



Chapter 178

Violet

The jet made a soft humming sound as it flew above the clouds.

I stomped my feet repeatedly against the floor, trying to stop my heart from jumping out of my chest. Everything around me looked calm and quiet, but I felt far from it.

Kylan stood in the back, talking to one of his guards while I was literally counting down the seconds until he came back. Having him by my side made me feel a whole lot better.

I still couldn't believe it. I was on a Lyperian private jet—a royal jet...on my way to Lyperia.

In a desperate attempt to calm myself down, I looked at the blue seats made of soft leather, then let my eyes drop to the blue carpet beneath my shoes.

I had never seen anything like it in my life. Why? Because I had never even been on a plane before, let alone one this fancy. We didn't use those in the village, and it was a good thing we didn't, because who would've wanted to be in it?

Every time we hit the tiniest bump, I gripped the armrest for dear life. Every time I looked outside, the clouds looked like they were made of cotton, making me freak out even more.

Unfortunately, there was not much of a choice, as this was the easiest way. Lyperia was across the sea, and only a five-hour flight from Starlight and the Common Lands by plane.



A car ride would take double the time, since we would have to cross the long bridge first.

Why couldn't we just take the car?

Like Nate. Like Trinity. Like Dylan. Like pretty much every other sane Lyparian.

I hated flying. I hated this.

A soft yelp came from my lips as the plane began to shake, and I squeezed my eyes shut.

Stay calm, Violet.

Don't embarrass yourself.

I tried to think positive thoughts, breathed in, then out, and in again.

As I was about to breathe out again, I felt a sudden hand on my shoulder and let out another yelp, this time louder. My butt lifted off the seat for a split second, and my eyes flew open just in time to see Kylan walking around the table to sit across from me, a smirk plastered on his face.

He was enjoying all of this a bit too much.

"You should've seen your face," he said, dropping down into his seat.

"Not funny," I glared at him.

Something shimmered inside his jacket, and then a little familiar face poked out. It was Jumper.

According to Kylan, there was no way he would leave a poor little squirrel alone in her cage for two weeks, and this morning, I found out he really



wasn't joking. He had actually taken her with him.

Jumper crawled up his chest, clearly not a fan of this jet either.

"See?" I pointed, gasping. "Even the squirrel is terrified!"

Kylan patted Jumper gently on her head, making sure she was okay before nuzzling his nose into her fur. "Jumper is still little," he murmured. "Of course she's terrified."

"Oh, really?" I folded my arms, giving him a look. "So a squirrel has the right to be terrified, and I just have to...suck it up?"

"Pretty much," Kylan smirked, leaning back in his seat. "We've only got a few more hours to go. We're almost there."

His eyes were locked on mine, one arm resting on the seat like he had decided the only thing he would be doing for these hours would be staring at me. There was something about his gaze, something that made me want to...

No, Violet.

I shook my sinful thoughts away.

Not on a plane.

I felt my cheeks warm up instantly. "Why are you looking at me like that," I mumbled.

"Like what?" Kylan asked, like he had no clue. He tapped his fingers on the table between us, waiting for me to explain.

"Like you...want to rip my clothes off."



"Because I do," Kylan shrugged, unbothered.

Butterflies filled my stomach. Not just because he said it, but because it was true. He had been doing that all week. And the crazy part? If he really wanted to, I knew I'd let him. Again and again...

I had barely caught my breath before Kylan's eyes found mine again, this time way softer. "Jet aside, how are you feeling?"

Good question.

How was I feeling about going to a place where I knew I wasn't exactly wanted?

A breath escaped from my lips as I looked out of the window, at the clouds. "Nervous," I gulped. "Like I'm throwing myself to the wolves."

Kylan chuckled quietly. "You mean the Lycans."

He was trying to lighten the mood in his own weird way, and I appreciated it, but at the moment, there was nothing that could fully prevent my nerves.

It would not only be Elyx, the king who had practically forced my parents inside that Veil, who I would be dealing with. It would also be that hideous court and their silly rules. Fergus, Chrystal, the thousand mistresses, and especially my eyes.

Although I trusted Aelius, there was still that bit of worry. What if they glowed again, and I wouldn't know how to stop it? What if they realized what I really was? Then what?

