



Chapter 210

Violet

Chrystal's eyes locked onto mine as hard as they could get. There was no smile, no warmth, just that same empty expression she had that day she had planned to kill me.

Now it was as if she was daring me.

Say something if you dare, and I'll show you again...

I tried to breathe, though I was pretty close to losing it. It was already something that she dared to show up, but above all, in a white dress. Bigger, brighter, and flashier than mine.

I thought I'd be able to handle her presence, that I could sit here and be unbothered—but I couldn't. Especially not after Kylan said he loved me while this...thing, in front of me, was out to ruin that.

Kylan suddenly let go of my hand, and my eyes drifted toward him. He didn't move, didn't speak, didn't even look like he was breathing. It was like he had turned to stone, and knowing Kylan and the anger he still felt toward her, maybe that was for the better.

Or maybe not.

I wasn't sure yet.

Just like he had been doing ever since he stepped foot inside this room, King Elyx just had to make it worse. He grabbed Chrystal's hand and spun her around like she was the Moon Goddess herself.

The room filled with admiring whispers, oohs and aahs, as she showed



off her dress. They all fell for it. People were eating it up.

This was the person Nate had dealt with his entire life, an attention-seeking cunt. No wonder he wasn't doing well.

He didn't look well because he probably knew she would pull a stunt like this. She had to.

If my Bloodrose status wasn't enough for people to make comparisons, then this certainly was. Let's not forget the difference in how the king walked right past me without a glance, and how he was now flaunting Chrystal like she was some kind of trophy he couldn't wait to show off.

My chest burned with embarrassment, and it was undoubtedly because I cared too much about what everyone else was thinking. I felt like I was shrinking right there at the table, and there was no way I could ever recover from this.

In the past, Lumia would've made somewhat of an appearance, tried to make me stronger, but Aelius was right. She was done with me, had to be. I was done with myself.

A soft hand touched my back, making me flinch for a second.

It was Dylan...

"I told you, this is what they're like," he said in a hushed tone. "All you got to do is say the word, and I'll kill her for you, spend my remaining days at Prison Island..."

Dylan kept rambling in my ears, but I couldn't hear him anymore, and I didn't respond. It wasn't about him or whatever rage he was carrying. This was about me.



Trinity tapped my hand. "Are you alright—"

"She's fine," Kylan cut in, his voice suddenly a bit too collected, like he hadn't been fuming just seconds ago. A smile reached his lips as he stood up with that practiced prince expression on his face.

I looked up at him, puzzled.

What is he doing?

He stepped out from behind the table and headed straight for the king and Chrystal, who had just let go of the king's arm. As soon as she saw him coming, her eyes lit up with the kind of joy that couldn't be faked.

She smiled like she had been waiting for this exact moment.

Meanwhile, I sat frozen, heart pounding, still wondering what he was about to do.

"Well, how nice of you, Dad!" Kylan's voice rang out. "To present me with my first mistress, on my mate's special day."

My brows creased, trying to make sense of everything. I knew Kylan hated her guts, and knowing him, he was most likely working out whatever plot he had just come up with before deciding to face her.

But what could it be?

Heads shifted from Kylan to the King, whose smile twitched slightly. Even then, it didn't fall—not all the way. It only wasn't as confident anymore.

And Chrystal...



She bowed her head, but her eyes stayed on Kylan, a smirk playing at her lips.

Kylan looked her up and down. "That's a killer dress you got on!"

I watched her face stiffen as I swallowed my lips, preventing myself from cracking up.

What did she think was going to happen?

Kylan twisted his body toward me and extended his hand. "Violet, come!"

After he called out my name, every eye in the room turned to where I was sitting. I didn't move a muscle.

Was this also part of his plan?

Dylan's fingers tightened behind me, and he gripped the fabric of my dress. His way of telling me—don't.

Kylan, on the other hand, gave me a small nudge with his head, motioning for me to come to him. The craziest part was, he didn't look stressed at all. If anything, he looked like he knew exactly what he was doing.

Perhaps that's the reason why I pushed Dylan's hand away and stood up.

My steps were steady, confident, and not like they had been at Starlight. Chrystal had already done the worst someone could ever do to me, I had already faced the worst—so I wasn't scared of her.

Facing her was never the problem. What annoyed me was the fact that she got to stand there at all.



Chrystal lifted her chin as high as she could as I approached, refusing to lower her head, even if it would be just an inch. Her eyes swept over me like I was nothing. They were cold, arrogant, nothing new.

King Elyx chuckled behind her, agreeing to what she was doing.

"Come here," Kylan spoke softly, reaching for me just before I got to him. He took my hand and pulled me in close beside him.

Then he glared at Chrystal. "Why isn't your head lowered?" he said, his voice harsher now. "You need to show respect to my mate."

Chrystal blinked. "Huh?"

That was my exact reaction.

Huh?

"Respect," Kylan repeated. He pushed me forward, his hand on the small of my back.

