

Chapter 201

Kylan

Violet brightened instantly. "Do you really think I look perfect?"

"Yes...but—"

Her smile fell again.

"I'm worried you might trip over yourself," I added, my voice a little softer. "You could barely keep yourself standing."

"Huh?" Violet tilted her head, eyes narrowing a little.

I rubbed my hand gently down her arm, like maybe that could soften the blow of what I had just told her. "I just want you to feel safe in what you're wearing," I said, trying to save face. "I don't want you to feel pressured to look more Lyperian or —"

"You already said I look perfect, so I like this dress," she said suddenly, with a big, smug smile.

"Okay."

Fuck...

She thought it was just a dress. That it was about her feeling good. And it was. But it was also a problem. For me.

It really looked like I was going to have to kill some people tonight.

Before I could ask her to change again, her brows creased as she repeatedly hit my shoulder. "By the way, you've got a lot of explaining to do!" she snapped.

I stared at her, completely lost. "What did I do?"

"You lied!" she said, full-on angry now. Those huge blue eyes locked on me while I was trying to think about what I had lied about. I should've been terrified, but she didn't look scary at all.

It was hard to focus on anything but the way she moved her mouth when she yelled at me. It turned me on. Maybe I should just drag her with me and skip this feast altogether.

There.

Everyone happy.

She kept going, but I couldn't hear a damn thing. There was something said about ten minutes, and not wanting to do a speech I think, but I didn't hear much more than that.

She could be threatening my bloodline for all I knew, and I would still be focused on those lips.

"And since I won't be staying here anyway, maybe I'll even find my future love tonight!"

Wait, I did hear that.

Not allowing her to say another word, I grabbed her by the waist and pulled her in. Her body froze, breath hitched in complete shock.

What the hell was she even talking about? Her future love?

I don't think so.

She could only have one love. There was only one man she was allowed to love. Me.

The dress made it difficult to close the space between us, but I still did it. That's how desperate I was. I leaned in, lowering my face to the base of her neck and breathing her in.

My Violet.

I let out a low hum. Right there was where I should mark her, end the madness. Maybe then she would learn. No one would dare to touch her, and she would be mine...forever.

It was selfish. I knew that. But in that moment, I really didn't care.

A soft, confused breath escaped from Violet. "What are you doing?" she whispered.

She was right.

What am I doing?

I pulled back, letting her go. Her face was flushed, and eyes wide with confusion.

"Wait..." she spoke softly. "You don't want me in this dress, do you?"

Shit. I was well aware Violet was sensitive, and that one small comment could shake her confidence just a little, and now I had probably hurt her.

"No, I..."

But then she grinned. "I'm right. You don't want me in this dress at all," she smirked. She folded her arms across her chest, pushing her breasts up so perfectly, I nearly forgot what air was. I cleared my throat, twice.

Yes, I didn't want her in that dress at all.

"And it's because you can't share the spotlight."

I cleared my throat again. "No, that's not it."

"It is." She lifted her brows, proud of herself like she had just exposed the best-kept secret. "You keep coming up with excuses why I can't wear this dress."

I couldn't help but roll my eyes because it seemed like she really had no clue. How could someone be that oblivious?

My hand lifted before I could stop it, brushing my fingers lightly against her cheek. She leaned into it, just barely, anticipating my response.

If she only knew what she did to me. What I wanted to do to everyone who would ever dare to look at her the way I did. It was times like these where I just wanted to tell her.

Open your eyes for once, Violet. Because it's you.

You're the one I want. The one I love. My first love.

The reason I want you out of that damn dress isn't because I don't want to share the spotlight. It's because you are my spotlight.

But the words never came. They were right there, but something was holding me back.

Violet had such a great future ahead of her. She was going to be a healer. A strong one. She would be respected to the point no one would even dare mess with her, and I would be watching her, admiring her from afar.

But then I looked into those eyes, and it took everything I had not to drop to my knees and beg.

I wanted to beg for her to hold on. Just hold on, endure, and I will protect you. Do not ever speak of another mate again because we are the only ones for each other.

After time seemed to stand still, I brushed the back of my fingers gently along her cheek.

"Can I ask you something?"

She curled her lips. "Depends."

I cracked a smile. That was my line. She was mocking me.

Once again, I had failed to speak the words out loud.

If I asked you to hold on and stay by my side...

If I promised never to let go, to love you forever...

If I asked something so selfish of you, to stay despite every rule I warned you about, would you? Would you still stay?

She moved her lips across each other, throwing me a suspicious and playful glance. "You're not going to ask me to get out of this dress, are you?"

I lowered my forehead to hers, gently. Her hands rested against my chest. We just stood like that for a moment, both smiling.

"Maybe tonight," I cupped her cheeks in my hands just in time to see her flustered face.

A low chuckle came out, and my thumb brushed beneath her eyes. Then I leaned in and pressed my lips to her forehead.

"I do not ever want to hear you speak about being in love with another man ever again," I whispered, resting my mouth there one more time.

She pulled back, blinking fast. "W-What?"

"I do not ever want to hear you speak about being in love with another man ever again."

This time my voice was clear, steady, and she was allowed to hear all of it. Her eyes widened like something had hit her, and hope was written all over her face.

"Why?" she whispered. "You've got to tell me why."

My breath caught.

Because...

Just say it, you coward.

Once again, they were right there, sitting on my tongue, but they wouldn't come out.

"Violet, I..."

Come on. Say it.

There were three knocks on the door.

"Your Highness," a voice called out. "All the guests have arrived, and they are ready for your entrance!"

"No," Violet said, shaking her head as she held onto my arm, desperate. "No, you were just about to say something."

My lips went dry, heart beat fast. But as I stared at her, all that came out was another round of bullshit.

"Is there really no way you can change out of that dress?"

Her expression fell, and her hand dropped from my arm as if I had just shattered her soul. "I was really hoping you would say something else," she whispered so quietly it barely reached me.

A disappointed smile reached her lips as she turned, and stepped right past me.

No, it couldn't end like this.

"Violet—wait!" I reached out fast, grabbing her wrist. She turned to face me again, but the hope was gone. It was replaced with something else, the kind of look someone gives when they've stopped expecting


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anything at all.

That wasn't what I wanted to become to her. Just another person she had learned not to expect anything from. She had too much of those already. A whole pack.

"I don't ever want to hear you talk about being in love with another man again..."

I stepped forward.

"Because you already have someone who loves you," I let out a breath. "And he's not willing to share." 

That felt good. Like a fucking weight had been lifted from my shoulders, and I should've done it a long time ago.

The most beautiful blue eyes, which had just been filled with disappointment, were now sparkling. Her mouth parted, but no sound came out. She looked like she couldn't believe it.

Like she had waited for so long, too long, and wasn't sure anymore if any of it was even real.

Her lips were still parted when more knocks reached the door. Louder, and more urgent this time.

"Your Highness, it's time!"

I hated how this would end, but by the look on her face, it didn't seem like she was capable of saying anything either.

Not that she had to.

I didn't need to hear her say it because I knew. She loved me.

She didn't have to spell it out. Violet had shown me more love than anyone ever had.

I waved a hand in front of her face. "Earth to Violet?"

She didn't blink, didn't react, just kept staring like she was still in a dream. I chuckled under my breath.

"Your High—"

"Yes!" I barked, louder than I meant to.

I sighed, softening just a bit as I looked back at her. She was still frozen, so I squeezed her hand, laced our fingers together tight like I had never intended to let go.

Because from now on, I wouldn't.

"We'll talk more later," I promised, "but we have to go now."



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