I looked back at Kylan. "Do you ever get nervous?"



“Not nervous. Pressured, maybe.”

He had every right to feel that way. With a dad like Elyx, cold, commanding, impossible to impress, and a brother who had been paralyzed by him, how could he not be?

And then there was his mom, who I did not know much about, other than the fact that she thought her own son was a monster.

The more I thought about Kylan's hardships, the more I began to realize that perhaps I was being selfish. Everything had been about me lately. My past, my future, my secrets, my mistakes, that I had barely even stopped to think about him, and what he might be carrying.

I looked at him, patiently waiting for him to continue. I didn't push it, just gave him a chance to talk, and he took it.

“There's always something expected of me,” Kylan spoke. “No matter how hard I try my best.”

“I know,” I said. “But I'm here if you want to talk. I don't think I'm as good at giving advice as you are, but you always listen to me, so I will listen to you.”

Kylan shot me a tired, but grateful smile. I returned it and reached out to place my hand over his on the table between us.

I was just an inch away when Jumper suddenly jumped onto the table, smacking my hand away with her tail.

“Hey!” I snatched my hand back, surprised.

Damn you, Jumper...



Kylan gently rubbed Jumper's head, pulling her closer. "Easy, girl," he warned her. "Violet is important to me, so we do not hurt her."

Kylan scolding a squirrel?

I had really seen it all.

It took me a minute to realize what he had just told her. He said I was important to him.

"Are you serious?" I asked, softly.

"About what part?"

"Am I really important to you?"

"Of course you are," he said, without missing a beat.

He said it like it was the most obvious thing in the world. Like I was even crazy to ask him that. What he probably didn't know was just how much that little piece of validation meant to me.

By now I knew Kylan wasn't the one for big gestures, and I accepted that. But this? Just saying it out loud, and without a second thought, felt bigger than anything else he could've done.

There were two things I could do. I could get into it and push him for more, or I could just let it go and accept what was given for now. I decided to go for the latter.

"So...what's the first thing we're going to do in Lyperia?"

Kylan sighed. "I'm not taking you on a cruise, and we're definitely not going sightseeing—"



Honest (whenever he felt like it) as always...

"The King will probably call me in right away. The Chief of Staff would like to meet you, burn you into the ground for what you're wearing—"

I looked down at the blue tank top hugging my waist. What was wrong with what I was wearing?

"People will probably want to meet you, break you or befriend you, although I'm not sure. You can expect many bows—"

"Oh. So we're not even going to see each other?" I finally cut him off. Something I had meant to do a while ago.

I felt my heart drop. What was that 'two weeks in Lyperia' talk all about if we wouldn't even be spending time together?

I knew he threw a few hints here and there, and specifically told me to bring Trinity, but I hadn't expected this.

"We will see each other," Kylan said. "Just not as much during the day. We'll both have busy schedules."

Busy schedules...right.

I looked down at my hand. My eyes landed on the ring on my finger. The one he gave me.

Deep down, I knew it would be like this. Thinking about it, Kylan had been honest from the start. He had never promised anything different, and I had just let myself believe otherwise.

"I know you're scared," Kylan said gently, "but you don't need me, Violet. You have one of the strongest minds I've ever seen."



He reached across the table and covered my hand with his, his thumb brushing over the ring. Jumper made a sound, and hid inside his jacket.

"You're wearing an important piece of me," Kylan said. "So I'll still be with you."

He then gently lifted my chin, making me look at him so he could see my face. I covered it with a smile.

"I know," I said. "It's just that we've been together ever since the day you've decided to make my life miserable...so it just feels like it isn't enough."

Kylan let go of my chin and reached into his pocket to grab something. Curious, I followed his every move with my eyes and watched as he pulled out a bracelet.

It wasn't just any bracelet. It was the one I gave him from the market, with the little Lycan charm. Chrystal got rid of mine, but he still had his.

"What are you—"

He didn't bother explaining. He just took my wrist and slid the bracelet on like he had been meaning to do it all along.

Startled, I looked up to meet his warm eyes. There was no big speech, no teasing, just sincerity and the sound of my beating heart.

"Whenever I felt down, I would look at it and think of you," Kylan said with a chuckle. "Now maybe you'll look at it and think of me."