

SPELLBOUND 81

Chapter 81 - Anticipation

"Gavriel... please don't go." She pleaded, hugging her arms around his middle even tighter. "Let me help you."

"No!" he finally spoke with the same difficulty he exhibited a while ago. He shook his head violently in a bid to further get his point across. "Let go. Leave!"

"No! There is no way I am going off alone. I will only leave if you're with me!" Evie replied, her tone filled with fierce determination and firmness. Her fingers curled stubbornly into the bunched-up garments in her fists.

Another low and agonizing groan echoed throughout the dungeon as he unsuccessfully tried to pull off her hands that were in a death grip around his waist. He sounded like he was being tortured and Evie immediately thought that it was because of the pain he was trying to bear and the torture of fighting against himself that was causing it.

"Leave now. Please, Evie..." his voice had further weakened and becoming more desperate, begging. "Before I end up... killing you." She could hear the tremble in his voice and realised that the fear he had on accidentally killing her was perhaps the cause of his pain.

"No. You won't –"

He managed to escape her grasp and continued moving away from her and heading towards the darkness where she could not see him.

Evie grabbed the lamp and came after him until she had him cornered at the far end of the wall.

She stared at him long and hard, before shaking her head slowly as her eyes were shining with unshed tears. "You would never harm me, Gavriel. Much less kill me." In her voice, he heard and realised the absolute trust she held in him. And his heart shuddered in rapture.

"I would, Evie. If you don't leave now, I would." The flames in his eyes blazed as he leaned his back against the wall looking at her approaching him. "Don't come.... Leave!" he growled. He was becoming menacing once again. Despite his weakened strength, he was trying to awaken his bloodlust to send her away. "Don't do this. Please go." He forced out a few more desperate words.

But Evie did not even budge a single step. Shaking her head, she slowly set the lamp on the ground. The corners of her eyes felt hot, and they stung. She could see he was fighting so damned hard internally, and it seemed his inner battle was so brutal to the point where his whole body started trembling.

"I told you, I won't leave. It's fine, Gavriel. I know you will never harm me." She said with soft intensity. "I know you can control yourself, like what you are doing right now."

Gavriel felt that he was going to be driven insane and wanted to leap away somewhere – anywhere – and destroy something, be it stone or iron, anything, just so he could distract himself from launching himself at her and killing her. Her words came at him like wrecking ball, shattering the last wall of defence left in him. How could she say that? How could she have such unwavering faith in him? She knew nothing. She did not know what kind of cold-blooded monster was raging within him right now. And she did not know how strong this monster was. How many times had he tried

previously to tame this monster or attempted to overpower him? He had never won, not once. And it was going to happen again this time. The monster would never listen to him, he never did. The outcome would be the same – one that he wanted to avoid at all costs.

"Stop! Go away! You don't know... I'm going to kill you!"

His mind was foggy, as though there were swirling mists clogging his thinking. He could not believe she returned. Why the hell did she come back after what she had seen?

The monster inside him was so strong that no matter how much he tried to force it back into its cage, it would never back an inch and would even threaten to break free from the existing boundaries it was in. And take full control of him – this was his greatest fear.

All that could reach him was her voice, her angelic voice that kept calling out his name. It was like a siren call. He did not know how it happened but every time she calls out his name, he would somehow be able to push the monster back a little within him. But he knew it would not last long. He could still sense it hovering like an impatient spectre, ready to claim full control over him again. He somehow managed to make it retreat a little whenever Evie speaks... but he knew it was still waiting and biding its time, preparing to launch and take over the reins the moment he sees any opening to break free.

And when that happens, he would take Evie and once his fangs sink into her tender skin and tasted her, he would not be able to stop until she drops to his feet... dead.

He growled again. He must send her away! He must! Before his monster takes over him again. But his body felt heavy and stone-like, as though it belonged to someone else. He knew he could not flee from her. All he could do was make her leave.

"Don't come closer." He was baring his teeth and growling menacingly, trying to scare her off. But still she continued moving closer. Why? Was she not scared? She had clearly seen everything. That monster he was hiding in him that he could not control. So why... why did she keep coming closer? She should be running in the opposite direction. Was she not utterly terrified of him before? Logically, she would be more terrified now that she had seen the worst of him. That he was not just a simple bloodsucking vampire but also had a monster residing within him.

