

SPELLBOUND 301

Chapter 301 - Passageway

As though they were in a rush, Gavrael grabbed onto her and suddenly, using his dark magic, the two of them disappeared from sight, leaving everyone heaving a soft sigh before all of them looked at each other with an unspoken understanding and dispersed from the gates and returned to their posts.

When they materialized again, Evie quickly raised her protest before Gavrael could activate his magic to make them disappear again. "Wait! Gav..." She pulled away, causing the man to frown and he wondered what is it that she wanted again this time.

"Aren't you in much of a rush?" Gavrael questioned her. "Then why are you asking me to wait? Shouldn't you be asking me to hurry?"

"Well... I..." Evie could not finish her words as her eyes caught the ruins behind Gavrael. He had transported and brought them over to the ruins of Dacia!

As if countless numbers of needles were stabbing into Evie's heart, she could only stand still just looking at the ruins with a sorrowful look. Her eyes filled as her vision blurred slightly as she saw how Dacia was now completely unrecognizable to that winter wonderland she had remembered it to be the first time she and Gavriel had arrived. And it hurts her every time she pictured in her mind on how this place looked like. It hurts her how easy it seemed to be in turning something so majestic, something so beautiful into a pile of rubble like this. Dacia was now nothing but piles of rocks and dust.

She swallowed the huge lump that had formed in her throat. This place had already grown onto her like it was her second home and the sight of it in ruins now, brought on more pain than she ever imagined it would. She had long prepared her heart, knowing that Dacia had fallen and in ruins. But seeing it for herself again, the impact was still more than she had expected.

Cool fingers suddenly ran her cheeks and she snapped out of her shock.

"What's wrong?" he asked her with a gentle voice, and Evie cleared her throat. Then she forced out a quivering smile as she blinked her tears back.

"Nothi –" she suddenly paused as though something suddenly popped in her mind. "Let's drop by here for a while." She told him before she unceremoniously dragged him towards the ruins.

Even if Dacia was in ruins now, Evie thought that it still held the same meaning to them both as this was a special place to them. Many of their firsts happened here. She also remembered that there was still that one place that could be left still intact even though the whole castle fortress had fallen.

The underground dungeon. The entrance of it. That was the very place they had separated and if her theory was right, this should be the place where he had lost his memories. This place was the start of the mystery surrounding Gavrael's appearance and Gavriel's memories' disappearance. Everything hinged on this point.

The hope in her heart bloomed. Thinking that this could be the key to bringing back his memories as Gavriel.

"Can you bring me there?" she asked him, pointing specifically to one direction of the ruins of the castle far ahead.

Gavrael stared at her for a while then did as she said. They then materialized in the castle's ruins in the blink of an eye.

After Gavrael set her down, Evie looked around trying to get her bearings. She needed to find the exact location of the entrance to the dungeon. While she was looking around, Gavrael just leaned back against a fallen pillar, looking at her quietly and observed her actions.

It did not take long for Gavrael to wait before Evie found what she was looking for. Her face lit up excitedly as she looked over her shoulder and called out to him, waving her hands as she gestured for him to go over to where she was.

"Gav! Come over here! I've found it!" she smiled widely as if eager to show him something interesting.

Silently, Gavrael approached her, and she quickly grabbed a hold of his hand. As she led him inside the passageway, she kept looking back at him, continuously checking if there was something that flickered in his eyes.

She took out her necklace which she had hidden in her pocket and her body immediately shone with an amber glow. Earlier on, when she entered Kirzan, she had taken the precaution to wrap that very precious necklace with a piece of cloth and hid it in a secret compartment within her clothes. So, it was only now that she had taken it out again.

Gavrael paused at the sight of her body glowing and his eyes zeroed in on the necklace which was held protectively in her hands.

Evie looked back and was about to ask Gavrael a question but just as she opened her mouth, he spoke up first. "You've been here before?" he asked her directly and Evie took a while to respond.

"Yes." She said and turned again, feeling a little disappointed with his question, as she led him down the stairs. The fact that he could ask her that question means there had been no recollection of Gavriel's memories. But she then cheered herself up right after.

"I don't know what you wanted me to see down there, but I just came from here yesterday and everything inside is already ruined. There is nothing left to look at." He quietly told her, and it was Evie who paused in her steps this time.

"You came to visit here yesterday? Why?" Evie was curious on why he even visited this place.

Her question made him become very still. But instead of answering her, he scooped her into his arms and then jumped down, bypassing the endlessly winding staircase. Evie was thankful that they need not walk down those number of steps. He landed elegantly on the ground before gently putting her down.

Then all of a sudden, something throbbed in his head.

Chapter 302 - Transition

Then all of a sudden, something throbbed in his head. There was a painful twisting and tugging sensation at the back of his eyes, causing him to feel a little flustered.

He then began to see himself in this same spot where he was standing. It was like a holographic image of himself, running as a flashback. He saw 'himself' crumpled on the ground, all bloodied and breathless. What he assumed was his own blood was pooling on the floor as he coughed and spat out blood continuously. And there was faint bluish glow emanating from his body. It was clear to him that he seemed to be dying. It was then that he realized 'his' eyes were not the normal blue that was characteristic of him. When he looked closer, he noted that they were a cool slate grey. This man... this was Gavriel!

Then Gavrael began to hear his voice speaking. It was his own voice, but this Gavriel he was seeing in his head seemed to be talking not to himself but to someone else. Even though there was no one around him. Trembling as he knelt on the pool of blood and clenching his fist on his chest, his voice echoed. "Alright, I'm setting you free from your cage now. Take over this body... I know I can only rely to you now to protect Evie. I know you are dangerous and monstrous, but I know Evie will be safe with you. You are the one she needed the most right now." He said in a trembling voice, as he was having great difficulty and it was not because of his injuries but because of the emotional pain. Gavrael could sense that just by saying those words, pained him more than anything else.

