

SPELLBOUND

Chapter 10: Are we clear?

Evie frantically surveyed herself. There seemed to be nothing unusual with her body. The vampire prince didn't seem to have done anything to her while she was asleep, she just somehow knew it.

She looked at his sleeping face again and her shoulders relaxed. A long sigh escaped her lips before she looked around the room. It was vast and the windows were covered with thick maroon curtains. The ceiling was also very high. It was a little dark but Evie could tell it was daylight. How long did she sleep? Was she in the village across the Dark Valley?

But judging from the size of this room, it somehow seemed to be a master room of a huge castle. Was there a huge castle in the very first village across the border? Or could it be that this wasn't the village anymore?

The thought that she was finally in the foreign land, the land she and all her friends used to imagine as a place as good as hell, made her subconsciously hug herself. She didn't tremble in fear but there was a peculiar churning in the pit of her stomach – the fear of the known and unknown making her heart convulse with unease again. What was going to happen to her in this land of bloodsuckers? She even chuckled wryly in her mind – they were true and living bloodsuckers, in the literal sense and not just a figure of speech.

"You're finally awake," a pleasant and husky voice made her shoulders jolt and her spine straighten. Her head whipped towards the glorious man, but his back was already facing her as he rose from the bed.

Evie couldn't help but feel her ears burn hot at the sight of his broad and perfectly chiselled back. She was glad his lower half was fully clothed. She watched him as he gracefully walked towards the large windows and pulled the curtain slightly open, just enough for the light to brighten up the room.

The light came streaming in and it slightly blinded Evie. But good lord... Evie couldn't help but gape because the man was more blinding than the light. And she couldn't even scold herself and tell herself that she was being ridiculous. Because she knew she wasn't, and it wasn't fair! Thank god she managed to maintain a shred of dignity by keeping her mouth from shamelessly hanging open.

It was all she could do to drag her eyes away from him. She was mortified because she thought she had expected to be unable to look into any vampire's face. Who would've

thought she would actually find herself struggling to look away instead? This was... ridiculously unbelievable!

"Are you alright?" the face she was trying so hard to look away from suddenly appeared right before her and she almost gasp. "You've been sleeping since yesterday, Evielyn." He added and Evie almost believed the worried look on his face. But she wouldn't dare. She wouldn't dare believe that he was really concerned about her, even his gentleness and care for her since their wedding until that brutal journey.

She wouldn't dare believe all of those gentlemanly actions were sincere. Because Evie had been warned beforehand by her parents and the emperors to remain vigilant and careful because the vampires would surely try everything to win her trust and then extract information from her. After all, the humans knew that the vampires would remain suspicious about the real reason behind the truce the humans had offered. They weren't idiots after all. They were intelligent and sly creatures as the emperors called them. They would go as far as to use their beauty and charm to bewitch the poor humans to their submission. And Evie had vowed not just to her parents and the emperors but also to herself that she would never, ever, let any vampire fool or bewitch her, not even this prince, her very own husband.

"I am fine." Evie replied and she couldn't believe she was staring back at him and with a hard glare too. "Y-you... why...you," she breathed, "are... sleeping next to me?" Evie stuttered out the thought that was plaguing her but was so disconcerted that her sentence came out weird.

The pair of moon-like eyes slightly widened and then narrowed at her. The next moment, he was right before Evie's face. His hands already on the bed as he leaned over her. Evie held her breath. The sight of him that day in the Dark Valley flashed in her mind and her body tensed up.

Evie gulped, her mouth opened and then shut. She suddenly didn't know what to say. It was as if her mind failed her as soon as she looked in his eyes. And all she did was watch him as those silver discs shuttered and let out a quiet breath right before her face. She subconsciously jerked backwards when her mind registered his cool breath fanning across her cheeks.

His eyes flashed open at her sudden movement and stared at her again, silently but intensely before he bit his lower lip in exasperation. "Are you still not fully awake? Fine." He nodded as if trying to reason with himself. "I am sleeping next to you because I am your husband and you are my wife." He told her in a serious but almost mocking voice.

Evie was forced to look away because staring back at those pair of silvery moon eyes were too distracting for her. She can't let herself be rendered mute by his gaze. She must respond. But before she could open her mouth, the vampire prince's spoke again.

"Say, Evielyn," his eyes brooded. "The deal was that I am not allowed to touch you without your consent, and I promised to respect that and will never force myself on you or harm you. But it seems as if the meaning of those words to you isn't the same as what I understood? The way you are reacting is as though I am not allowed to stay in the same room and lay in the same bed as you, am I right? Evielyn?"

He bit his lips again, this time harder. Evie stiffened because she felt the atmosphere turned heavy. Worry began to consume her, scared that his eyes would turn red. But it didn't.

"Listen," his voice became calm, utterly calm. "If that's your understanding, then I apologize, my wife. But I'll have you understand that it is totally off the mark and I'm not going to buy such nonsense. You and I are married, therefore, we shall stay in the same room and lay in the same bed. Are we clear?"