He saw her gathered her beautiful shiny hair to one side and revealed her bare, translucent neck to him. She was wearing a white gown. Her fair skin and that silvery hair coupled with her dress made her look like some pristine angel luring him to his doom, to commit the sin he would never ever accept afterwards.

The monster inside him smiled in anticipation, licking his lips in eager anticipation. Becoming even stronger now, telling him to stop resisting and just accept this divine offering that came to him on a silver platter.

The sight of her bare, vulnerable neck caused a sharp searing pain that lanced through his entire being. His throat suddenly felt parched and burned with thirst. This angel had knowingly lit the fire and now he was in hell.

Chapter 82 - Hunger

"Evie! Stop!" Gavriel roared out desperately. The flaming thirst and his desperate struggle to fight against it made him dizzy. This little wife of his truly knew how to get under his skin and drive him

insane! He knew he was close to letting the monster break loose. He had to grasp on to the wall to keep himself standing but his nails would not – no, could not – even sink into the stones anymore. He slowly sunk to the ground and leaned back tiredly against the wall. Gasping and fighting for air.

Then she was already before him, kneeling with her hands on his shoulders, and checking him over with genuine concern and utter worry on her delicate little face. He closed his eyes to regain some sanity, to keep fighting this monster which was now right beneath the surface.

To his utter surprise, she hugged him, burying her face into his sturdy chest and wrapped her hands around him. Her soothing warmth and the delicate fragrance of her skin wrapped around him like a cloud of soothing magic invading his senses – not aggressively but ever so gently. He could not figure out how he could still hear and feel her like this at this point. Neither could he reason out how he could even still think somewhat rationally.

"I can't stand it anymore, Gavriel. I don't want you to keep suffering like this anymore. Please, believe in yourself and believe also in me. I know you will not kill me. You can never ever do that to me." She kept repeating those words reassuringly, her warmth slowly but surely spreading all over him, her soothing voice making their way to the deepest recesses of his soul.

Feeling like it was now the right time, Evie pulled away and smiled tenderly at him, pleased at the thought that he was just sitting there quietly and obediently, finally giving in. Suddenly, her lips landed on his and his entire being froze. His bared, dangerous fangs sunk back and looking at his eyes, though they remained an intense blue, it somehow looked a little tamer.

She did not plan to kiss him so suddenly at that time, but before she knew it, she already found herself at it. Was it because this oh-so-strong and mighty man looked even more alluring when he was vulnerable now that she could not stop herself the moment she stared at his lips?

Feeling his lips against her again nearly made Evie tear up. She had been missing the feel of his lips on hers for the past three days badly, so very badly, that she currently felt as though she were drowning in utter relief and pleasure at the taste of his lips on hers once again. It was as though his lips were water and she was someone who had been dying of thirst for the longest time ever.

Gavriel's body remained motionless and still but deep within him, his heart quaked at the taste of her lips. Oh, this taste that could bring him to his knees! How he had missed her desperately too.

This treacherous heat that her kiss ignited within him began to spill over and spread everywhere. His heart was thudding wildly with both desire and fear. Did she truly not know that to the vampires, a kiss was also a kind of ritual and a wordless invitation permitting their partner to draw and feast on their blood? No, this cannot be... she knows nothing about these... she should not be aware of this...

Gavriel had the thought of wanting to jerk away before it was too late, but the floodgates of desire had already been opened. Two kinds of hungers came flooding in – sexual desire and the craving for her pure and untainted blood. And now that both these desires came at him all at once, the power it wielded over him was impossible to resist, more powerful than any other hunger he had experienced ever before. It shook him to his core – this all-consuming need and hunger that he is experiencing. In his mind, he knew it would be a challenge with Evie. However, the knowledge and reality truly cannot be compared to each other. He had underestimated how much his yearning for this little lady was – the sexual desire he had for her was real and unfortunately unfulfilled in their marriage bed.

"Only for now, at least." This was the thought that crossed his mind. However, when this overwhelming sexual desire met with the ravenous craving that came from wanting her unsullied and surprisingly fragrant blood, it truly was as if he were sucker-punched in the gut. Fighting it off is going to be perhaps the most difficult thing he would ever attempt in his life, which was not without its fair share of hardships.