"Just promise me you'd take care of her... yes, I know you would," Tears then fell from his eyes as he sank his sharp nails into his chest, all the while screaming, and blue flames burst forth from his chest and enveloped his body in a matter of seconds.

...

"Gav?" Evie called out when Gavrael just stood there as if he had turned into a statue. Her heartbeat was erratic. Looking at his glazed eyes, she was hoping that he is finally remembering something.

However, he soon looked away and swept his gaze around the empty dungeon. "Have you found what you're looking for?" he asked, his tone neutral and unaffected, causing Evie to go still. She tried her best to hide her disappointment as it was obvious to her that he did not seem to remember a thing as well down here.

"Well... yeah, you were right, everything's in ruins here now. Let's get on our way." She forced out a smile and reached out to hold his hand and led him to the stairs.

She took a few breaths, trying to cheer herself up again. She told herself it would not be that easy and she must be patient. Moreover, there was still the Forbidden Land. Maybe because their memories in this particular place was not of the pleasant sort, that was why his memories were not triggered. She must cheer up and keep her faith.

As she was cheering herself up, Gavrael was thinking about the things he just saw, as he was trying his best to act normally.

He did not remember Gavriel's memories, he realized at that moment... these were 'his' memories too! Was it because that was the moment of their transition?

Gavrael could only believe that it was indeed because of that. But what bugged him to his core was the words he had said. It appeared that Gavriel knew about his existence, but he thought he was being caged inside him. Furthermore, it seemed Gavriel knew that he could release him, set him free and take over his body. 'How did Gavriel know? Could it be that he had seen some of my memories while he I am trapped inside him?' Gavrael asked himself.

The way Gavriel had told him to take care of Evie also haunted him. It was obvious Gavriel did not want to let him take over, but apparently, he had no choice. It was also obvious to him that the decision Gavriel made pained him and hurt him very much. As if to him, that moment was also saying goodbye forever to Evie.

'Why? Was it because he knew that the two of us... our memories can't co-exist? Or was it because he knew that once I take over, he'd be gone forever?' the question made Gavrael's throat clenched.

He realized what was going on now.

Right now, Gavriel's memories were buried within him. And it will never return again unless he gives up just like what Gavriel had done and allowed him take over once again.

The realization made Gavrael's heart clenched in pain. Somehow, he understood now why he always felt this strange hurt every time he realized that Evie was making efforts to bring Gavriel's memories back. So, this was the reason why. His subconscious or his body already knew that if Gavriel's memories return, it would only mean that he'd disappear again as Gavrael.

He quietly looked at Evie's back. He knew how much she was working hard, doing everything she can to make him remember Gavriel's memories. She was doing all these so her Gavriel's memories could finally return. How would she react if she found out that his memories and Gavriel's can in no way co-exist with the other? The question made him smile bitterly as the pain in his chest intensified, knowing that she was doing all these all for the reason of wanting Gavriel back.

It was almost ridiculous for him to feel this way because to Evie, he and Gavriel was one and the same person. But to him and also to Gavriel, they both knew it was not as simple as that. They lived in a different time, they both lived different lives and even have different names. Therefore, to them both, they were not one and the same soul... to them, they were actually different people who could not co-exist with the other at the same time, in the same space... and only the two of them could understand that.

Chapter 303 - Favorite Spot

By the time they were outside the dungeon, Evie suddenly let go of that tight but comfortable grip that she had on his arm and took a couple of steps to the side. She then turned to face him before spreading her arms wide towards him. Gavrael somehow felt the miss of her arms curling around his and could not help but feel a little disappointed at her letting go. But he kept his face calm and showed no outward signs of his internal disappointment. He then crooked a brow at her, questioning her on her actions without words.

"Can we travel normally?" she finally asked him, tilting her head to one side and looking at him with those large eyes of hers, turned into cute puppy dog ones.

"Normally...??" he echoed, frowning at her even as his heart did a funny flip flop as he tried to ignore how her puppy eyes did a number on him.

"I mean, I'd like you to carry me in your arms, princess style, as you run and leap through the woods. Rather than just disappearing and materialising to our next destination. That way, we could enjoy the travel and the view don't you think?" she smiled widely, like a child excited to go outdoors and go on an adventure for the first time in a long while.

Looking at her sweet smile and the twinkle in her eyes Gavrael could only give in despite already knowing the reason behind all the requests she has been making lately. This was the first time he was looking at her face being so happy like this since a very long time ago, for many years in fact... so how could he have the heart to say 'no' and bring himself to make that smile fade? It's kind of incredible how fast his ice cold heart was melting since last night.

Without a word of complaint, he scooped her up into his arms and she grinned up at him. "Thank you, my prince." She whispered and she kissed his cheek again, causing his ears to turn red.

Gavrael was not used to her making such advances on him. He was used to be the one making advances on her and making her speechless and thrown off constantly with his naughtiness. Now the tides had turned, and she was now the one being in charge, playing the role of the naughty one, throwing him off kilter without warning.

And now that he thought about it, to his surprise, he seemed unable to do anything but freeze and feel hot. He remembered that it was she who was always reacting like this when he was doing these very same things this to her. What was going on with him? When had he turned to be on the receiving end like this? They were not something that big of a deal anyway. So why was it that he seemed so taken aback by the things she is doing to him now?

"I'm ready, Gav." Evie's comment pulled him back to the present and he inwardly shook his head. Then with her securely cuddled within his arms, he began to run and leap with so much ease, as if she did not weigh a thing. His movements were so smooth sailing that it was as though he were only carrying a light doll.

Evie settled her head against his upper chest, enjoying the ride. She had missed moving and travelling this way. She snuggled further into his arms as she looked around as the scenery flashed by them as Gavrael moved swiftly over the ground.

When they finally entered the Forbidden Land, Evie tapped on his arm and asked him to slow down.

"Can we stop up on that tree there?" she pointed at one of the tallest trees in the forest and Gavrael leapt over and brought her there without a word.

