

Chapter 259

Kylan

As the king neared closer, True quickly lowered her head, and everyone behind her followed her lead. I stayed where I was, watching as the two paths joined together. The Bloodrose came from one side, and the king, queen, and their people came from the other.

The king arrived first.

"Your Majesty," voices rose in unison.

I heard fast steps behind me, and before I knew it Chrystal had run forward and hooked her arm through his. A scoff slipped from my lips. She looked too eager, too desperate, too pathetic...

There was only one reason why he had shown interest in her anyway, and it was all to bother me. He gave her a brief eye roll, then scanned the crowd of Lyperians, refusing to look at me for even a second. The usual.

That was how he punished me when he was angry. Silence.

It bothered me a long time ago, but now it was one of the best things that could ever happen to me.

Kayden came rolling up beside me. "Dad..." he said nervously. "You came."

Surprisingly enough, Elyx scoffed at his golden boy. It was something I had never thought he was capable of, yet here we were.

He turned to the crowd. It was a big group who had gathered to go up to the mountains. "So it is really true," he spread his arms wide as

dramatically as possible. "The people who should be serving Lyperia, and their king, are climbing these cursed mountains...and all because of one girl!"

The words did not get to me, but those around me seemed to shrink in embarrassment.

"Even you, my boy," the king said, his gaze turning to Kayden. The coldness in his eyes faded, softening as he looked at him. "What are you doing?"

Even Kayden's mask cracked. His smugness, which had already been fading today, had now vanished completely. His face showed unease, nerves he could not hide, and in that moment I realized something I had refused to consider before.

Perhaps this had never been a father-son thing at all. The king clearly opposed the idea of anyone climbing those mountains to aid the witches, while Kayden, motive aside, had arrived early that morning looking far more sincere than the king did now.

The only reason that man was here was to control the situation, to twist the outcome into his favor.

Kayden let out a sigh and opened his mouth to speak, but a deep exhale came first. It was Alpha Fergus who had stepped forward with his people close behind.

"You are right indeed," Fergus said with a calm smile. "It is all because of one girl. My daughter, who seems to care more for the Lyperians than you do." He nodded. "Thank you for acknowledging her efforts, Your Majesty."

The king's face flushed with anger. He shoved Chrystal from his arm, nearly knocking her to the ground. She let out one of her fake squeals and moved out of the way with a single glance from the king.

"I care for my people, Alpha Fergus," he spoke through gritted teeth, then his eyes slid to True.

"And that is why I've come all the way here to lead this expedition. That is the only right thing to do. Do you not agree, True?"

I let out an unimpressed chuckle. This man was too predictable, and as always felt the need to be in the spotlight. It was like Lyperia had put a toddler on the throne, and we somehow all had to deal with it.

True's lips spread into a wide smile. "That is no problem at all," she said quickly, her voice dripping with relief. "That is an honor, Your Majesty!"

Apart from her not even wanting to be here in the first place, she was so far up his ass she might as well have been one of his mistresses. Her and her daughter both.

"Then we can go now." The king hummed and swept past her. Many, including Fergus, followed soon after. He brushed my shoulder with his hand as he passed, a quick acknowledgment. I knew he probably was not happy about this either, but he knew better than to show it. In his mind, he was here for Violet. I felt the same.

"Kayden!" The king called out sharply. "Why is that kid not here yet?" He muttered.

Of course. He always wanted Kayden at his side. Always Kayden. His perfect son, his golden boy, and you know what? As long as it was not me, I was completely fine with it.

I looked at Kayden. His hands gripped the wheels of his chair so tightly, his knuckles turned white.

The sight was hilarious. Now that I could see through him clearly, I realized he was never good at hiding his feelings. It had always been there. That unstableness, that rage, and I ignored it because of guilt...

"What?" Kayden spat.

He was not looking at me, but there was no doubt he could feel me staring at him. "Nothing," I released a low chuckle. "I am just happy for you."

Kayden snapped his head toward me, his brows lowering. "I'm sorry?"