Lifting both his hands with much difficulty, Gavriel held her head as if to push her away but instead, his shaky fingers sunk unreservedly into her thick and silky hair, conveniently establishing a foothold for him to bring her even closer to him. It was impossible to resist. Retreat was some far-off notion that currently is not even anywhere close to his mind. The desire was too much it felt even more powerful now than that monster which was within him.

He felt the dizzying heat at the brush of her tongue, and everything began to melt. His palm pressed against the back of her head as he found himself kissing her back with savage hunger.

His entire being burst into flames. He wanted her. Her body, her soul, her blood.

When their lips parted, Evie was gasping for air. But Gavriel did not give her much time to catch her breath before single-mindedly swooping down and capturing her lips in a searing kiss again. Before long, Evie felt his lips travelling downward.

The monster rejoiced, coaxing him to go on and satiate its hunger.

Evie's pulse became even louder, knowing that he was going to do it now. She was not afraid, but the nervousness was unnerving. She swallowed tensely but still she tilted her head back giving him free access to her neck.

His lips lingered on that one sweet spot and she knew he was going to bite her there. She stopped breathing, anticipating his bite. Would it feel painful? Her fingers curled and grasped onto his dark hair and as Gavriel inhaled sharply before he finally bit into her, Evie spoke.

"You just go ahead and drink until you've had enough. I will be alright,?love."

Chapter 83 - Predator

"I will be alright, love."

She had said that so naturally and his body stiffened at the words of endearment. This was the very first time she had ever used an endearment towards him and the effect on him – even though he was in this state – was just as unnerving.

The sweet endearment swirled around inside him like some kind of spell, scattering his thoughts and erasing every struggle, every pain and insatiable hunger that even wildness and ferocity of the monster within seemed to have been momentarily reigned in for the moment.

Then there was that confident and natural way she was talking about how he should just bite into her and drink of her blood. Where did she even muster up such courage? The way she was going about it was as if they were just referring to plain old water or even wine. Did she not realise that this was not something one can just take off on a free-flow basis? They were talking life giving blood here. He felt the situation was so surreal that the thought that this was in his dream even crossed his mind, as he blinked and stared down at his little wife. He ended up shaking his head in the attempt to clear the cobwebs in his head.

"No... Evie," He said wretchedly, finally regaining some bit of his sanity. How on earth had it come to this? He had vowed to himself that he would never let anyone bite his wife – not even himself. The humans and most vampires were not aware of this but once a human had been bitten by a vampire, there were actually certain changes that would start to occur in them. First was the scent of the blood of the human that was bitten would start to become stronger with time. Normally, a human's scent, as long as they are not wounded, was very faint to the point that most vampires could not pick up their scent if they do not sniff for them at a close enough distance. But once a human has been bitten, the scent of their blood will become apparent and incredibly enticing, very similar to an inviting and strong perfume.

This was why, humans who have been bitten are in more danger of the vampires. Their scent would come as pure seduction – functioning as an undeniable siren's call – and most vampires would not be able to resist that desirous temptation. Thankfully, each human has different scents that they exude individually and most have an average scent that vampires had found to be not that sweet to their palate, despite it being so aromatically strong. It tends to carry a more earthy and muddled taste that was mixed in with their scent. So, the vampires have since then, been able to pair that unsavoury taste when scenting the not-so-sweet undertones of a human's blood scent. It was found that the vampires were highly partial to the sweeter and flowery scent of some human's blood as they had found that the humans who exude these scents to have blood that tastes honeyed, floral, and crystal clear – which invigorates them like nothing else could.

But Evie's scent... Gavriel had noticed it ever since the first time he met her. Every time he inhaled the air anywhere near her, he could smell her scent and to him, it was the sweetest perfume he had ever smelled. He did not even dare to imagine how her scent would change once she was bitten or bleeding.

This was why Gavriel had been very careful in handling her. It would be a disaster if she was wounded or bitten. Moreover, he knew that one of the humans' greatest fear was getting bitten by a vampire and he was well aware that Evie felt the same way. No sane human would ever want to be bitten by a bloodsucker and end up becoming a vampire's blood supplier. He had sworn early on that he would never let her go through such an experience in her lifetime. He would do anything and everything to never let that happen to her. He had promised to protect her. But now, this was happening. He never once thought he would end up being the one she needed protection from.