He put her down on the highest branch but did not let go of her waist. He kept a loose hold but was on high alert in the event that she accidentally slipped and fall. Evie looked at the view below and she felt as though this was the first time that she was seeing the Forbidden Land in daylight. Even though she had been here before for many days.

Somehow, she could not help but feel emotional after arriving in this place. Aside from the night when Gav had brought her to visit the lake, she had been here not to leisurely look around like this. And that was definitely why she had failed to fully appreciate the beauty of this land before.

Now she realized it was not just the lake and stones that were beautiful. The ethereal landscape and everything in this land was beautiful. She could see the cloudy and darkened area way far ahead where the Mist forest and Crescia was located in, and she wondered again how beautiful it would look if those lands would be able to see the light of day again.

A soft smile curved fondly on her lips, not noticing that Gav had been staring at her all this while.

"Let's drop by the lake Gav. I'd like us to visit there for a bit." She told him, all smiling and excited.

Gavrael looked at the direction of the place she was pointing at and the memories that they shared in that place flashed in his mind. That lake was their favourite spot back then – during their first lifetime, it seems – and that was the very same place where they had spent their very first night together. Something flashed in his eyes and his throat worked at the memories he began recalling of that place. Because they were memories only he could remember.

Before Evie could turn over to look at him, Gavrael scooped her up into his arms again, as if to avoid letting her catch a glimpse of his expression. He did not want her to question him more, as he himself was still not fully sure of what was happening within himself at the moment.. He would need to think through and sort his thoughts out properly before being able to face her and provide any answers.

Chapter 304 - Don't Doubt It

When they landed at the shores of the lake, Evie asked him to head for that flat and smooth rock in the shallow waters of the tranquil and magical lake.

Gavrael did as she asked and set her down on top of that said rock.

Evie sat on the rock and then grabbed at his sleeves as she looked up. "Sit with me here for a while, Gav." She beckoned to him and Gavrael lowered himself to be seated next to her. They both remained silent for a while, looking out at the crystalline waters, and appreciating the breath-taking view afforded to them.

She then leaned her head on his shoulder as she looked ahead, continuing to stare out at this magical place that Gavriel had introduced her to.

The world suddenly seemed to have come to a standstill. It was as if everything else had fallen into a deep slumber, fading away into the background, and the only ones awake in this entire world was just the two of them. There was a sort of peace that reigned for the moment, and that gave both Evie and Gavrael a measure of relaxation in their hearts and minds.

All they could hear was the quiet sounds of the soft breeze caressing the shores, the relaxing sound of the many birds singing in the distance, and their heartbeats and breathing that seemed to be synchronising to each other's. Oh, how good this feels...

Evie could not help but close her eyes for a moment, savouring the sweetness that was surrounding them. She remembered that Gavriel had promised her the next time that he would bring her here during daylight. And now they are finally here. And she understood now why he had wanted to show her this place in the daylight. She had seen this very same scenery before and in daylight too. But back then, he was not there with her. Now that he is seated right beside her, the feeling was completely different. Even the view seemed to have taken on a different hue in her eyes.

Her heart swelled with intense emotions as she took his hand and entwined her fingers with his. At that moment, her heart was overflowing within her.

They just sat there, without saying a word for what seemed like a long time until Evie rose and approached the edge of the stone. She then reached out her hand and dipped it into the water then looked back at him with a big smile, while swirling her hand in the crystal-clear waters.

Then she scooped a small amount of water and playfully splashed at him as she chuckled.

Her happy laughter tinkling like bells before him, made Gavrael's cold heart shake with happiness within him and... also fear. Seeing her behaving this way was such a bittersweet feeling to have, causing his heart to warm but at the same time, his guts to shrink slightly in trepidation.

A while ago, he had thought about when did he start being so overwhelmed with her advances and Gavrael quickly thought that it must be because of the very long time that he had lived a life filled with nothing but suffering. Therefore, he must have gotten so used to pain and darkness – to the point of expecting nothing else that was good to come his way – that the calmness, joy, and light that she was offering him now out of her own free will, overwhelmed him to his core.

Even now, seeing her smiling at him so unreservedly and happily, and being able to be touching her so easily again, still felt too good to be true. To him, he somehow felt a nagging fear within him that this happiness... this simple joy was all just another illusion that his mind had managed to trap him in.

"Gav? Are you doing alright there?" Evie called out softly as she looked at him. He seemed to be lost in his own thoughts again and she saw that same look that she kept seeing in him for many times now. It was the kind of look that seem to be questioning her if she was real and not just his fantasy.

It always made her feel like a needle was stabbing deeply into her heart every time he looks at her like that. And this time, she could not turn a blind eye to it any longer. She needed to ask him and clarify on the matter.

She caught his face between her palms and made him look at her. "What are you thinking?" she asked, her gaze at him so incredibly gentle. Her amber eyes looked so soothing warm. "You looked like you're doubting if I am real or not." She added and Gavrael's eyes widened.

His expression immediately confirmed it and Evie could not stop herself from pinching his cheek, hard.

He blinked in surprise before frowning at what she was doing.

"What are you doing?" he asked. Evie's gaze was locked onto his face as a humorous smile hovered over her lips.

"Pinching you... that's what I am doing." she retorted, and she squeezed his cheeks again, to give him an extra measure of reality. "I don't know if you already know about this, but humans do this to check if they are dreaming or not. If one pinches herself and she feels the pain, it means she is not dreaming. You feel pain on your cheeks now too, right?" Evie grinned impishly at him, as her eyes twinkled merrily.

When he did not say a word, Evie huffed and pinched him harder until he finally gave in. "There is a very little pain." He gave in and Evie smiled brightly as she rained down light kissed on his cheeks that had reddened slightly from all her hard pinching, surprising him again.

Then she bumped her forehead against his gently as she chuckled at him. He could clearly hear the fondness in her laugh. "I'm real Gav... I'm here with you now and you're now here with me. We're finally together again. So, please don't doubt it. I am not a figment of your imagination." She breathed out almost in a whisper and Gavrael stilled for a while.

