



Chapter 227

Violet

I kept my eyes on Kayden as we followed behind Varius. This time, he was the one controlling his wheelchair, and for once, he looked ahead. I couldn't fully see his face, but his usual smirk pulled at his lips as he looked at Varius's back.

For him to do that, smile at that old man with that kind of joy, he must've been very important to him.

Good for him. But all I could think about was how Kayden knew I was a child of blood, yet had the audacity to act like he only figured something out when he saw my eyes glow.

What was that all about?

I slowed my steps a little, taking in everything around us. The deeper we went into the village, the stranger it began to feel. Something was definitely off, and it wasn't just the mist.

The homes were small and made of old wood, with several tents scattered around. Everything looked so fragile, it seemed like even a bit of wind could knock them down.

The villagers who had greeted us were not the only people around. Eyes peeked out of the windows, out from inside the tents, and from several corners. I couldn't tell if they were hiding or watching, but if I had to believe how they were being treated by Lyperia, I would say probably both.

Something deep down told me to run because I didn't know where we were heading toward, but for some reason, I just couldn't. 1

All of this, the village—it was just so fascinating I had to get to the bottom of it. Including Kayden, his business here, and how he had found



out about my identity.

I couldn't leave.

Not now.

The raven on Varius's shoulder—Thorne, I think—turned its head slowly, then locked its pearl-like eyes, as dark as the night, right on me.

It let out a deep croak, cutting through the silence, the sound so loud it made my chest tighten.

Freaked out, I ran a little to catch up with Kayden, who seemed to be having way more fun than I was. "What do you know about me?" I asked, my voice direct. "And for how long have you known?"

A quiet chuckle came from ahead.

It was Varius.

He had heard me. Of course he had.

Kayden heard it too, but he didn't answer. He just turned his head slightly to face me and smirked like I was asking something silly.

His reaction only made my blood boil even more. Aggravated, I touched the handle of his wheelchair and gave it a slight push. "Start talking," I demanded. "Now...please."

Kayden rolled his eyes and released a big sigh as if I was the one bothering him. "I know your mother's name is Adelaide, and that it was she who gave me this name," he began, his voice too calm for the words he had just said.

I felt my breath hitch. What did he know about her?

"I know your father's name is Alaric. I know your grandmother was the Grand High Priestess, and your grandfather the Alpha King, which makes



you the rightful heir to all Dark Covens and the Common Lands."

Too shocked by his words, I stopped in my tracks, but Kayden just kept talking.

"I know everything," he breathed, slowly raising his head to look up at the sky. It made me wonder...what was going through that head of his, and what was everything?

An uncomfortable knot twisted in my stomach.

"I also know that you and I met when we were children." He took a deep breath, then his eyes snapped to me. "You were just a baby back then."

The world spun.

How?

I didn't even realize we had already stopped in front of a tent until I noticed the gap between me and Kayden wasn't as big anymore. Varius had also stopped walking. We had reached wherever we were supposed to be.

There were so many questions going through my mind, but for some reason, I was not able to ask any of them. I couldn't speak. My mind was racing so fast I didn't even know where to start.

Kayden remembered?

That couldn't be right...

"I'm going in, Kian."

There it was again.

That name...

Varius let out a low chuckle over his shoulder and pushed open the



entrance to a large dome-shaped tent. Before he walked in, the raven let out another cry and flew from Varius's shoulder to Kayden's lap.

I didn't take my eyes off Kayden. He looked relaxed—too relaxed. It felt like he was waiting to see how I would react before deciding what else to tell me.

I knew there was more. I could see it in his eyes. He knew everything. I didn't understand how or why, but I knew one thing for sure. There was so much more to his story.

A cold breeze hit me, and I felt it all the way down to my bones. Shivering, I pulled my arms tightly around myself.

I hadn't even realized how cold it had gotten, and I wasn't sure whether it was Kayden's confession that had made me realize, but I was freezing.

Kayden didn't hesitate to take off the green cloak wrapped around his shoulders. He held it out for me, and for a moment I just stared at it. Something about him already felt off, and now even the cloak seemed strange. Yes, I was freezing, but I wasn't sure whether to take it or not.

"I don't want you to get sick," Kayden sighed. "Just take it."

His voice was a bit different now. Softer.

What would be better?

Freeze to death...or just accept the cloak?

Every part of me wanted to say no. To show I didn't need him. But I was cold to the bone, and the wind didn't care how stubborn I was.

"Thanks," I muttered, taking the cloak from him. I wrapped it around my shoulders right away and felt the warmth spreading through my body.

All while Kayden kept staring at me, but it wasn't just him. It was the raven as well...



And that raven...I knew I had seen it somewhere before, but where?

I cleared my throat. "How do you know about...everything?"

I could either tell him that none of it was true, but he seemed to be very confident in his story. Kayden ran a hand gently down the raven's feathers, and the bird leaned into him.

"Thorne...he whispers things to Varius," he said, his eyes still on the bird. "And he has been visiting me in my sleep."

He lifted his head to glance at me. "It's shown me the past," he added. "The first time was when I..."

Then he stopped. He shrugged his shoulders with a coy smile as I waited for him to finish his story.

When he what?

Lost his ability to walk at sixteen?

None of this made sense.

A raven whispering things? Dreams showing him the past?

"And...the raven gave you that name, Kian?"

Kayden let out a low chuckle. "Something like that."

He turned his chair forward again, moving toward the opening of the tent. "We should go," he said. "They're waiting for you. And I promised them I would take you to them. Varius...he's getting weaker."

They?

I stepped forward, following after him. "Who?" I asked, even though part of me wasn't sure I wanted the answer.



"I already told you," he responded. "Your people."

I stood a few steps behind him.

My people?

"These people have been waiting on the savior the red-eyed raven promised us," Kayden explained. "Someone who gives a damn about those who have been cast aside, kept in the dark, left without guidance."

He looked back at me. "We think you might be that someone, Violet."

We?

What was his deal with the witches?

What was his part in any of this?

Kayden opened the tent, and the smell of herbs and sweat hit me. I followed him inside, curious, but as soon as I saw what was there, I wished I hadn't.

There were beds.

Maybe even a dozen of them, laid out in rows. It wasn't only beds, but also thin mattresses on the ground for those who couldn't fit, and not a single one was empty.

All were occupied by someone. Men, women, children. Their skin was pale, eyes dull, and either coughing or in obvious pain.

No one screamed.

No one cried.

They were all just...waiting.

Terrified by the sight, I clutched Kayden's cloak around me and felt my



heart beat inside my chest.

I didn't even know what to feel.

Horror?

Confusion?

Guilt?

I knew they were my people. I also knew they worshipped Baelor, but that didn't change anything. I felt horrible, especially since they were all looking at me like they had been waiting for someone.

Waiting for me...



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