Gavriel searched desperately for a way to dissuade her. Not her! He cannot do this to her! Not to mention the danger. She had faith in him, but he did not have the same faith in himself with this monster residing inside of him.

He must send her away now when he is still mentally aware. Before his sanity could be swallowed and overwhelmed by the monster again.

However, just as he was about to pull away, Evie's arms around his head pulled him back without any warning, burying his face into her neck.

"Don't fight it anymore, love. It will be alright." She assured him patiently, one hand gently caressing his hair as how a mother would caress her child to calm him down.

It was too late for Gavriel to protest. Because it was then that his sharp fangs had already grazed across her skin and a small trickle of blood flowed from that small wound.

Her scent, that heavenly scent of her blood immediately raced through every fibre of his body and his throat was suddenly on fire, not just his throat but his entire being was on fire! And this blood was the only thing that could quench this all-consuming fire burning in his soul. It was the only thing that could save him from the fire that was burning him.

At that moment, he was nothing but a predator.

Everything was a blur in his mind. His view was obliterated by nothing but hunger and before he knew it, he had tasted her blood. Her sweet, sweet blood. And heavens... it was something he never thought would actually exist in this world. Even his monster thought the same.

Gavriel felt like rain had finally fell in the inferno that was burning him up. But he just could not get enough of it. The hunger was as extreme as hellfire. As he continued drinking up the sweetest blood he had ever tasted, the pleasure consumed him. For the first time, he was one with the monster. And they both savoured the divine blood that seemed fated just for them.

A moan of greatest pleasure echoed around that dark cold place. Evie was starting to feel strange. Then she felt a sharp searing pain.

Her grip on his hair loosened and her mind began to swirl.

"Gav..." she uttered. She knew it was time for her to stop him. But he did not look sated yet. Not even close. He was still drawing on her like a starved beast. However, she knew that she needed to stop him now before it was too late.

"Gavriel." She called out again, clutching on tightly to his hair again. But Gavriel seized her shoulders, squeezing her against him in an iron grip. His strength was already back and there was no sign of him letting go.

Chapter 84 - Tamed

"Gav... I ... I think this is enough." Her voice was weakening. But there were still no signs of Gavriel giving up and stopping his feasting. Panic began to swell in Evie's heart. She was getting really dizzy. She could somehow tell that it was only a little more she could withstand before her life would be in danger. And Gavriel could not seem to hear her, at all.

Oh, no... this is bad. She had to do something... to wake him up... to stop him... but her body... her mind...

Weakly, Evie hugged his head closely to her bosom. She did not know why she did that when it was more logical to try and push him away, but she could not think straight anymore. And then, her lips weakly whispered as her dazed mind was floating off. "Gavriel... I love you."

The moment those words left Evie's lips, something seemed to hit Gavriel like a wrecking ball and he was forced to be awakened from the addictive haze of pleasure he was indulging himself in.

At that precious moment, he heard her small voice echoing at the back of his mind and then Evie's face filled his vision. He started to feel the beginnings of panic forming when she began to feel her becoming limp in his arms. However, his hazy mind could not quite catch up on why he would be feeling that panic yet.

Protest shook his body at the realization of what was going on soon enough. The pleasure that was consuming him, gripping him, rocked his entire being at the same time. And the deadly battle started.

His monster growled in objection as his power overpowered his rational side the moment he attempted to stop. His mind was in chaos, a battlefield of emotions, pleasure, fear and more.

Gavriel heard her weak voice again, "Gav", she could not even complete calling out his name anymore. The fear rose from deep within him, overpowering the heady pleasure of her divine blood. Why? Why did her blood had to be this delicious?

His monster was not willing to let go. His desire for Evie's blood was beyond reason. It would kill just to have all this blood just for himself. Yes, he wanted more. More! No one was allowed to share in this delicacy, and it belonged solely to him! He needed to drain it dry until there was nothing left. Until Evie was dead... No!!!