And before he knew it, he seized her mouth desperately.

Chapter 305 - Crucial

Evie was caught off guard at the sudden kiss that had attacked her. It was another wild and sizzling one that Evie could not help but think if this Gav of hers had also forgotten how to kiss gently. Though she could not quite say she did not like it at all. In fact, she was surprised to know how much she is loving this wild and rough side of his. But... if he kissed her like this any longer, there was no way she would be able to even resist, as she would definitely be seduced instantly, helplessly, and completely!

She did not plan to do anything as of yet, as it was still broad daylight. Evie was planning to wait for the night-time to come before attempting to do anything. Not that she was being a prude or anything. It was only because she believed that it would be a lot better if the settings would be almost exactly the same as that night that she was trying to recreate.

But if he was already going on like this... how could she stay true to her plan? If this goes any further and with this level of intensity of his, they might very well...

Just as Evie was about to reach out and wind her hands around his head, Gavrael suddenly pulled away, surprising her even as her eyes flew open. Then he suddenly let himself fall on his back and laid all sprawled out on the rock, covering his eyes with the back of his palm.

Gavrael was suddenly and strangely being overwhelmed again. He felt as though his emotions were getting the better of him and he was a little afraid again that if he fails to control himself, he will be taking her right then and there like some barbaric hungry wolf again. Even though she did not seem to mind or even be angry at him about all that had happened last night, if he lost control and do such things to her again, and on top of it, in this broad daylight, he was certain she would be thinking of him as a lost cause! In his mind, he did not want her to have a worse impression of him than he already did at this moment.

Slowly, he took in several deep breaths, inhaling and exhaling slowly, trying his best to control his emotions and most importantly, to curb that raging fire of desire that was wrecking a havoc in his system. He did not want to do anything to ruin this blissful day. This was the very first time he was able to be with her in broad daylight like this, without losing his temper and turning things sour. So, he must at least be on his best behaviour and compose himself. He must not cause anything that could ruin the bliss of this moment he is sharing with Evie.

This had been one of the things he had been dreaming before. To be with her like this and roam around freely in broad daylight, without bothering about the time and not during the duration of the night. Now that it is finally happening, he wanted to savour it. He wanted to savour being with her like this, just sitting next to her and feeling her presence.

"Gav?" Evie held his hand that was covering his eyes but before she could remove them to look at his face, he suddenly made a move to grab her and brought her close into his embrace.

Evie was stunned but she stilled as her ears that were pressed against his chest picked up the sounds of his loud and skipping heartbeats. Listening to them was soothing to her and she then relaxed her body and laid on top of him.

She felt his fingers caressing her head and she revelled in his gentle and pleasant touch.

For what seem like a long time, the both of them just laid there, enjoying each other's presence without saying any words to each other until Gavrael finally pulled himself into a sitting position and rose with Evie still in his arms.

"I think we should head to Crescia now if you don't want us to end up returning to Kirzan before nightfall." He said and Evie reluctantly pulled away.

"You're right." she replied before moving out of the comfort of his arms and standing up.

Gavrael stood up and carried her in his arms again, and in no time at all, they reached the Mist Forest.

"Gav... somehow, I am getting the feeling that something's a bit off." Evie whispered lowly into his ear as she clung onto Gavrael.

"What is it?" Gavrael landed on one of the large branches of a massive tree and looked at her.

"The beasts. It's strange that we have yet to encounter even a single one of them. The savage orcs should also be somewhere around here right now." She muttered below her breath, but he could still hear her clearly. Gavrael narrowed his eyes after hearing her say that because she was right. This should be the very place where those beasts were constantly rampaging around. This was their turf.

"Could it be that they've sensed your aura and are all scared away by you? Or did you cast some magic to drive them away?" Evie raised a brow at him. There was no sign of worry in her eyes at all.

He remembered that Evie always clung to him nervously every time they passed by this place in this Mist Forest. She was very frightened by the orcs and that was why she preferred to ride a dragon and fly over this section of the forest sometimes.

"I didn't do anything. And the orcs aren't afraid of anyone, even of a dark fae. The savage orcs are a little intelligent but not the other beasts. Instead of running away from danger, they would foolishly attack... So, I don't think I'm the reason why they're gone." He explained and Evie creased her brows.

"If that's the case, then why?" she wondered loudly, "could it be that Onyx was the one who had scared them all away?"

"Perhaps...?" he replied though quite unsure. But in his mind, he did not think it was as simple as that. Usually, the dragons will not do anything to the beasts as long as they do not attempt to cross the entrance of the gates of Crescia.

"Alright, we better go ahead and find out what has happened." Evie then decided and Gavrael leapt forward again, keeping her securely wrapped within the circle of his arms. His mind was now occupied, his focus became sharper. He could not believe he had missed out and failed to notice such a crucial matter!

Chapter 306 - Two Hard Heads

Upon arriving at the entrance of Crescia's dark gate, Onyx was seen lying in wait there at his usual post. His fiery amber eyes stared hard, not at Evie but at Gavrael as soon as the duo arrived and stepped into his territory.

"Onyx!" Evie cheerfully ran towards the dark dragon the moment Gavrael set her feet on the ground, as if the massive creature was her pet waiting for her return. She immediately circled her arms around and hugged the dragon's snout and caressed his shiny scales fondly as she had missed it so much.

Watching her, Gavrael stared back at Onyx cautiously and the dragon then rose and issued out a rumbling growl. Evie was startled at the sudden dangerous sound Onyx made and she immediately realized that his eyes were currently fixed on Gav.

Her eyes flew towards Gavrael and her mouth dropped open at the sight of him glaring back at the dragon aggressively as his darkness was starting to swirl and gather around him again. Oh, no!

