

Chapter 8

Violet

"I wasn't ignoring you, I was just..." I stopped explaining myself to Nate as he raised a brow. He wasn't stupid. Of course he knew I was ignoring him.

"Why are you hiding over here?" he asked, eating a piece of vegetable from his plate.

I couldn't help but chuckle. "I'm not hiding."

"When you sit at a table by yourself in a corner, behind a giant plant," he said, pointing to the ridiculously large pot, "you're definitely hiding."

I laughed, staring into his curious, brown eyes. There was something about Nate that made him easy to talk to. He wasn't scary, overconfident or judgmental like the other Lycans.

He was just...normal.

"So, how is your first day of school going?" Nate asked, popping another vegetable into his mouth. "Already thinking about running for the gates?"

"If only they would open them," I cracked a smile.

Nate grinned. "Well, from what I'm hearing, you're not doing too bad. First day, and you're already scheduled for a trial day with the Elite Team?"

I looked at him, surprised he knew that.

"Are you not eating?" he asked, changing the subject as he eyed my untouched tray.

"How do you know about the Elite Team?" I questioned.

Nate leaned back in his chair with a chuckle. "When you're part of the student council, word travels fast. Also, the Elite Team isn't nothing."

He leaned over, and grabbed my fork from my plate before stabbing it into a piece of pasta.

"Hey!" I protested as he brought it toward me. Either way, my mouth opened instantly, and I let him feed me.

Nate watched me as I chewed while I was still trying to process everyone being in my business. So everyone in this school talked about everyone which was an even better reason as to why I should be careful around Kylan.

Nate gave me another bite, and I accepted without thinking too much about it.

"I'm also on the team," Nate suddenly shared, grinning. "So we'll be seeing each other a lot."

A wave of relief washed over me. The idea of having Nate around already made everything less scary.

"What are the people on the team like?"

"Most of them are alright," Nate spoke with a full mouth. "It's me, Kylan—"

"The Lycan Prince is on the Elite Team?" I felt an uncomfortable chill spread through my body.

Nate gave me a strange look. "Of course he is. He's one of the best."

I bit my lip, trying to hide the fact that internally I was freaking out. Of course Kylan was on the team. Why wouldn't he be?

All the girls could talk about was him being the school's golden boy—and the golden boy belonged in such a team.

Nate shook his head, huffing, as he noticed my reaction. "If you're afraid he's going to bump into you again—don't be. Kylan likes to provoke people, but you shouldn't take it seriously. It's just his way."

That's right, that's how it all started.

He bumped into me on my first day, called me four-eyes on the spot.

I forced a smile. "Oh, I'm not worried about him."

Nate looked at me for a second longer. By the look on his face, I could just tell that his best friend hadn't told him about the mate bond we shared. He was completely oblivious.

Kylan didn't tell him because he was embarrassed of me, just like I didn't tell Trinity because I was embarrassed of him.

"You know," Nate said, "the high teachers only need about ten seconds to determine whether someone is worthy or not. That means you must be a really good healer."

That was the same thing Esther had told me when she saw the doubt on my face. "I hope so," I said, softly.

"If you're on the team, you must know my brother, Dylan?" I wondered.

Nate stopped eating, this time a vegetable dropping out of his mouth, right back onto the tray. "I didn't know the two of you were related," he commented. "No way you're from the same pack as that thing."

A small laugh escaped from between my lips. "That's what I thought about your sister and your Lycan Prince."

Nate shrugged, chuckling. "Fair point."

Even though one might have found Nate's words offensive, I didn't. Surprisingly, it didn't bother me—because it came from him.

"I hope my sister's not giving you a hard time in that dorm. She can be too much at times."

"Meh," I rolled back my shoulders, dismissing the treatment she had given me this morning. "She's barely even around."

Because she stayed with Kylan...

Before either of us could say anything else, someone from across the cafeteria called out to Nate.

"I'll see you later," Nate got up and walked around the table, then her ruffled his hand through my hair.

"Stop it," I laughed, smacking it away.

"I'll see you around, beautiful," Nate winked, then walked off, joining his friends as they headed out of the cafeteria.

Beautiful?

That was something else than four-eyes.

His presence was nice, but now that he had left, I could only think about Kylan. Hearing he was also on the Elite Team had only drained my spirits. Just the thought of being in the same room made me sick.

Why did it have to be him?

Of all the people in this academy, why did the Moon Goddess choose him as my mate?

