



Chapter 304

Kylan

"I hate you so much I've spent years dreaming about the day you'll die, imagining the way I'll dance on your grave. And I need to practice first, you know why?"

"No. Tell me," I growled.

"Because I haven't danced in years because of you. I haven't been able to do anything because of you and that selfish choice you made!"

His scream filled the air, his breath heavy. Everything that left his mouth hurt, but it also felt good because I had to hear it from him. I should've heard it from him years ago.

And even then...I had to remind myself not to lose my cool, as I didn't want to let him win.

"But I do not want to kill you, Kylan," Kayden said, shaking his head. "I do not want to kill you because you're my brother...the brother I once looked up to."

"Wow," I said with a dry laugh. "Aren't I lucky?"

"I wanted to die," Kayden admitted. "But the thing that kept me alive was watching you fall apart. Watching you go down on your knees, crying like a little bitch, begging for forgiveness, and I enjoyed every second of it."

His grin widened, his eyes glinting with joy. "That's why I often don't know whether I want to kill you or kiss your cheek for giving me the only entertainment I've had. Watching you crumble!"

A wicked laugh slipped from his mouth, and though he was the one ranting without pause, for a moment it felt like I couldn't breathe. His



rage was tangled with something I couldn't name, but pure hatred was as far as I could go to describe it.

He showed his teeth. "I thought I lost everything, but when I gained the mountains I gained hope, and then I saw the truth," he said. "It wasn't me who lost everything, Kylan. It was you!"

My fingers curled tighter. He was dragging out every scar, every hidden shame I had tried to bury.

"You might've won the title that day, but you lost your family. Your mother can't even look at you, and dad? He fucking hates your guts," Kayden sneered. "And you—" he grinned, "you hate yourself, and even Nate, the only 'brother' who ever gave a fuck, even more than I ever did, hates you now. One day, Lettie will hate you. The crown prince with nothing left!"

The rage only grew, and it made my heart pound so loud I barely heard myself breathe. "So it is my crown you want?" I asked through gritted teeth.

Kayden burst out laughing. "Your crown? You think I want that?" He lifted his hands. "I don't want it, idiot. Unless it's Lettie, I don't care about your leftovers."

Something inside me snapped. "I told you to keep her name out of your mouth."

"Yes, and you and I both know you're going to continue to stand there without doing a thing!" Kayden hissed. "Can't you see I'm trying to help her? I had such high hopes for her. But you...you've been infecting her with your weakness," he said. "You do not deserve her, and you're trying to drag her down, the same way you dragged me. You're not protecting her, you're ruining her!"

I exhaled, forcing a slow breath. There was one thing he couldn't change my mind about. I was protecting Violet, no matter what it cost me, and no



one, especially the one who wanted to push her toward darkness, could make me believe otherwise.

"She could be unstoppable, a force, the most powerful of the whole universe, but not with you," he shook his head. "With you, she's just another soft little girl waiting to be used up like every other piece of trash you touch," he said. "If you want to be like Dad, that's your choice, but please don't waste Lettie's potential and turn her into some...wasted palace whore like that mother of yours."

As soon as those disgusting words slipped past his lips, it felt as if the room tilted. Now I could only hear the pulse roar in my ears, and he had finally done it.

"You want to die?" I said, my voice shaking. I looked him dead in the eye. "Okay...you win."

I lunged. My hand wrapped around his throat, my fingers digging in as I yanked him out of his chair. His body slammed into the cold ground, and his head cracked against the floor, but I didn't let go. Kayden's eyes were wide, and his smile had vanished. He tried to fight back, but he was too weak.

"This will be the last time you ever speak about Violet or my mother," I growled, squeezing until his breath rasped. All I could think was die, die, die. I didn't care about consequences anymore. I would deal with them later. This had been going on for too long, and all that mattered was ending this right here, right now.

I tightened my grip, pressing as his lips parted, and his chest bucked under me. "Stop..." Kayden choked. "P- Please!"

"No!" I shouted. "I should've killed you the first time. That's what you wanted, right?"

I heard a sound at the other side of the locked door. As I turned, I saw the handle jerk and faint knocks followed. I knew it was Violet. She was right



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"Kylan—" Kayden rasped, making me turn back to him. His palm smacked my wrist, begging for mercy. And his eyes...they were full of fear.

"So you are afraid of dying?" I spat with an angry chuckle. Kayden choked out another sound, and then his eyes changed. They were red, bright, unnatural...and glowing.

What was that?

My attention shifted to the glow in the corner of the room, and that's when I noticed Thorne's eyes were lit with that same red shade, glaring at me through the bars of his cage.

A chill ran through my body, and I jerked back instantly, stumbling off him. As soon as I got off him, he gasped for air. He took one ragged breath, then several more, and brought his hands to his throat.

Even as he lay on his back, not able to move, the only thing I could think of were those eyes. They had changed back to their normal dark shade as soon as I had let go of him, but the red had really been there. I was not crazy.



How did he do that?

For a split second, I just stood there, frozen, my own hands trembling. He wasn't just dangerous. He was something else...something I couldn't name. A demon, a vessel...darker than I imagined.

Kian...

Maybe that's why my hands had stopped. As much as I wanted to crush the life out of him, I didn't know what would come out if I actually did. Who knew what he would turn into if I killed him? What would rise in his place?

The thought made me nauseous. I wanted to kill him, I really did, and I would've, but my fingers wouldn't allow it. Kayden wanted to die. He had been begging for it, and it was all for a reason.

Kayden wasn't just a threat anymore. He was something far worse. If we were going to survive this, if Violet was going to survive this, he had to be eliminated, locked away, sealed...but not killed.

Not like this.

A groan came from Kayden's lips, and I immediately stumbled to the door. My hand reached for the lock, and I twisted it open with shaking fingers. Then I opened the door and stepped out.

As expected, Violet stood there, fumbling her hands nervously. She gasped the moment she saw me. "Kylan," she breathed, her eyes wide. "Kayden—" she then said, trying to look past me into the room.

"I felt it," she blurted. "I think I felt—"

"I don't want to hear it right now," I closed the door hard behind me. "



That...thing is not your priority, Violet.”



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