Hastily, Evie let go of Onyx and strode towards Gavrael, throwing herself at him as she wrapped her arms around his lean hips. "Gav! Hey, look at me." She urged as one of her hands cupped the side of his face and applied gentle pressure to make him look down, so he could focus his gaze on her instead. "It's fine. You don't have to worry about Onyx. He is... he's my dragon, Gav. He's definitely not an enemy to us."

Gavrael fixed his gaze on her frantic face, and he slowly breathed out, realizing that he had alarmed her. Of course, he knew that this guy was her dragon.

He also knew that even back then, he had been jealous of this particular dragon because of Evie's fondness of him. And now he could not believe that of all things, this was one of those things that had not changed about her. She had changed so much from the Evie he knew in the past, and yet he could still see that she had not changed one bit in her affection and attitude towards Onyx. Somehow, this caused Gavrael to somehow be unable to hold back his displeasure because of the realization that perhaps this time too, this dragon was going to take all her attention away from him, just like back then. Gavrael scowled as he thought back on how he had been neglected every time this blasted dragon came into the picture.

Back then, Gavrael remembered that he had to always try to fight for her attention when Onyx was around and that caused such a sour disposition to exist between them. He also knew that unlike the other dragons, Onyx did not seem to like him just as how he felt towards it. Gavrael thought about it before that the dragon's reaction toward him was perhaps because it had felt his darkness, or maybe because the dragon could sense his immense and dangerous powers and that was why Onyx's reaction right now was not a surprise to him at all.

However, despite their obvious dislike of each other, Onyx had never really attacked him. Back then, all they did was glared at each other just like what they were doing right now. The air of hostility was also heavy with pressure that it could suffocate anyone who come within a five-feet radius from them. However, that was about the worst that had happened between them. There never had been any physical altercation as they knew that Evie would be saddened if any of them were hurt.

With another long, drawn-out sigh, Gavrael pulled back on his darkness and said to her. "I know he's your dragon."

"Then why are you..." Evie was confused.

"Well..." he paused and tilted his head slightly. "It's his fault. Look at him, growling at the sight of me. Of course, I'd glare back. Or were you expecting me to smile back at him?" Gavrael responded in a complaining tone.

Evie was speechless. Now that she looked back at Onyx, she could not help but realize that the two of them were actually kind of similar to each other. Right then, they were both dark and brooding... Evie actually thought that if Gav could shapeshift into a dragon form using his magic like one of those tales she heard when she was still a child, she was almost certain that he would most definitely be a carbon copy of Onyx.

The thought made her giggle as she suddenly thought of Gav and Onyx's relationship which was going to change from being enemies into one of friends very soon. She just could feel it and the thought of it made her think of how cute they would be together once they became friends. As she could already picture it in her minds, she could not help but giggle even more.

"What is so funny?" Gavrael raised a brow at her, and Evie cleared her throat before composing herself. She knew better than to share that thought with either of them as it would only cause more drama and friction between these two hard heads.

"Nothing," she grinned slyly before turning to face Onyx. "I'm sorry I forgot to introduce my companion to you." she told the dragon. "This is Gav, my husband."

Instantly, Gavrael stilled, feeling like his body had turned into a statue. Her words 'my husband' echoed over and over in his head, like a clanging gong and cymbal.

"So... be nice to him, okay?" she added entreatingly and then Onyx looked away, as if snubbing Evie's request. Evie could almost see him pursing his dragon lips and pouting at her.

The dragon's reaction made her want to burst out in laughter, but she refrained. She managed to tamp it down and released it as a small giggle. "Alright, would you bring us to the castle?"

Onyx seemed to glare at Gavrael as Gavrael finally snapped out from his momentary daze.

"He does not seem to want or be willing to escorting us, so I guess you shouldn't force him. He should stay here at the gate to keep watch." Gavrael held on to Evie's waist possessively as he smirked at Onyx.

The dragon growled and then it turned around, leading the way forward.

"Oh, he agreed!" Evie pressed her lips tight, holding in the laugh that was threatening to bubble out with the slightest provocation, as she heard Gavrael tsk-ed.

Evie then dragged Gavrael to climb on the back of the dragon along with her, but Gavrael refused.

"I don't ride on dragons, Evie. I can travel on air if I want to." Gavrael said, causing Evie to raise a brow.

"Oh, alright. Whatever you prefer." She then let go of his hand and climbed onto Onyx's back, leaving Gavrael standing aside them, scowling.

Chapter 307 - Too Precious

Dragging his hand through his hair, Gavrael could only sigh helplessly and follow after Evie and that irritating dragon. He stayed very close to her as he stood lazily, floating in the air as a dark

cloud formed purely from his powers was suspended beneath his feet, carrying him along very similarly to a magic rug.

Looking over at him, Evie could only part her lips in awe. She did not know he could do this too. His magic was truly something far more superior compared to what she had seen from Zanya or hers. As she continued watching him, Gavrael felt the weight of her gaze on him and turned to see her staring starry eyed.

"Want to fly with me?" his voice echoed across the short distance between them, and Evie realized the man had read her expression. "Come, Evie." he stretched out his arm towards her welcomingly, but Onyx suddenly picked up his pace and flew a little further from the man, so Evie's outstretched arm could not bridge that sudden gap that widened between them to reach for his hand.

Evie saw how Gavrael half-bite his lower lip in frustration and she could not help but smile in amusement. Somehow, seeing him looking so incredibly annoyed was providing her with some jollity. Though knowing that both Gav and Onyx seemed to irritate each other to death, she could not help finding the way these two interact was just so funny.

'Easy Onyx, don't tease him too much.' Evie told her dragon through her mind communication and the dragon voluntarily moved closer to Gavrael again – but not before giving a somewhat indignant snort that had Evie patting his back soothingly.

But the moment Gavrael stretched out his hand when Evie was within reach, again Onyx swerved away. It was clearly on purpose to agitate Gavrael.

Gavrael's hand stayed suspended in mid-air as Evie looked helplessly at him, pressing her lips tight to stop smiling. But the next second, she saw his darkness blazed like black fire around his body and her eyes widened. Oh, no!