"I am happy for you," I repeated with a faint smirk. "That the king, our father, who hates Violet and probably anyone who has got something to do with her, came all the way here to spend time with his favorite son, and that he will not be keeping his eyes off you. He will give you all the attention you need, like he always does," I said, not breaking the eye contact. Kayden's eyes darkened with each word that came from my lips. "I'm happy for you."

Kayden's lips twitched. He released a soft chuckle. Then he rolled away toward his maid and the king, who was waiting for him. I let my eyes linger on them for a moment longer.

Since it was clear those two were not working together, maybe having the king around was not all that bad.

Suddenly, a throat cleared in front of me. I looked up and caught not one but two burning stares.

One belonged to Dylan, and the other to the queen. Both were glaring at

me, arms crossed, and both opened their mouths to speak.

"Why are you not with my sister, and what is that thing doing here?"

"Where is my daughter?"

Both questions hit at the same time, and for a moment I was not sure who to answer first. The queen's tone was demanding, her eyes hard. But Dylan's eyes were full of rage, and he looked like he could attack Chrystal, who had already walked away, any second.

Trust me, he had every right to do so, but not now.

I looked at Dylan first. "Violet is with the first group," I told him. "But she is in good hands, so you do not need to worry. Trinity is with her."

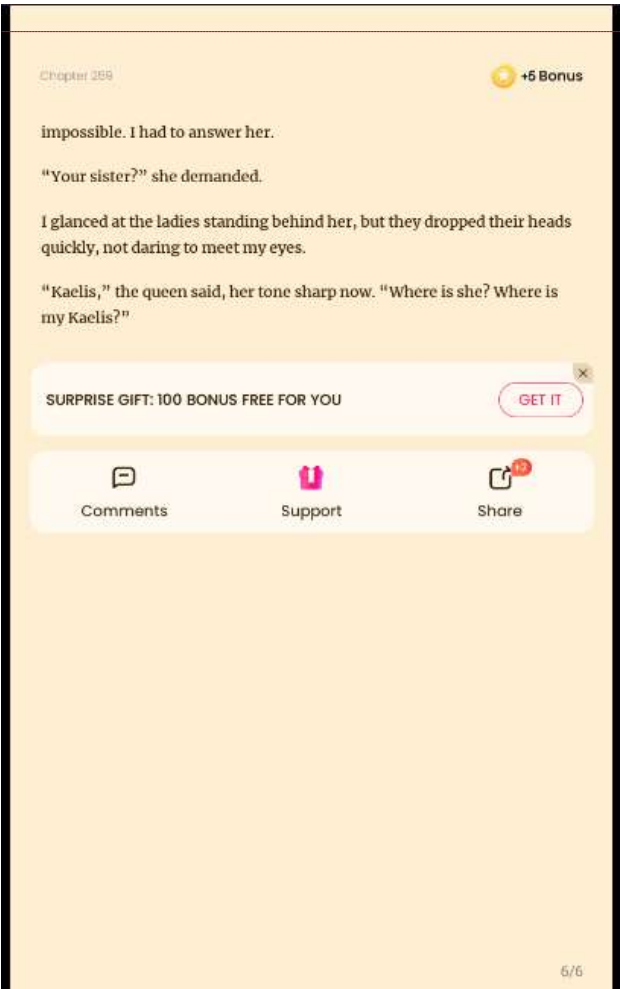
"Good. That means I can kill her."

As soon as Trinity's name left my mouth, Dylan shoved his hands into his pockets. Before he could walk away, I set my hand on his shoulder. He gave me a warning look, and I gave him one back. "Whatever you think you are about to do," I said, nodding toward the king, "think it through first."

He muttered something under his breath, shrugged me off, and walked away. Even though the two were not biologically related, Dylan was, just like Violet, someone who would just do whatever the hell they wanted to do. Maybe it was just a Bloodrose thing.

I wanted to follow him, to control the situation before it could escalate, but then there was her, the queen...

The moment her eyes locked with mine, a chill slid down my spine. It was not the kind of fear that made me flinch, but the kind that made silence



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