

## Chapter 190

Violet

We had been waiting outside for a while now, and the tension in my chest got worse with every second.

I stood glued to Kylan's side, fearing I might crumble if I didn't. He hadn't said much since we got here, just stood there, quiet and calm. Too calm. Meanwhile, I couldn't stop shifting from one foot to the other.

After hiding out in his room for quite some time, we had received word that the Bloodrose had finally arrived.

I heard the engines before I saw them. Then one car appeared. Then two. Three. Four...

My eyes didn't know where to look as they just kept coming. They were Lyperian cars, like the one that had brought us to the palace. Dark, big, with tinted windows.

My heart started pounding as I lost count of the cars. They really had come with many, but it made sense. If I had been advised not to come here alone, then neither should Uncle Fergus. Especially not with a king who wasn't exactly thrilled about any of us being here in the first place.

Nervously, I scanned my surroundings. I didn't know if I was only imagining it, but it somehow felt like there were whispers around us.

"Pup," Kylan said with a soft laugh, gently tugging the hem of my dress. "I need you to breathe."

"I am breathing," I mumbled, a bit frustrated. But he was right, I wasn't. It barely made it past my throat. Between Cecilia, Kayden, and pretty

much everything else, enough had happened in the span of hours to fill an entire day, and I was overwhelmed. There was only so much I could take.

I tugged the hem of my dress, the same way Kylan had done. I had changed earlier and picked out the first thing that looked at least somewhat appropriate. It was a simple, pink, knee-length dress. It didn't look nearly as eye-catching as the ones Kylan's sisters wore, but still better than the top.

Not that Madam Renata would agree.

My eyes shifted behind me, and then I was met with a cold stare.

It was her...

She stood at the back with the same ten girls from earlier. She had already recovered from the earlier embarrassment a while ago and had been the one to escort us from Kylan's room after an exchange of words with one of the guards. Back then, although she had walked many steps behind us, I could already feel her eyes burn into my back.

There wasn't much I knew about this Lady Mona, but since she was one of her people, I knew this woman was waiting for me to mess up even more than I already had, and I could not let that happen.

"Violet!"

Trinity's bright voice rang out before I could even see her. She didn't wait for the driver to help her and had already jumped out of the car. "Violet!" she called out again, her curls bouncing with each step as she nearly skipped over.

A chortle escaped from my lips, looking at that wide smile that always

stretched across her face like nothing in this world could ruin her day. Her pace quickened until she was running.

I didn't care who was watching. Trinity ran, so did I.

And the second her arms wrapped around me, I squeezed the life out of her. Yes, it was dramatic because we had seen each other hours ago, but I hadn't realized just how much I needed her.

I closed my eyes. "Please don't ever leave me alone again with these people," I whispered, burying my face into her shoulder.

My eyes shot open as someone ruffled my hair. Pouting, I pulled away from Trinity just enough to see Nate standing there.

"Vivi," he smirked in his usual soft tone. Then he strolled right past me and joined Kylan's side.

Moments later, the two seemed to be discussing something or someone. Kylan leaned in a little as Nate spoke. They started whispering, and I squeezed my eyes shut like that would somehow help me catch what they were saying. It didn't help that they were both looking right at me while doing it.

It was hard not to look too interested when I couldn't help but wonder what they were talking about.

Was it good, bad?

Positive, negative?

One of the guards cleared his throat. "It's good to see you're back, Lord Nate Wyrnsbane," he said, bowing slightly. "Beta Jack should be arriving soon with His Majesty."

My stomach twisted.

The king?


The king would be here?

Stay calm, Violet.

I sucked in a breath, then quickly came to the realization that there was no way I could ever stay calm. Not when it involved that man.

The king...

I had so much to say to him, so many things locked in my chest ever since learning the truth about Adelaide and what he had done to her. But the worst part? I couldn't say a single thing. He didn't know I knew. He had no idea.

And unless he opened his mouth, neither would I. 

My eyes darted to the many cars, instantly searching for Uncle Fergus. It was no surprise that he, or anyone else, for that matter, had yet to get out. They hated being here just as much as I did, maybe even more. I could only imagine Fergus needing to gather all the strength he had left before stepping out.

Same for Dylan.

"Hey again!" Trinity's voice pulled me back from my thoughts.

I followed her gaze and saw Nate and Kylan walking toward us. Kylan managed to give her one of his fabricated polite smiles.

She nudged my shoulder. "Wow, Kylan smiles!"

Gasps echoed around us, and I turned just in time to see everyone, including the maids, guards and even Madam Renata stiffen in horror. There were soft murmurs and exchanged looks, like someone had shouted during a funeral.

Trinity fluttered her eyelids and looked around, confused. "What?" she asked with a chuckle before frowning at Kylan. "I'm allowed to call you that, am I not?"

I glanced up at Kylan. This time, a sincere smile appeared on his lips, and it looked like he was holding back a laugh. He took a breath to speak, but right before he could, the sound of a slamming door cut him off.

It was Dylan. His brows furrowed, jaw locked, and his glare locked onto Kylan. "Why wouldn't we be?" he asked coldly. "It's the name on his birth certificate."

I was waiting for Kylan to respond, but strangely enough, he didn't. Since today it looked like he wasn't talking back, maybe I had to just say every little negative thing I had to say to him now, while I still could.

Dylan walked over and threw an arm around Trinity's shoulder, rubbing it protectively. He didn't even acknowledge me, just kept staring at Kylan with that look I couldn't quite place.

Why was he still fighting with air?

What the hell is his problem?

Kylan chuckled softly. "Dylan. Always good to see you."

Dylan let out a hum and rolled his eyes, clearly not sharing the same energy. Now that Dylan was out, more cars began to open, and one by one, the familiar faces of the Bloodrose stepped out.

We weren't the biggest, so I recognized all of them, but none of them were the ones I was waiting for.

Not yet.

Then the final car opened. That's when I knew, it had to be him.

Uncle Fergus stepped out, with Sonya by his side.

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