Before Evie could say anything to appease him, Gavrael disappeared from where he was, and she felt strong and swift arms grabbing her the next second as she heard and felt Onyx's growl vibrate along his large body. The next thing she knew, she was already pressed against Gavrael, floating along with him on his cloud.

Speechless, Evie looked up at him and his expression was all serious, completely unrepentant. "You should always choose anything that I offer over anybody else's." He said, sounding as though he was more than certain that he what he just did was the right thing. "Because I'm your husband." He added, though this time she heard a hint of difficulty for him to finally vocalise that last thought.

Evie fought the urge to laugh at his pettiness. It seemed that this version of her Gav was even pettier that it was making her want to crack up constantly. He is really just too precious! "Who told you that?" she raised a brow at his statement, but her tone was still gentle and patient. "Just because you're my husband, doesn't mean that I must always choose your offers and am not allowed to make my own choice, Gav. And as my husband, you can't just ignore my choices too. Otherwise, our relationship wouldn't be of husband and wife but would be reduced to something like a master and slave, don't you think?"

Gavrael fell silent. "Alright," he gave in after sighing glumly, looking away as if to hide the expression on his face. "But between me and this dragon, I should always be your first choice. Deal?"

And with that, Evie could no longer stop herself from bursting out in laughter. Her sweet and soft laughter as of light that stirred the sea, echoed all around them as her shoulders trembled exquisitely. He was so serious as he said those words and that was what actually triggered her to laugh even more. She actually found him so adorable right now despite the brooding expression on his face. The more she laughed, the harder his frown became.

Seeing how he was frowning so hard, as if he was having problems solving a serious puzzle which was the question 'why the hell is she laughing? Is she laughing at me?' as he looked at her, Evie finally forced herself to stop.

"Geez, Gav," She lifted her hand and pinched his cheek playfully. "Could it be that you're jealous of Onyx?"

His frown became even deeper. He could not believe she was still asking him that. Was it not already obvious to the point that even a blind person could tell? He could not believe this was one of the other characteristics that did not change with her as well.

Gavrael was about to groan when suddenly, something caught his attention. There was another dragon approaching them as if it came from the sky and was now falling to the ground, looking as though it was hurt.

Without a word, Gavrael disappeared from the air along with Evie and materialized on the ground.

Evie was about to ask what the problem was when she saw Fir and he was indeed wounded! Her heart immediately jumped at the sight of the dragon, there were cracks spreading out on almost all the scales that were covering his chest area and his blood had coloured his originally bluish scales into dark red – that was just how much blood he had lost.

"Fir!" Evie shrieked as she approached the dragon. "Oh god, what had happened to you?"

"I think someone must have summoned him." Gavrael said, his face now expressionless, as Evie worriedly surveyed the dragon's large chest wound. Someone had summoned him? Evie then remembered Thundrann.

"Oh god, how can we help him?" she looked over at Gavrael with a frantic face, hoping for him to give her an answer. "That's right, let's bring him to the magical crystal waters, Gav!"

"The waters won't work on them." Gavrael rejected her idea immediately, causing her heart to drop. "But there's something else..." he suddenly trailed off as if he had changed his mind at the last second.

But Evie was not going to let him keep mum and be all mysterious about what he was about to say earlier. "What something? Please tell me! I can't let anymore dragons die, Gav. There are only seven of them left. I can't let any of them who are left to die! So please... tell me..." She was beside herself with worry.

He stared at her and then let out a deep sigh, "The waters can't cure them... but you can, Evie."

Chapter 308 - Absolute Fact

"How?" Evie asked, her eyes wide in surprise and relief to hear that there was a way.

Gavrael looked at the dragon's wound first before answering Evie's question. "You can still save him as his wound is at the stage where it's still curable." he said, "all you have to do is touch the wounded part then call forth your healing magic."

"I have healing magic?" her eyes widened. How come Zanya did not tell her anything about this?

"Light faes and us, dark faes have healing magic. It's pretty common. However, most faes are not able to heal dragons." Gavrael explained. Back then, he had tried to heal one before Evie tried, just so he could do something to stop Evie from crying over the dying dragon. But it did not work. His dark magic could not work on the surface dragons, unlike in the Under Land. In fact, the other light faes tried too, back then, but it was all futile. Only Evie had that unique magic to cure a dragon.

"Alright, is that all?" Evie asked and when he nodded, she did not waste a moment longer and immediately stretched out her hands and placed her palms just an inch from touching the dragon's chest.

Fir was barely moving now, and his eyes looked glazed over as though he was ready to leave them for good. She must hurry or she might not be able to save him.

Thankfully, with all the training that she had done with Zanya, it was now a little easier for Evie to summon her magic and use them. She was also glad it was not that complicated as long as she could concentrate, she could call forth the right magic needed.

In three tries, Evie's body glowed and her magic which was of the same colour as her eyes enveloped the dragon as well. The stronger magic coming out from her palm concentrated at the wound.

Gavrael just stood there watching her and he was shocked again at how fast it was for her to call forth the right magic and put it to use. It was usually not this easy for her back then.

Fir growled out loud as if in pain but slowly, the dragon's wails slowly died down as Evie's magic healed and patched him up. Until he became fully quiet, and Evie's magic slowly disappeared.

"Did I do it right?" Evie asked as she opened her eyes while scanning over the wounded area on Fir's chest. She saw that the injury was gone.

The first thing she did was look at Gavrael and when the man nodded in approval, Evie's eyes twinkled happily, and she hugged Fir.

"Thank god!" she breathed and then caressed the dragon's spikes as it crouched before her like an obedient pet, making high pitch noises as if it was uttering some song of gratitude.

The corner of Evie's eyes suddenly stung and felt hot. She was so relieved. "What is happening? Why was Fir summoned? Is there a war going on?" Evie asked Gavrael as she continued caressing the poor dragon. "Who could have summoned him?"

