

## Chapter 184

Kylan

I looked at Mona and the king. They were both watching with grins, proud of what they had created. Their perfect little monster.

"A true firecracker," the king said, catching me staring. "Your sister has always been a tough one."

I chuckled, looking down at the maid who was now on her knees, licking the table. "Is that so?"

This wasn't anything new. Things like this had been happening for years. It was just another day at the Lyperian palace.

The only thing that had changed was me.

If Violet had been here, if she'd seen this...

Fuck, I would've felt ashamed.

I would've been even more ashamed if she looked at me with those puppy eyes, begging me to do something instead of just sitting there and letting it happen.

"Kahlia, let her go!" I growled. She did as I told her, immediately releasing the maid but not without pushing her to the floor. The girl looked at me with watery eyes. "And you, out!"

I watched as she scrambled to her feet and ran,

leaving behind the sound of Lady Mona and my sisters laughing.

"Since when do you care?" Kahlia snickered under her breath.

I didn't look at her. I just stared at my balled fist, thinking about Puppy, and the reason why I could never fully be with her. This was who they were.

I could tell them to stop, but they just didn't care. They would do it again and again, because they were the king's favorites. Lady Mona's children.

The situation was so bad, I had even locked my damn pet squirrel in my room. That was how horrendous this place, and the people in it, could be. Not saying I was any better. I had paralyzed my brother over a fucking title. We were all twisted.

Puppy would only be here temporarily, and that was final. This place wouldn't ruin her like it ruined the queen. I wouldn't allow it.

"Where's Kayden?" I swallowed, trying to think of anything else before I would completely lose it.

"He went for a stroll in the gardens," the king said, narrowing his eyes. "Things have been... hard for him. He needed it."

I clenched my jaw, noticing the rage behind the king's eyes. It wasn't just an answer. It was a jab, a reminder that the monster who put him in that chair had no right to ask where he was.

"The feast," the king went on, brushing crumbs from his hands. "Lady Mona and I were just discussing how pleased the elders will be."

I raised my glass before taking a long sip of the drink that wasn't nearly strong enough for the bullshit I knew was coming. Every time this man opened his mouth, nothing useful came out.

"Why would they be pleased?" I asked, already knowing I wouldn't like the answer.

The king's lips curled, but there was nothing kind in it. "You've found your mate," he said. "Which means we can finally start planning ahead."

I let out a chuckle. "I'm listening."

Lady Mona leaned forward like she couldn't wait to speak. "We've been recruiting potential mistresses," she said. "They'll all be at the feast. We would like to install them as quickly as possible so you can secure the bloodline. They will all be Lycans, of course, for obvious reasons, since the girl—"

"Violet," I cut in, my voice sharp. "Her name is Violet, and there's nothing wrong with her being a werewolf."

Or a witch...

Lady Mona blinked but kept smiling, like she hadn't just tried to erase the most important person in my life. I knew what she was thinking. She probably thought she was better than her, but she was wrong. My Violet wasn't just some girl, and one thing she would never be was some mistress. Violet was already better than her in every way.

The king took over. "I already had heirs at your age," he pointed out. "You've waited long enough. Now that you have...the girl... there's no excuse."

My fingers curled tighter around the glass, unable to respond right away.

"Chrystal will be there, of course," he added, almost like it was nothing. Like she hadn't tried to kill Violet. "Her place as first mistress is already set."

"Says who?" I cackled in disbelief. I already knew this would happen, but hearing it out loud just triggered something inside.

So that was the plan?

If they couldn't get rid of Violet, they would just bury her under enough heirs to make her presence meaningless?

Now, I didn't want to be selfish, but that just made me want to mark her.

I leaned back in my seat, keeping my eyes on the king. "And what if I don't want Chrystal as my mistress?"

Hell, I didn't even want her anywhere near Violet, not after what she had done, and not even before that. Jack was Jack. He was a good Beta, and I didn't hate the man, same way I didn't hate Nate, but Chrystal could drop dead for all I cared.

"And what if I don't want any mistresses at all?"

"It's the way of the Moon Goddess. You know this," the king held my gaze. "Yes, you've made... some mistakes," he said, glancing around the table. "And she has punished you for it by giving you that Bloodrose dog, but she is not like us, and she never will be. Do you hear me?"

"What mistakes, Daddy?" Kristina asked.

Now he had done it. He knew how to push me, he wanted a reaction, and now I was about to give him one.

I let out a bitter laugh. "I want you to go stand in front of a mirror and really ask yourself if having a million mistresses and putting my dick in all of them until it goes limp, then popping out a million kids whose names I won't even remember, while my mate dies inside from the cunts you've lined up for me, is the way of the Moon Goddess."

He shot me a warning look. "Kylan!"

"Or if it's just some pathetic law you and the elders cling to so you can humiliate your mates while you sit there like a joke, with some nobody bouncing on your lap and your little bastards slurping wine like they own the place, when they don't even deserve a title!" I barked. "Tell me, Elyx, is that the way of that Moon Goddess of yours —"

"Shut your mouth!" the king roared, slamming his hand down on the table.

I grinned, knowing I had hit a nerve. "Oh, and uh, maybe I'll have them tear each other apart for the crown, since it worked out so great the last time!"

"Shut up!"

The king let out a roar and stood so fast Mona nearly fell from his lap. His beloved mistress yelped, grabbing the edge of the chair just in time, but he didn't even notice.

A second later, he swept everything within reach off the table with one arm. Plates, cups, food, it all went crashing to the floor, the sound of shattering glass filling the dining hall.

Everyone flinched.

Except me.

I had been through worse under this roof. His yelling didn't scare me anymore.

"And I was just about to have a piece of that carrot cake," I yawned, leaning back in my chair. I stretched my legs out onto the table and folded my arms across my chest, meeting his furious gaze.



He could blame me for what happened to Kayden. He could yell, threaten, call me every name in the book, but today he was going to learn that I wouldn't let him disrespect Violet.

My Violet.

The king was breathing heavily, his chest rising and falling. "I need to speak to the crown prince and handle some business, so he remembers who he's talking to," he said, calm now. "Alone."

No one moved.

"I said alone!" he yelled.

All of a sudden, chairs scraped, doors flew open, and one by one, everyone scrambled out. Guards, maids, Lady Mona, and even those four demons. I watched every one of them leave, then looked back at him.

It was just me and him now.



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