At first I was terrified of joining the team for other reasons, but now it was all about Kylan.

I had yet to reject him, and I just knew he was going to make my life a living hell.

I really had to do something about that bond before even thinking about putting foot inside of that Elite Team.

~

The rest of the classes passed in a blur, and after studying for a while longer, I was back at the dorms.

"Hey!" Trinity called out, lying on the couch. She was on her phone, texting with a wide smile—possibly her mate. She gave me a look, then shifted her eyes to Chrystal's closed room door—and I got the message.

Unfortunately, Chrystal and Amy were around for once.

"Hey," I joined her. "How was your day?"

"Alright. How was yours?"

I dropped my bag on the table, then released a groan. "Long. Very long."

Trinity chuckled, sitting up. "You look like you've been through a battlefield."

"I feel like I have," I rolled my eyes.

She had no idea.

"Don't tell me you're already thinking about dropping out?"

"Dropping out?" I sighed, rolling onto my back. "Never. It's just been a long day."

Trinity leaned over with raised brows. "You've got that look on your face. Something's on your mind."

I hesitated telling her the truth about everything, all of it. The festival, Kylan, our bond, the kiss, the mess on the Elite Team.

How could I even begin to explain any of it?

"Really, it's nothing."

I could tell Trinity wasn't buying it, but she didn't push further. "Well, if you ever need someone to vent, I'm here."

"Thanks."

It wasn't that I didn't trust her. I did, but something about this whole situation made me want to keep it to myself. It was not some romantic fairytale, compared to hers, my story was embarrassing.

"So," Trinity spoke, "I heard some news..."

"What news?" I sat back up.

She raised an eyebrow, grinning. "You know... about the Elite Team?"

Nate really wasn't kidding. Apparently everyone did talk about everyone. "How did you hear about that?"

She laughed, tossing her phone onto the table. "Are you kidding me? It's all anyone's talking about! First day of school, and you're already in for a trial with the Elite Team. That's huge, Violet!"

"It's only been hours," I exhaled. "Anyway, let's not get our hopes up. I have a habit of screwing this up."

"You're not going to screw up," Trinity stated firmly. "A few of the girls told me about what you did with those fish today. You're talented, you'll fit right in."

The way she said it made it sound so easy. If only it was just the Elite Team I had to worry about.

My phone buzzed, pulling me from my thoughts. I glanced down and saw an email notification. As I opened it, a pit in my stomach appeared.

'Elite Team Trial - Two Days from Now'

Two days...

My trial was in two days?

No, no, no!

I painted a schedule in my head. I had two days to reject Kylan, Chrystal was in her room—which meant I had to do it now. I had no choice.

Trinity laughed. "What's up? You look like you've seen a ghost."

"It's nothing...I need to head out for a bit," I rushed off the couch.

"Now?" Trinity asked. "Where are you going?"

I tried to think of an excuse, but I didn't want to lie to her again. "I have to talk to someone. Won't be long."

She nodded, looking a little curious, but didn't question me further. "Alright. Don't be out too late—we've got curfew."

"I know. I'll be quick!"

~

I walked from the Lunar Hall through the dark campus, all the way to the Combat, Strategy—and Leadership Hall where I knew Kylan would be.

How did I know?

Kylan was a big name around campus, and within a few days, I had already overheard where and in which room he stayed at.

I pulled my hood low over my face, glancing around the nearly empty hall to make sure no one was watching. Then I made my way up the stairs and saw it—the room at the end of the hall with the big door, with his name on it, just like the girls had described.

The door was large, dark, and intimidating—just like him.

The closer I got, the more I reconsidered this silly action—but I had no choice. It wasn't like I wanted to be here, but I had to be here.

I had to reject him. It was as simple as that.

I stood in front of his door, taking a deep breath.

What if he didn't want to talk to me?

What if he would slam the door in my face?

It was too late to turn back now. Before I could rethink my decision for a second time, I balled my fist and knocked on the door.

Once, twice...it felt like an eternity.

Then the door swung open, and I quickly hid my guilty fist behind my back.

Kylan stood there, shirtless, his skin damp and slightly glowing, like he had just stepped out of the shower. His scent hit me instantly—clean, fresh, intoxicating. It made my head spin.

I realized my eyes had wandered somewhere they shouldn't have, so I forced them up to meet his. He stared at me with a cold, yet calm, gaze, like he had been expecting me for a while.

His eyes narrowed. "Four-eyes."