Gavrael looked contemplative but before he could give any response, Evie seemed to suddenly think about something, and she ran to him with much panic.

"C-could it be that something's... oh my god, what if the enemies actually went over and attacked Kirzan while we're here –"

Seeing the intense panic and fear in Evie, Gavrael pulled her to him. "Easy, Evie. Don't worry, Kirzan is safe." He rubbed circles into her back to sooth her as he assured her of her fears, knowing what she was panicking about.

"How would you know? We are –"

"Of course, I know these things. Who do you think I am?" he cut her off. "I can easily monitor what's going on back there with my magic. Of course, I can't monitor every little thing, but I can see if there's an invasion happening. I had left a few vampires under my control. I can see what's happening back there through their eyes and I just checked on them a while ago, and everything is fine there. I am confident the war is not going to start yet, at least not today or tomorrow. But after tomorrow, the war could break out anytime."

"R-really? How could you tell? Could it be that you also sent some spies to infiltrate the capital?"

"No. But I have other methods to know and predict everything. So, be rest assured, Evie." His expression returned to that cold hearted and unfeeling one. "I'm not going to let anyone attack us because I'm going to be the one who will attack them first."

Looking at him, Evie felt so much power, sheer confidence, and a will of steel brimming in his eyes. At that moment, he looked like he was promising her that she had nothing to worry about because he'd destroy the world just to keep her safe. It made her heart shiver a little. Because he just looked like he'd do just that and she couldn't help but remember the look in his eyes when he was about to slaughter those young men last night.

Feeling his darkness starting to turn him colder again, Evie gripped onto him tighter, moulding herself tight against him. And thankfully, the cruel and sharp edge of his power calmed down and retracted into himself.

"I trust you," she whispered, and it pleased him.

"But if there is no war going on, then why was Fir summoned?" she asked, once Gavrael was calm – half murmuring to herself.

"I'm not certain but that half dark fae must be trying to do something with the dragon but failed since the dragon returned here despite its wounds being that bad." Gavrael explained and Evie somehow agreed with this explanation. Though truth was that Gavrael actually suspected that they were up to something sinister. The disappearance of the beasts also added up to his suspicion. However, the matter still was not enough to alarm him. In his mind, he thought that no matter what kind of trick they would try to pull, nothing could stop him. No one would be able to win against him. He was going to make sure of that... no, he is already very certain of that. It was an absolute fact.

Chapter 309 - Hidden Agenda

It was already night when Evie and Gavrael entered the throne hall of the massive castle.

Evie had her hand loosely held in his as they walked together towards the throne. She was telling him everything that she had heard from Zanya while Gavrael looked around, listening to the sound of her melodious voice, and not making comments on anything. All that she is telling him, he knew all of it already, but he did not make any comment and simply listened. He was happy that she

trusted him to the extent of telling him all these without him probing and did not hide anything from him.

Truth was that Gavrael had not planned on agreeing with Evie's plan to awaken these light faes. Though what she said was right, that these light faes were certainly strong. Therefore, they will definitely be a huge help coming on as their allies. However, Gavrael did not want them to be awakened just yet. In the grander scheme of things, now was not the right time to awaken the light faes. He had thought and planned things through, with Evie's well-being and benefit at the forefront of his mind.

Gavrael had already realized that despite all the changes that had happened, it seems that the major events which had occurred before were bound to happen this time around as well. It was just repeating everything with just a little twist to the events.

It was as if no matter what he did, everything will somehow end up eventually happening again. This was something he refused to accept just because it seemed to be cast in stone. That was why he was going to do everything in his power to alter things and events as much as he could. One of which was to not awaken these faes.

He had let Evie awaken them before. This time, he would not just stand aside and let her do it now. He had other plans for them and for Evie as well. He needed to change the sequence that led to events happening as they did in the past.

"I'd like to awaken them now, Gav. They'll be of great help to us in the war!" she said enthusiastically, as she turned to look at him, her eyes shining. Gavrael could practically see how much she wanted to help. He knew what he was about to say might cause her to be upset and even hurt her feelings.

It took a while before Gavrael could voice out his stand and turn her down. "No... I don't think this is the right time for that, Evie."

Evie's face fell as the light in her eyes dimmed. "I think this is the right time though, Gav." She insisted, her voice floated to his ears softly.

"No, it's not. Not yet, Evie. Remember that I told you I'm planning for a surprise attack, right? If you are to awaken them now, you'd need to awaken the tree of light too. Otherwise, these faes would be useless. But the moment you do that, that half dark fae will immediately be alerted. He would definitely know what's going on in here. I don't want to give them any signs of what's going to befall them very soon." He explained to Evie with a serious and uncompromising expression, hoping that his words would be enough for her to understand and trust in him and his plans.

There was that hint of cruelty flashing in his vivid blue eyes again. Though it was very fast, but Evie caught it. She looked at him silently for a long time, contemplating what he had just told her and thinking of the person she had come to know him as for the past days she had been with him.

Knowing him and understanding where he was coming from, Evie remembered that she had the very same thought as Gavrael back then too. She had even told Zanya the same thing when she had asked Evie to awaken the rest of the light faes. At that time, she had wanted to find Gavriel first before awakening these light faes.

"But you said a war could break out any time soon after tomorrow." Evie reminded him softly.

"Yes, because that's the day I initially planned to launch my own attack." Gavrael replied with a devilish smile.

"Then would it be ok if I just come here again tomorrow night or at dawn of that day to awaken them..." Evie suggested her plan that would compromise and work along with his own.

"Yes. But you must wait for my word first and foremost before doing anything." His gaze was firm, and his voice broke no nonsense. "Can you promise me that?"

When she nodded with eyes that shone with determination, Gavrael grabbed her hand, and they promptly left the castle.

