

Chapter 189

Violet

"I'm still proud of you," he mumbled, his hands wrapping around my waist. "I couldn't have done what you're doing. I don't exactly see myself going to the Bloodrose swamps."

I giggled, hitting his chest. "It's not a swamp, it's a village."

"Same thing."

I leaned into him fully, resting my cheek against his chest, and took a quiet breath. His strong arms and the sound of his heartbeat brought the same calm to me, like they always did.

I really liked Kylan like this, and he had been like this for a while now. Soft, slightly unguarded.

I knew it wouldn't last, and that's why I enjoyed every moment.

"I liked seeing you with your little sister," I murmured, still against his chest.

"Katerina?" he asked, and I heard the change in his tone. It was softer, like the name meant something. Kylan had claimed not to know much about love, but just by that tone, I could tell he loved that little girl.

"Yes, her."

"She's one of the best out of the..." he trailed off.

"Thirty-something?" I teased.

He sighed. "Something like that."

"I want to get to know all of them."

"Trust me," Kylan chuckled, "you do not. Some of them aren't true Lycans. They're more like demons."

They aren't true Lycans...

Suddenly, Cecilia's words came back to me. It was something I had pushed aside because of Kayden, even though it was just as bad.

She said I wasn't a true wolf...

My breath hitched a little.

Did she know?

Was it just a dig, or was it something more? My chest tightened, and I felt an uncomfortable pit in my stomach. What if Cecilia had seen something in me that I hadn't even realized was visible? What if it wasn't just a guess?

I shook my head quickly.

No. No, it couldn't be. I was probably just being paranoid.

That woman was harmless...I think.

Nervously, I peeked up at Kylan. To my surprise, he was already looking down at me, staring straight into my eyes with that suspicious look of his.

"What's on your mind?"

"Nothing," I lied way too fast.

I unwrapped myself from him and took a step back, tucking my hands

behind my back like I had something to hide.

Yep. Definitely not suspicious.

"You're being weird again," Kyran said, his eyes narrowing a bit.

"I'm not being weird."

He raised a brow. "Yes, you are."

I needed to switch topics, and fast.

"D-Didn't you say we wouldn't have much time together?" I stuttered.

"I did," Kyran confirmed, "but I don't want you around any of these people without yours."

Yes, and I didn't know if I wanted that either. I truly believed Madam Renata wouldn't have addressed me like I was nothing if anyone close to me was in that room. It was all too much already, and then there was that feast.

The one I had to find out about from others, while he could've told me.

Kyran caught my glare. "What?"

"Nothing," I said, shrugging. "Just thinking about that feast you didn't tell me about."

He smiled and shook his head like it was no big deal. "Because it isn't important."

Now that I was safe again, I stepped back closer and slid my arm around his waist, my head tilting up to meet his eyes.

"And why not?"

"It's boring," he said. "You'll shake a few hands, introduce yourself to the court, and about ten minutes in, I'll take you upstairs and throw you onto that bed."

I turned my head for a moment to follow his gaze, then looked back. "And then?"

Kylan leaned in slightly, smirking. "Whatever you want me to do with you."

My breath caught as a thought suddenly returned to me. The last time I let my eyes glow, I had gotten so overwhelmed, so turned on I had nearly begged him to do something.

But this time I had managed to stay in control.

I was certain that it was one of the side effects, but now I wasn't that sure anymore. It was a good thing I could control myself, but confusing that I still didn't fully understand how it worked, and why my body did whatever it wanted.

I really did have a long way to go.

"You're being weird again," Kylan called out, gently brushing my hair to the side. He pressed a soft kiss to my temple. "But I like you like this, and I don't want you to change," he said. "Not for me, not for anyone."

I felt a warm sensation in my chest listening to his words. Kylan had a good heart and was just misunderstood because he acted like an asshole to protect himself. He was nothing more than a victim of the Lyperian ways, always trying to prove himself to everyone.

Even his own parents.

There was never any peace for him.

"Why did you tell me to stand up to Madam Renata," I asked softly, "but you won't stand up to your mom?"

Kylan let out a sigh, his hand moving to my hair again, fingers sliding gently through the strands. His smile looked tired. "You know why she hates me."

I thought of Kayden, and how maybe everything could've been different if they hadn't been forced to go against each other. Not just those two, all the brothers. I bet it was the same for the sisters as well.

"You're still her son. And everything that happened...it's not even your fault."

I looked up at him, studying his tensed jaw. I knew he blamed himself. I knew someone at sixteen should've known better than to poison his own brother, but even I might've turned out the same, maybe even worse, if I had grown up here. Kylan clearly regretted his actions.

"But I see you're not ready to talk about it," I said gently. "When you are ...I want you to know that I'm here."

His eyes dropped to mine as he swallowed.

"Every messy thought, every dark thought," I gave him a nod. "I will listen, and I'm here."

Kylan's lips curved as he cupped my cheek, brushing it with his thumb. "Just like that night in the dorm," he whispered.

I remembered...

That night I followed him unintentionally and stayed over. It was the first time he really talked, and not because he had to like during the challenge in the woods. It was the first time he let me in, and I had gotten more out of him than I thought was possible.

Before I could say anything, he reached for my hand. "Thank you," he said. "For not asking too many questions. For not forcing me to say things I'm not ready to say."

I just smiled and let him talk. I loved hearing the soothing sound of his voice and could listen to it all day.

Kylan took a breath and looked down, like he was trying to find the right words. "I don't trust people easily. I don't let them in. I can't. But with you...it just happens, Violet," he admitted. "I don't even try. It's like my walls forget they're supposed to be there."

I opened my mouth to say something, to tell him I felt it too, but I stopped myself. I didn't want to interrupt. I just listened.

He shook his head, almost like he was disappointed in himself. "You've given me everything. Your time, your patience, your heart...and I've barely given you anything back. I should at least tell you that I..."

That you?

Love me the same way I love you?

Come on...say it.

"That I..."

Commented [Ma1]:

"Yes?" I squeezed his hand, pushing him to continue. His brows drew together slightly. The words were there, but it was like they got stuck somewhere deep, caught between fear and denial.

"That I...care about you a lot, and you are one of the few people I actually trust, because you've always been honest with me."

No...


That wasn't it...

Anything but that. Not right now...

"I mean it," he added, smiling as if he was pleased with himself. "I don't say things like that lightly, but I mean it."

I hummed and forced a smile onto my face, even though my chest was hurting.

I had messed up, and now I couldn't tell him about Kayden at all. Not after he had said that. Not after he looked at me like that. And especially not after he told me he trusted me.

And whether Kayden had seen me or not, I would just have to deal with it myself. 



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