A burning pain throbbed deep in Gavriel's chest. The image of that young girl he had killed long ago, her dead body lying on his feet, flashed so vividly before his eyes once again. He was staring at it like he was back at that very moment again.

He fell to his knees and his trembling hands reached out to brush the hair of that young innocent stranger he had just killed. Though unintentional, it was still his hands that were stained with her blood.

As he blinked repeatedly to get his sight in focus, what welcomed him made him roar out in fury and everything burst out of control. What he was looking at, what was being burned into his mind, was not the dead girl's face but Evie's face. And she was lying there dead.

The world seemed to break apart and Gavriel screamed out Evie's name – over and over – jerking wildly as though he had just awakened from a terrifying nightmare.

"Evie!!!"

His agonized voice echoed inside the dungeon, shaking the very walls. And the next thing Gavriel knew, he was kneeling on the ground, gasping, trembling, and feeling something warm moving ever so slightly in his arms.

His eyes were still filled with terror as he held Evie close to him. His body was filled with nothing but utter fear that he was still trembling. Afraid to death to move and pull away to see her, to confirm what he was terrified of happening, for fear that he had truly killed her.

He wanted to call out her name again, but he just could not make his lips move nor his throat push out a sound. His fear was too great that he could not even calm down to check and feel for the presence of her heartbeats. His body and mind felt broken. But eventually, with stupendous effort his hands moved from her shoulders and pushed her back ever so gently.

The moment he looked down at her face, time seemed to have stopped for him. She was looking back at him, smiling faintly. And though her eyes were still heavy lidded and dazed with dizziness, he knew she could see him.

Frozen still, Gavriel watched her as her hand reached out and touched his jaw, feather light but very real. "See?" she said, still smiling. "I knew you could do it... I..."

She looked like she had something more to say but her hand fell back into her lap tiredly and her eyes fluttered gently as it closed.

Gavriel initially got flustered and panicked but as he felt her steady breathing, he calmed down and realised she seemed to be asleep.

Relief came shining in his eyes as if he had finally seen the sun's rays after the endless darkness and he hugged her to him. He could not believe he had managed to break free of his madness and yet, did not end up killing her. It was unbelievable because he fought back too, back then in the past, but he did not win and could not change a thing. But this time, he did, even though this was the toughest internal battle he had ever gone through in his life yet.

He knew he only succeeded all because of her.

Hugging her again, and kissing her head, Gavriel rose while cradling her close to him – this precious treasure of his. He could see his monster finally locked in and back inside the cage where it belonged, keeping himself fully chained now and tamed. But his eyes were still burning as he stared back at him.

Chapter 85 - Scent

The first to emerge from the doorway was Samuel. Everyone's eyes were trained intensely at that spot, all excited and at the same time apprehensive of what might come through it. As Samuel lifted his head upon exiting, he saw everyone looking at him in alarm as his eyes were red and he looked as if he had just barely escaped with his life from something – and that something was one which is dangerous. What the hell! Did the princess fail and now the prince was after Samuel?

"What's wrong?" The men asked but Samuel could not even bring himself to speak as of yet. It could be seen that he was trying his hardest to control himself, his hunger.

"The princess... what happened to –" Zolan froze and could not finish his statement as right at that moment, everyone began to smell an indescribably mouth-watering sweet scent that wafter over to them. That scent alone caused every single one present there to freeze and lose all rational thought or questions they had running through their minds.

It was as if they were suddenly put under a powerful spell, and the men's eyes became red – barring none. This scent... this scent was something none of them ever smelled before in their lifetime. This was a scent of a blood one would willingly die for just to have a single taste. Where – no, who – was the source of this heavenly blood?

As the men's mind began to be taken over by that spellbinding scent, it suddenly became even stronger and their instincts took over them. They had never – in their long lives – experienced something like this before. Most of them had experienced being taken over by their hunger before, but this was an entirely different experience. Most importantly was because they were not hungry at all. They were sated and were not supposed to be tempted to this point no matter how fragrant the scent of the blood was. But this particular scent was just impossible! Never have they ever thought that something such as this existed in this world.

When Gavriel finally emerged from the secret door, what welcomed him were his men. However, these loyal men of his all had their eyes fixed on Evie – who was being carried carefully and passed out in his arms – crouching and fully prepared to launch themselves at her as how wolves would behave towards their prey.

