

## Chapter 150

Violet

“And what does that mean?”

I gritted my teeth, trying not to let out a yell. Aelius spoke in riddles, avoided answers, and now he was questioning whether I was worthy? I had just relived Adelaide’s pain, seen flashes of things I barely understood—and since they all came from his beloved granddaughter, having him doubt me was unfair.

Kylan must have sensed my frustration because, in the very next moment, he moved. He got up from the cold ground, his eyes sharp as he headed straight for Aelius.

“Kylan—“ I gasped, reaching for him, but he was already there.

Aelius just sat there and let it happen as Kylan wrapped his tight fist around his cape, yanking him closer. “Listen, you old fuck,” he growled. “Violet said she wants you to teach her, so you will teach her. I don’t care what kind of cryptic bullshit you’re on, but I do know one thing.” He shoved him back, pointing at me. “You’ll do what she asks.”

Silence fell over us. I held my breath, waiting for something—anything—to happen. Aelius didn’t react much to Kylan’s outburst. He simply raised his hand and gave Kylan’s arm a light tap, silently asking him to let go, and he did.

Then he cleared his throat and straightened himself. “Like father, like son.”

Elyx...

He was talking about Elyx, and I knew exactly what he meant. I hadn’t forgotten how he had entered the caves.

Kylan frowned, tilting his head slightly, but I knew he wouldn’t understand.

“Very well, then,” Aelius exhaled.

I blinked. “Wait, w-what?”

“The girl wants to learn, the girl’s boyfriend threatens violence in the name of love,” Aelius hummed. “So they win. She will learn, may it be the easy way or the hard way.”

“I’m not her boyfriend,” Kylan muttered, protesting halfway through his sentence.

I pressed my lips together, trying to hide my smile, but I couldn’t help it.

He had agreed to help me. Finally, someone who could teach me.

“I expect you here every week at the same time,” Aelius added. “You will not be late, you will not be stubborn like your mother. You will listen.”

Stubborn?

Adelaide had been stubborn, I wouldn’t argue with that. She was strong-minded, thick-skinned, and far braver than I could ever be.

But me? I wasn’t like that.

I definitely wanted to be, but I was more like Alaric...Dad. I even looked like him. Basically copied his entire face. I was just as naïve...maybe, but not as stubborn as Adelaide.

“I understand,” I said quickly. “But wait...”

“Yes?”

“What about Esther?”

“What about her?”

My mind went to my RD.

Mama Esther...that’s what Claire used to call her.

Almost everyone’s behavior toward me made sense. James and Jane, who had only recently remembered everything because now they were ‘worthy.’ The King of Lyperia, who had something against me because Adelaide hadn’t erased his memories and instead forced him to live with his sins.

But Esther?

While it was clear she had some kind of hidden agenda, it was still a mystery.

I believed she had no powers anymore, so was her endgame?

“You should focus on yourself,” Aelius said. He opened a soda and surprisingly took a sip. His face scrunched at the taste. “Don’t try to stop something that isn’t there yet.”

How could he tell me not to worry when that woman and that demon of a grandmother tried to put a vessel inside Alaric’s body?

The same Alaric whose blood was running through my veins?

Aelius studied me for a moment, and I just wished I could see inside his head. What was he thinking? Was he comparing me to Adelaide? Maybe weighing the love he had for her against whatever he felt for me—which, after all these years, I was sure was close to nonexistent.

“I think you should head back—“

“I think so too,” Kylan muttered, agreeing a little too quickly. From the moment we had walked in here, I could already tell he couldn’t wait to leave. I knew what he thought of Soothsayers.

He grabbed my hand and wasted no time pulling me up. “Come on, Pup.”

I stumbled to my feet, my body still exhausted from everything that had happened. Luckily, Kylan’s grip was strong.

He moved his hand behind my back, almost pulling me into his embrace as he led me toward the exit. As we started walking, I glanced over my shoulder one last time and saw Aelius still looking at me, either emotionless or lost in thought.

I didn’t know what to think of him.

He was family, he was a good man—I knew that because Adelaide loved him just as much as she loved me. She had asked for his help, guided me to him—so I could see her in the Veil.

I knew there was a reason for that, an explanation for everything—but it was all still unclear.

A yelp escaped me as I tripped over a fallen branch, Kylan’s grip being the only thing preventing me from falling into the mud.

“Idiot,” Kylan hissed, smacking my back before chuckling. “Look in front of you.”

I let out a small, embarrassed laugh. “I know, I’m sorry.”

“Are you tired?”

“Yes,” I mumbled.

Before I could react, he bent down in front of me. I lifted my brows, surprised as he grabbed the back of my legs and forced me onto his back. I grabbed onto his shoulders. He didn’t ask, didn’t wait for permission—he just did it, like it was normal.

Still, it was nice.

Kylan felt warm and safe—he always did. This was one of the rare moments where he wasn’t teasing me or making any smart-ass comments, and I was going to enjoy it.

I kept my mouth shut. Just pressed my cheek against his back, knowing my face was probably flushed. I liked being close like this.

He had been carrying me for a while before I broke the silence. “What now?” I asked quietly.

“Now we drive back, and you tell me everything.”

I took one last look behind me, watching the cave fully disappear. Then I looked ahead.

I did have a lot to tell him.