To Evie's surprise, Gavrael let her ride on Onyx this time as they left Crescia and did not fight and insist on her travelling beside him. He flew by himself, but this time, he travelled at a much higher altitude than them, and Evie was curious what he was up to. She felt like Gavrael was doing something on his own, as if it was not just her who had a hidden agenda in coming here but him as well.

He even went up so high she could not see him anymore as he went past the thick clouds.

When Onyx landed and Evie met and caressed each of the dragons, relieved that every one of the dragons were there. She looked up and finally, Gavrael appeared from the clouds and landed before her.

"What were you doing up there?" she asked, probing him.

Gavrael's expression was unreadable. "I'm just curious of one thing."

"One thing?"

"Why everyone aside from the dragons cannot enter Crescia through the sky route. It appeared that this place is still protected by a very ancient magic and that was why everyone could only enter through the gates." He explained and Evie was again amazed at the new information she is learning from him.

"That's amazing, I didn't know that." She said and Gavrael approached her.

"It's time to go back."

She nodded but before following him, she spoke with the dragons. It was as if she was a mother telling her children to take care of themselves while she was away, and they should wait for her call.

Then Gavrael watched her go to each one of the younger dragons and hugged and patted their scaly head with much fondness.

At that moment, he noticed Onyx's piercing glare again and he turned. Their intense gaze met. Gavrael remembered that even back then, this dragon sometimes looked at him like this.

It was as if despite the fact that he could not seem to stand Gavrael, the dragon seemed to have something he wanted to say to him.

Gavrael had ignored those looks directed at him before, knowing that there was no way he could communicate with this ancient creature. He had thought then that he would definitely only say something that will irritate him if he could actually speak with him. And this time, Gavrael still thought the same.. So despite feeling the heavy gaze of the dragon on him, he kept his face expressionless and ignored him.

Chapter 310 - Last Chance

Then Evie came over and approached Onyx last. The way she hugged and caressed it was definitely more biased if compared to the other dragons. Though she did seem to try to treat them all the same, Gavrael could see the minute changes in her expression and the look in her eyes when it comes to Onyx. He could not help but scowl again.

And it was as if she felt his gaze and his brooding energy, Evie quickly ended her goodbyes and let go of Onyx and jumped at Gavrael and kissed his cheek. "Alright, let's go Gav. Thanks so much for waiting." She grinned as if enjoying his aggravated expression, giggling secretly to herself.

By the time they were out of the gates, Gavrael was looking very serious again. It was obvious to Evie that his mind was occupied with something.

"Gav..." she called out softly as she could now see the moon the moment they were out of the Mist Forest.

He glanced down at her, and she flashed a slow smile at him, appreciating his patience with her.

"Let's drop by the lake again before we leave." She said in a gentle pleading manner and his brows creased a little. He looked like he wanted to ask why when they had dropped by that place just this afternoon.

"I told you right, I'd like to bathe in that lake there tonight." Evie added and her smile widened at the feel of him seeming to stumble a little as he landed on one of the tree branches after hearing her say that. She knew very well that her Gav was that ever so graceful prince, and he never stumbles. But he did just now, though only a little.

He did not say a word, but he followed her wish.

They landed softly on that same flat stone surrounded by the shallow waters of the lake and Evie pulled away from his arms, like a butterfly fluttering away as if wanting to escape to the skies.

The waters were glimmering, just like that night.

Evie walked towards the edge and ran her fingers across the water's glittering surface. The glimmers became amber with enticing series of ripples.

As she cupped the water in her palm, Evie's expression became a little severe as she looked down. She was getting worried about this war. She knew all he was thinking about was to win this war and to wipe out all his enemies and take over the throne. She knew he was much stronger now, but... what if this war will cause him to lose himself and the most fearful thing for her was that his tremendous magic ends up consuming him instead? Her heart shuddered at the thought, remembering his bloodied face last night again.

She could not help but feel the fear and worry nibble away secretly in her heart. Now she truly was out of time. If he was really going to go for his plan the day after tomorrow, that only means that tonight was her last chance. She must try her best to make him remember now!

Clenching her fists tight, Evie took a deep breath and her expression brightened before she threw a playful look over her shoulder at him with a smile on her face.

He was already seated. With his legs folded and his wrists resting on his knees. His gaze was unseeing, his expression seemed odd though Evie could not read his emotion at all at that moment.

Before she knew it, her smile faded. She did not know why but as she looked at him at that moment, he seemed so lost, so alone, even though she was right here with him. It was inexplicable but something about him right then drew shivers up from beneath her skin. She felt as though something was not quite right and not knowing what it was only heightened the sense of foreboding that threatened to overwhelm her.

She realized now the one biggest difference between these two versions of him. Both of them were brimming with so much fiery charisma. Only that unlike Gavriel's which was like an inviting, hypnotic flame, that would lure one to jump into it, Gavrael's was the kind of fiery flame that would warn you to stay far back, as far away as possible.

Right now, he was exactly like that flame, forcefully trying to intimidate her, looking like he was already warning her not to go for whatever it was that she was planning. As if he already knew what she was trying to do next, and he was not encouraging her to go for it.

But Evie shook her head stubbornly. She told herself there was no way he would know what she was planning to do. And no, there is no way she would let herself be intimidated. She would go for her plans no matter what!

Taking a deep breath, Evie rose and faced the tranquil waters. She reached for the ties of her cloak first, pulling on the tassels holding it together and removed it, letting it drop heavily to the ground. Her heart was thumping wildly as she shed her clothes, one article after another.

Though she could not see his expression, she could feel his gaze sweeping across her naked skin and that was enough to make her smile and relax.

Once she was fully bared to his viewing pleasure, Evie jumped into the water. The warm water was lapping at her waist. She scooped it into her cupped palms and splashed it on her face first before she turned to look at him. Her long hair draped elegantly over her shoulders, covering her breasts just enough not to be fully exposed but at the same time, revealing enough to tantalise and draw the pair of eyes that were looking over.

"Undress and come join me in the water, my love." She then called out a little coyly to him, copying the exact same words he had said to her that night.