Gavriel's eyes widened. His mind and body was still overwhelmed with worry and he was fully sated that he had not considered what would be the effect to his men once they caught the scent of Evie's blood.

His hand immediately flew to Evie's neck, covering her wound with his palm even though it was not bleeding anymore.

He bared his fangs in warning and his dark aura leaked out of his body in waves. This was all he could do at the moment. He needed to wake his men up from this wildness induced by the mere scent of his wife's blood! Then he also needed to do something to treat his wife. Her life might still be in danger from too much loss of blood even though she was still breathing now!

"Men!!!" his voice thundered inside the room.

Like a zap of lightning that pierced through their fog laden minds, Zolan and Samuel were the first to snap out of their stupor. Thanks to not only the extremely menacing voice but the deadly aura that followed which seemed strong enough to suffocate them all to death. Their survival instincts somehow overpowered the hunger they felt driving them.

"Y-your Highness!" Zolan spoke, lifting his arm to cover his nose at the realization that the scent was wafting over from the Princess. She was the source?! Just how and why does this princess, of all humans, have such kind of blood?!

But that was not what surprised Zolan the most. Just how did His Highness managed to stop himself from draining her dry when he had already a taste of such a magnificent sample of blood? Zolan clenched his fists, his sharp nails piercing into his palms and drew blood to clear his mind, as he realized he was salivating.

His gaze fell to Gavriel and he was thankful that the prince looked so terrifying right now. He was in fact the only reason why the others who were unable to snap out from the spell-like effect of the princess' blood were still rooted at their spot. Their instincts could clearly sense the immense danger which was warning them that they would surely die if they dared move a single step closer to that blood source.

"I need someone to treat my wife. I believe she has lost too much blood." Gavriel said, panic was obvious in his voice.

"I think we should do something about the Princess' scent first, Your Highness. Her scent is too strong, it's driving us mad." Zolan said apologetically while retreating a couple of steps. Samuel had already pulled the others out of the library.

Just as Zolan said those, Gavriel's eyes lit up into a flaming blue as he sensed more vampires approaching the library.

"Damn. This is bad. Please go back inside the secret door! Her scent will attract the vampires here! They'll lose their mind if... now, please! I will do something about this, just wait inside!"

Zolan quickly went to the shelf and Gavriel could only turn around and return inside. The door closed and the maddening scent was gone. Though the remnant of her scent was still lingering in the air, it was not that hard on the rest of them anymore.

"Heavens... just what the hell was that?!" Zolan felt his knees weakened and he grabbed on the shelves to prevent himself from collapsing embarrassingly in front of the others. He could not

believe that it was not just the prince they needed to hide but now, also the princess?! Why the hell must the princess possess such a dangerous characteristic as well?

"These two will be the death of me." He muttered and he sighed and rolled his eyes, stepping out of the library.

Chapter 86 - Right Choice

Zolan was not surprised that there were already a few vampires hanging around outside – in fact, he somewhat expected it. She was not even bleeding anymore and yet her scent was like a spilled perfume.

Seeing that Leon was the one who blocked the vampires from barging into the library, Zolan looked at the man with curiosity. Everyone, most obvious being Levy and Reed, still had their eyes at varying stages of red. Thus, what could be expected of the common vampires who were also still deeply affected as though they were drugged with an extremely potent poison.

But as he turned to look at Leon, the half-blood did not seem to be affected by the scent like the rest of them were?

Zolan nodded at Samuel to keep their comrades in check until the scent was completely gone before he approached Leon.

"All of you, leave this place, now. It's an order from His Highness." Zolan said. The vampires hesitated but when the air was finally clear from that sweet but deadly scent, their eyes calmed down. And when they realized that they were before a half-blood, they flinched, and left the area without question.

Zolan sighed and faced Leon. "You didn't smell anything?" he asked.

"You referring to the princess' blood? Yes, I did." He answered.

"Then how is it that you are not affected by it like the rest of us are?" Zolan was truly curious about this.

Leon nodded. "I think that's the one thing that is left human in us. Our vampire half needs it, but our human half do not crave for it. To us, blood is just like water to humans. We only crave for it if we are thirsty enough."

