there’s no time...but I had to tell you,” Claire tried to steady her breathing. “All of it was a lie!”

“What are you talking about?” Alaric once again demanded, his face going pale. “Someone...”

Claire ignored him, looking straight into my eyes. “Your mom is a hostage, Addy,” she spoke. “The Alpha King has her. He’s holding her for her crimes—for trying to bring back Baelor. He made a deal to release her only if all three of you are dead so there won’t be a vessel.”

“And how do you know this?”

“I didn’t trust any of it,” Claire shook her head. “So I had to check it out for myself. I don’t even think Elyx knows—”

“I...I don’t get it!” Alaric raised his voice. “What’s happening?”

Yes, what was happening?

The room began to spin as I realized the shit we had found ourselves in. So this was where the real mess started.

Because there was no way Mom would simply let go of such a big plan she had been working on for years. I was pretty sure she had a trick up her sleeve as well.

Everyone had come here for their own benefits, everyone was selfish—and that’s why everyone had to go inside that Veil.

I got it now...

“Guys?” Alaric stepped forward. “Aelius? What’s going on...”

Aelius held Violet closer, ignoring Alaric’s pleas. I know what he was thinking. It wasn’t for him to tell, I should’ve done it and a long time ago.

“Is my father here?” Alaric asked, still not getting a response from anyone.

Claire’s gaze dropped. “I told Greg to distract the warriors so I could get to you and warn you. But there’s no time.”

“Hey!” Alaric raised his voice this time. “Is someone going to tell me what the hell is going on!”

Still...nothing...

“Why?” Alaric’s eyes were desperate for an answer. “Why would anyone want to hurt Violet? She’s just a baby...”

“And she’s special,” Aelius said. “Stronger than both of you. Gloria wants her gone because she’s more powerful than her own daughter who turned against her. The Alpha King who lives for power? He’d sacrifice his own blood if it meant getting rid of the biggest threat—”

“Baelor?” Alaric finished, quickly catching on to what was happening. His eyes were weak at the betrayal, but I knew he wasn’t angry with me. “Does my father really want me and my daughter dead so we can’t change into vessels?”

Claire swallowed, nodding her head. “Elyx...he lied about many things but I do truly believe that he had no idea your own father is planning to kill you,” she spoke. “Not when he has done all of this to protect you.”

Alaric stared straight ahead as if he didn’t want to believe it before letting out a broken sigh. “Elyx?” He turned to me. “And you knew he would betray me, didn’t you?”

His blue eyes met mine, demanding for answers. “I-I,” I stuttered, shaking my head. “Not like this. I swear.”

I felt like I couldn’t breathe. He was his best friend, his brother in anything but blood. I wanted so badly to take that pain away, but I couldn’t.

It wasn’t just the news of his best friend betraying him, but also knowing that we soon would have to enter that Veil. Something he hadn’t anticipated for a long time.

“Alaric—”

“Dad...Elyx,” He raised a hand, stopping me. “They want us dead?”

“No, not Elyx. Like I said, not you and Violet—and I’m sure he doesn’t know—” Claire tried, but Alaric wasn’t having it.

“But he wanted Addy dead...and what would happen to Violet?”

We both looked at our sweet girl who still lay innocently in her grandpa’s arms, unaware of the hell that was about to break loose.

“Violet has a lot of people that care about her,” I whispered, eyeing Claire. “You do not need to worry. She will be fine.”

Alaric’s breathing was uneven as he looked between me and Claire, his blue eyes full of disbelief. “And we will have to go to that Veil—won’t we?” He asked, his voice hoarse. “That’s why you didn’t tell me.”

I swallowed hard, still unable to answer.

“I suppose I’m right...” Alaric released a chuckle. “I know it would happen one day, and I understand why you chose not to tell me—but I wished you did,” he said. “I’m not the same Alaric from years ago. Whatever it is, I can take it.”

“I know...”

“What’s the Veil?” Claire cut in, looking completely puzzled.

“There’s no time to explain,” I said quickly.

“There isn’t,” Aelius spoke up. “They’re almost here. I can feel it.”

Alaric turned to Aelius, his jaw tightening. “Then what are we supposed to do?”

“Nothing,” Aelius breathed.

“What do you mean, nothing?”

“The only thing we can do is hold our ground until Baelor appears—and believe me, he will come today,” Aelius stated, his eyes wide. “And only when he appears, you should open the Veil.”

“But why?” Alaric asked. “Why can’t she just open the Veil now and end this now before it starts?”

“Because the Veil is a cage, not a weapon.” I explained. “It requires a lot of strength, and so does sealing Baelor.”

“Indeed,” Aelius nodded. “It needs to happen quickly or else the Veil will collapse. If he enters before the rest, the Veil won’t hold.”

Claire didn’t speak, but I could tell by her paled expression that she was beginning to understand what was happening. She knew that I had asked her to protect Violet with a reason.

How was I even going to do it?

Hold my ground against all of them, the Alpha King, Mom...him?

On top of that, how would I get Violet out safely?

Before I had time to think about it, a loud boom came from outside, and I knew it were the caves. The ground beneath us began shaking, and then there were screams, shouts—howls and the smell of burning.

They were here...