

Chapter 239

Violet

"This Kayden guy has lost it, hasn't he?" Trinity whispered. We had skipped the East Wing for the time being and went back to her room for some privacy. That's where I told her everything. All of it.

I told her about Kayden seeing my eyes, the witches in the mountains, the strange raven, Kayden's twisted request, and the council meeting.

The only part I left out was what he said about being reborn. I was scared Trinity might actually snap if I told her that. With every word I said, her eyes got wider. I was starting to worry they might pop out.

"And you want to go back and explain to him why you won't use your eyes?" she asked as we stepped out of the room again. She leaned in a little so the nearby guards couldn't hear. "The only thing you should ask him is which hand he wants me to slap him with. My right hand or my left or both!"

I laughed at her simple solution. "Don't tempt me," I muttered, shaking my head.

There were a lot of reasons running through my mind for why I shouldn't do this. But something told me that warning Kayden about the council meeting ahead of time was the right move. 1

"I know Kayden," I said, the words coming out like I'd known him forever. "He thinks there's something between us. For whatever reason, he believes we're friends. And something tells me he'd actually care if I told him what's going on."

Trinity scoffed softly beside me, like she didn't agree, but wasn't going



to argue. She didn't need to. I already knew this was risky. Maybe even reckless. Maybe just plain stupid, but it still felt like the right thing to do.

Kylan told me to trust myself, so that's what I was doing.

Kayden was unstable, and there was no telling what he would do. I had to make sure he wouldn't lose it. Show up to the council meeting, lie, twist everything around, or worse, back out completely because he suddenly didn't want to get involved.

Or maybe he'd think I was trying to ruin everything on purpose, when all I wanted was to help the witches and get this over with.

So we walked, and after a while, we reached the stairs leading to the East Wing.

This time, we walked up the stairs. I went first, with Trinity right behind me. We had barely reached the top when the mood changed. Everything suddenly felt colder. Even the lights in the East Wing seemed dimmer.

At the top, Trinity and I shared a look. It wasn't like last time. This time, there were guards. They stood tall and watched us with blank faces and stiff bodies, almost looking like statues. Trinity let out a nervous laugh. "We can still turn around and leave, you know."

I didn't answer, but I kept her words in the back of my mind. We could still turn around and leave.

I started walking down the hall, heading straight for the window where I knew he would be. And if it wasn't that one, then maybe it was the other one he told me about. Trinity followed close behind.

The closer we got, the faster my heart started to beat. But I didn't stop.



"This whole wing gives me the creeps," Trinity muttered beside me.

"Same," I said, glancing around. The place really did look like it belonged to some dark lord. It was a perfect match for Lady Mona and her children.

As we walked, footsteps echoed from around the corner. Not just one set, but several. Trinity and I both froze and looked at each other. I had never changed my mind so quickly, and I knew we were thinking the same thing. It would be better to turn around.

But before we could move or say anything, someone stepped out from behind the corner.

It was Lady Mona...

And she wasn't alone. Three girls followed behind her. The same three daughters Kayden had embarrassed not long ago, when he made them kneel in front of everyone. His brother, Khaedric, wasn't with them.

Lady Mona and her daughters came to a stop. She crossed her arms. I couldn't help but glance at her hand, covered in gold rings. I hadn't heard many good things about her, but I had to admit, she was beautiful.

She looked like she had walked straight out of a painting. Despite her cold appearance, the queen at least appeared a bit more approachable. But Lady Mona had a kind of elegance that made you want to step back. It felt like even looking at her too long might burn my skin.

I leaned toward Trinity. "Maybe we should turn around," I whispered.

"Change of plans," she mumbled, shaking her head. "Can't you see the way that woman looks at you? Don't let her scare you, Violet. One day, all of this will be yours. Even this wing."



She said it softly, only loud enough for me to hear. But every word made sense.

Especially when I looked up, and saw not only Lady Mona but her daughters as well staring at me with those sharp eyes. A smile that was much too polite to be kind suddenly appeared on her lips. "The royal mate," she greeted.

I gave her a nod and returned the smile. "Lady Mona."

She released a soft sigh, her lips pursing. "I heard you got lost in the East Wing before," she said. "So I'm just going to assume you did this time as well."

Behind her, all three daughters let out soft, mocking laughs as they covered their mouths.

"I'm not lost," I said calmly. "I'm looking for—"

"No, I think you are lost. You have no reason to be in our wing!" a sharp voice cut in. It wasn't Lady Mona this time.

It was the one daughter I hadn't forgotten. Kahlia.

Her voice was louder than it needed to be. She didn't sound like the quiet girl from before, the one with the hurt hand. The bandage was still there, neat and tight, but that shy version of her was completely gone.

"I'll kill this little girl if you don't," Trinity sang in my ear. And trust me, I wanted to. There was nothing to like about her.

"This is our wing," Kahlia said, lifting her chin. "And—"

"And Lettie is my guest!"



A voice even louder than Kahlia's echoed through the hallways. All three sisters instantly dropped their gazes to the floor and folded their hands in front of them.

Even Lady Mona looked uneasy. There was something in her eyes that was hard to miss.

The sound of a wheelchair grew louder, and I didn't even have to look. I already knew who it was.

Kayden was here, and knowing what he was like, I had a good feeling he had been watching and listening the whole time, just waiting for the perfect moment to show up.

Trinity turned first. I followed. As I turned, I saw Kayden being rolled forward by his maid, that usual smirk spread across his face like he was enjoying every second of this. Those dark eyes weren't on me. They were locked on his mom and sisters.

Lady Mona gave him a soft smile, but it didn't reach her eyes. "I'm glad you made a friend," she said gently. "But you know you're not supposed to let any strangers into the East Wing."

"Strangers?" Kayden let out a short laugh and slapped his hand against his knee. "Mom," he said. Then his face changed. The playful look faded, and his eyes turned sharp. "There are a lot of things we're not supposed to do," he said slowly. "But we did them anyway. Didn't we, Mom?"

Lady Mona's face froze.

That's when it hit me.

He had something over her. A secret. One strong enough to make her obey him. Lady Mona had taken him into the mountains without the

king's permission, hoping to heal him. The king's favorite mistress had betrayed him for her son.

It wasn't just a secret. It was power.

And Kayden knew how to use it.

It was the same thing he had used to get me into the mountains.

"Anyway," Kayden said with a faint smile. "You can all go now."

None of them argued, not even Lady Mona. But I could see it in her clenched jaw that she really wanted to. She said nothing, just gave Kayden a look, then turned and walked off with her daughters. Kahlia's uninjured hand was curled into a tight fist as they passed us.

"All of this is a bit weird, Vi," Trinity whispered beside me. And she was right. It was weird.

Kayden watched them go, his eyes locked on them like a hawk. When they were finally out of sight, he smiled again and tilted his head back to look up at his maid.

"You can go too, sunshine," he told her.

She nodded and gently rubbed his cheeks with both hands. "Please be careful. Don't push yourself too hard," she said, her voice barely above a whisper.

"Me? Never," he answered with a grin. Then she turned and walked down the hallway.

"His girlfriend?" Trinity whispered, tossing out another one of her comments.

Kayden definitely heard that. His head snapped in her direction. "Good morning to you, Trinity!" he said cheerfully.

Trinity just hummed in response, sounding bored and unimpressed. Then Kayden looked at me.

"Good morning to you, Lettie!"

I rolled my eyes before I could stop myself. There was something about the way he said that name that made me want to rip it right out of his mouth.

"Good morning, Kayden."

He rolled closer, eyes scanning my face like he already knew I hadn't come for a friendly visit.

"Is it a good morning?"

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