

Chapter 67

Violet

The ride was silent.

Kylan's eyes stayed on the road ahead, not even glancing at my direction while I shifted in my seat, fidgeting with the hem of my shirt as I tried to think of something to say.

"So, I'm wondering..." I began. This time Kylan glanced at me briefly, lifting a brow.

"How is my little friend doing?" I asked, testing the waters as I often did with him.

Was he going to react like the usual Kylan, or the softer version?

He chuckled, his lips curling into a small smile. "The squirrel?"

I nodded, returning his smile.

"She's made herself pretty comfortable in my room," he chuckled, the sound of it warming my heart. I guess he was being kind again.

"Even more comfortable than me?" The words slipped out before I could stop them, and my cheeks immediately flushed. Why had I said that?

Kylan didn't answer right away, but a smile appeared on his lips. He looked amused by my embarrassment.

"So you've never gone out before?" he asked, changing the subject.

I shook my head. "No. I've only ever stayed in my village. There was never really any reason to go outside."

He raised a brow, glancing at me for a second. "So you've never seen any other supernaturals?"

"Nope," I confirmed. "No elves, fairies, witches, vampires...nothing."

Even though the world was much bigger than our packs, and the Lycan Kingdoms—I never really got the chance to experience it.

There were many other places, ruled by different supernatural—but most of them didn't mingle with each other unless completely necessary.

That was mainly one of the reasons why the thought of witches at Starlight Academy fascinated me. Everyone tended to stay within their own groups.

"You grew up so isolated," Kylan said.

Thinking about it, I really was. While Dylan had the freedom to go wherever he wanted and do whatever he pleased, I had always been held back. There were so many things I wasn't allowed to do, but I never complained.

I knew it had everything to do with my eyes, and that was fine.

"I don't really mind." A small smile spread across my lips as I turned to look out the window. "I'm a bit antisocial anyway."

Kylan chuckled. "Well, I think you're doing perfectly fine," he said, his suggestive tone making me think he perhaps meant more than just the talking thing. Or maybe he didn't, and I was just overreacting.

Either way, his words caught me off guard, and my heart did a little flip. I bit my lips to keep from smiling too much before we fell into a comfortable silence.

After a short while, we drove into downtown. Amazed, I pressed my face to the window, taking in every little foreign thing. This place was nothing like campus, and absolutely nothing like the Bloodrose village.

The streets were filled with people, loud cars, and flickering lights—and I had never seen anything like it. There were different supernaturals, and while with some it wasn't hard to figure out what group they belonged to, others kept me guessing.

I gasped out loud, seeing a tall elf with pointy ears walk past. "Look!" I pointed out, almost feeling like a little kid on a school trip, which—by the way—also never went further than the village borders.

"Did you see his ears?"

Kylan glanced at me from the corner of his eye as he drove. "Yeah, Violet. I've seen elf ears before," he said, shaking his head in disbelief. Seeing his reaction, I couldn't help but feel silly for how fascinated I was, but I couldn't help it.

"What's it like in Lyperia?" I asked, genuinely curious.

"Completely different," Kylan spoke. "I suppose it's like stepping into the future?"

"Wow."

I had heard many times that it was one of the most advanced kingdoms, and could only imagine what it would look like. From what I'd been told, the kingdom was a mix of nature and technology—filled with big buildings, and beautiful houses.

We pulled into a parking lot, and Kylan parked his car beside Dylan's. He had quickly turned off the engine, unbuckled his seatbelt, then stepped out of the car before opening the door for me.

Surprised by his gesture, I blinked my eyes at him.

"Come on," he said, holding out his hand.

Flustered, I stared at his palm. Once I accepted, he gently helped me up but just as quickly let go of me. Just like that, he was back to his usual self, immediately heading over to Dylan without even looking back at me.

Meanwhile, Trinity skipped over to my side, and locker our arms.

"Ready?" she asked, beaming with excitement.

I nodded, but my mind was elsewhere. I was still too busy with Kylan, and trying to figure him out.

How could he joke and laugh around with my brother out in public, but now with me?

Was he different because Dylan was around? Did he act this way because he was embarrassed?

The unfairness left an ache in my heart. Kylan could switch back to his cool, detached self so easily when he wanted to, while I was left overthinking every little interaction.

"And?" Trinity pulled my arm, grinning. Of course, she would be interested.

I released a huff, staring at Kylan's back. "It was okay until he changed again the second we got out of the car."

Trinity giggled, bumping my shoulder. "Not him, silly," she said, shaking her head. "I meant, what do you think about the town?"

My eyes widened as I realized what she meant. At this point, I was just an embarrassment by choice. "Oh, that," I spoke, sheepishly.

She raised an eyebrow, waiting for my answer.

"I like it here."

Trinity smiled warmly. "It's amazing, isn't it? It kind of reminds me off back home."

I nodded, taking in her words. If this was what it was like at the place she called home, I was afraid she would have a hard time adapting to the village life.

We walked in the direction of a market, and I was, once again, amazed. There were many stalls, all selling different kinds of things—from food to clothes to jewelry, but same as before, the one thing that really caught my eye were the people.

"This place is amazing," I whispered, not knowing where to look.

"It is," Trinity said. She let go of my arm and sprinted a bit ahead to walk beside Dylan, locking her arms with his now. Kylan respectfully kept his distance to give the two some space, now walking in the center.

My legs moved on their own as I quickened my pace until I was walking beside him.

Right at that moment, another elf walked past us. "I saw it again!" I whispered, not wanting to be disrespectful, yet my voice turned out to be a bit louder than I intended.

Kylan glanced at me with a small frown. "Saw what?"

"The elf's ear!"

Kylan clicked his tongue. "You're too easy to impress, village girl."

Village girl?

I huffed at yet another nickname before a smile tugged at my lips. His teasing didn't bother me as much as it used to—at least not today.

We walked through the market in silence, but I was too distracted to mind as my eyes darted to every stall we passed. For a moment, I wondered what my life would've been like if I hadn't decided to follow in Mom's footsteps, didn't have a strange eye condition, or had never applied to Starlight.

Perhaps it would've been me, owning my own little stall—living a simpler life, away from all the chaos.

"Hey, guys!" Trinity's voice snapped me out of my thoughts. "I forgot my phone in the car, so Dylan and I will just walk back to get it."

She shot me a quick wink, and my stomach sank—knowing exactly what she was doing...again.

Kylan opened his mouth to speak. "We can go wi—"

"No!" Trinity cut him off, nearly yelling at him. The three of us stared at her, confused.

"I mean," she said, smiling innocently, "Violet has never been here. You should show her around, don't you think?"

Kylan clenched his jaw a bit, and as usual, I was already overthinking. Did he not want to be alone with me? But we were just together in the car, and that went fine.

"We'll see you guys later," Dylan shrugged, clearly not realizing what was going on. He gave Kylan a brief nod before walking off with Trinity, who shot me one last grin before disappearing into the crowd.

Unfortunately, Kylan had also caught that grin, as Trinity didn't even try to hide the fact that she was aware of everything. My cheeks burned with embarrassment. The last thing I wanted was for Kylan to think that he was a daily topic of our conversation—that I was always talking about him, thinking about him, checking out every little thing he did—even though that's exactly what I did.

He didn't need to know that.

I shifted my eyes to Kylan awkwardly, searching for something to say. "I—I..."

Before I could finish, he unexpectedly grabbed my hand. My mouth hung open, literally, as I looked down at our intertwined hands.

"You're clumsy," Kylan decided, and I could see a faint smile on his lips. "I just don't want you to get lost."