King Elyx shook his head. "I don't think that's necessary," he said sharply. "That's Beta Jack's da—"

Chrystal jumped in fast. "It's okay, Your Majesty!"

And then, to everyone's shock, she bowed her head. She didn't meet my eyes.

"Greetings, Violet," she said in a tone meant to sound sweet, but I could hear the struggle in her voice. "It's good to see you again."

So this was his plan...

Now I knew what Kylan was doing.



He couldn't outright ban her with everyone else in the room, but what he could do was show them that this was not the same situation as the king's.

He had put me first, and he wanted everyone to know that.

Chrystal slowly lifted her head again, her smile tighter than before. King Elyx did not look pleased. His eyes flicked to her, then to me, then to Kylan.

There was a brief moment of silence, but it didn't last. Queen Cecilia rose from her seat as well.

"I don't believe that's a proper greeting!" she said, loud and clear. All heads turned toward her, even the king. Her steps were as graceful as she was, as she appeared from behind the table, adjusting her dress with a composed smile.

"In my day, when the late king introduced his first mistress, Lady Mona came before me on her knees and kissed my shoe in a show of respect," she said, walking forward slowly. "Do you remember, Your Majesty?"

Chrystal dipped her head toward the Queen in respect, an uncomfortable grin on her face.

The king growled under his breath. "Cecilia—"

"I just want us to continue Lyperian tradition. Because they are very important, after all!" Queen Cecilia said. She didn't look at the king; instead, her eyes wandered to the row of elders sitting at one of the tables.

The Lyperian council.



The one who wanted Chrystal here, and me gone.

The next thing that happened was completely unexpected. Queen Cecilia shifted her gaze to Kylan. "Isn't that right, Crown Prince?"

There was a silence again.

I looked at Kylan, wondering if he would back his mother. His eyes flicked at me, just for a second, and then he nodded back at the queen.

"Yes..." he declared. "Yes, the Queen is right!"

My head turned to the Wyrnsbanes.

Beta Jack's face was stiff, pale... but he didn't appear to be angry. Just... done.

He looked tired, and it was clear this whole situation wasn't what he wanted.

Not for his family, not for his daughter.

So why was he allowing it?

Nate had turned his head completely away from the scene like he couldn't bear to watch. His mother sat arm-crossed, her lips so pursed it looked like she might start breathing fire any second.

For half a second, I almost felt sorry for them.

But then I remembered...

This was the girl who tried to kill me.

The girl was so vile, so dangerous, so entitled that even Kylan and Cecilia



had to team up just to put her in her place.

So if they would let her drop to her knees, and let her kiss my shoe — embarrass her the same way she had embarrassed me — so be it.

I did not care.

I looked right into Chrystal's eyes, waiting. She looked stunned, and her brows were lifted like she couldn't believe this was actually happening.

The thought of not being worshipped had clearly never crossed her mind. After all, she had spent her life as Nate's sister and Beta Jack's daughter.

Chrystal looked back at the king for help, but this time, he stayed silent. For some reason, it felt like he didn't want to challenge Cecilia any further, and I couldn't understand why. The only thing she had done for that to happen was bring up whatever had happened in the past.

"O-Okay," Chrystal sighed softly. "I'll do it."

She took her sweet time as she sank to the floor. First one knee, then the other.

It was so silent, you could hear a pin drop. A noble Lyperian on the floor for a Bloodrose girl would be one for the books.

Chrystal's hands trembled as she lowered her head and leaned forward. I stared down at her, raising my dress just enough for her to reach my heel, and stuck out my leg.

I didn't think she would actually do it, but I was shocked when her lips brushed the end of my heel.

"And now thank her," Kylan sneered. "For allowing you to stand in her



shadow.”

Chrystal took a deep breath. “I want to thank you —”

“Oh, I’m sorry,” Cecilia cut in, behind a sweet smile. “She might not hear you from all the way down there.”

Another breath.

“I want to thank you!” Chrystal raised her voice just above a whisper. “For allowing me to stand in your shadow.”

I nodded once, an awkward smile plastered on my lips. “Well, stand then.”

The loud scrape of a chair was the only sound in the room. A woman stood behind the table and stormed off, shaking her head and mumbling under her breath. Chrystal’s mother.

She had left the hall and didn’t look back.

The king’s cheeks were glowing, and if looks could kill, we’d all be dead. Chrystal helped herself up from the floor with a high-pitched hum. She didn’t wait a second before walking to the table and taking her seat between Beta Jack and Nate, both of whom were avoiding her gaze.

I glanced at Kylan, who was looking at the queen, still standing across from us. They exchanged a small nod, a quiet acknowledgment.

At least mother and son found common ground. Hating Chrystal.

“I believe everyone should take their seats again,” the king muttered, his voice suddenly a bit less alive. “The food is getting cold.”



Today was not his day. He just kept getting embarrassed, over and over.

And honestly? He deserved it. 1



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