"So... what you are saying is, the scent isn't tempting at all to you..."

"Yes." Leon responded with a casual shrug of his shoulder.

"I see. Then, His Highness is currently in need of your help. As you see, it is not ideal for us to approach the princess. And she seemed to have lost a lot of blood, so we desperately need to find someone or something to treat her, pronto."

Leon nodded but he was looking at Zolan as though he had something to say.

"What. Do you know a way to help the princess?"

Leon nodded again. In the past few days that this man stayed with them, Zolan was quite surprised with his attitude. He had expected this man to act like the almighty half-bloods the entire empire were glorifying but he was somehow yet to show any sign of arrogance. In fact, he seemed to genuinely feel as if he were inferior compared to them – Gavriel's men – to the point that he would

not speak unless spoken to or asked a question or told to do something. Perhaps it was because this half-blood felt as if he was the newcomer to Zolan and the others, and he was kind of inferior to them in status.

"Tell me how. Do we need to fetch a human to –"

Leon only shook his head.

"Just say what's on your mind Leon," Zolan sighed. "Don't just nod and shake your head like that. Speak freely, please."

"I will need to see her first. I have experience because I live with humans back in the capital." That was the only explanation he gave for now.

"Alright then. Follow me."

Inside the secret door, Gavriel's body was slightly shaking as he held Evie in his arms. Apart from his worry and self-loathing, Evie's scent was permeating everywhere in that tightly closed place, and it was just so strong.

And his anger towards himself burned within him as he felt his craving for her kept intensifying by the second. The colour in his eyes kept shifting from red to blue and back again as his bloodlust and anger warred against each other like ice and fire within him until the door finally swung open silently.

Zolan stood by the door, covering his nose. "Your Highness, Leon is here to check on the Princess. He says he has the experience in dealing with this."

Leon immediately felt chills running up and down his spine at the sight of Gavriel's piercing blue eyes landing on him. He froze behind Zolan. What the hell was with the prince? What was with those blue fires burning in his eyes?! Leon remembered that Prince Gavriel was already so strong and scary when they were battling it out previously at the battle front and when he was still under Prince Caius. Was it even possible that he could be hiding more? The mere thought of it caused his heart to shudder with a fear he had never felt before as a powerful half-blood. Thinking that he had pledged to be loyal to this prince, his heart gave a small sigh of relief – somehow instinctively knowing that he had made the right choice in following this master.

Noticing Leon's shocked surprise, Zolan leaned in towards the half-blood, knowing that even the man was threatened by Gavriel's state right now. "Just go ahead, Leon. Don't worry, he is sane right now. I'll explain to you about his eyes later." Since Leon is now considered one of the warriors loyal to Gavriel, he would have to be briefed about His Highness' special circumstances.

With that, Leon finally entered and carefully reached out to touch Evie. "I'll just feel her pulse Your Highness." He said and when Gavriel nodded, he sighed in relief and lightly placed two fingers on Evie's wrist – knowing that any extra and unnecessary touch on this woman would have the prince slicing off his head without blinking an eye – and then went on to check on the wound that was on her neck.

"How's is she?"

Leon could hear the panic and worry in the prince's voice. "She'll be alright, Your Highness. Thankfully, she had not yet reached the critical limit. She would be able to replenish the lost blood

within two to three days. But there is that immediate need to take care of her wound so it would heal fast, and the scent will stop leaking out."

A deep shaky sigh escaped Gavriel's lips as he heard Leon's diagnosis on Evie's condition. He looked at Leon with an unreadable gaze as the man stood and stepped out of the door.

As soon as Leon told Zolan the things he needed to help the princess, the men immediately moved.

Chapter 87 - Secrets

"Amazing! The scent is completely gone! There is not even a trace left!" Levy exclaimed with eyes as wide as saucers. The men followed after Gavriel – who was carrying Evie protectively in his arms – as they all headed to the chambers of the prince and princess.

"Leon truly has done an amazing job. He used a strange herb on her wound." Zolan said and the others looked at Leon with amazement.

Leon looked away and rubbed the back of his neck with his palm. "It wasn't that amazing. It's a common knowledge for humans. My mom is a human, so naturally, I have learnt about these things."

"Still ... that's quite amazing. We wouldn't have known heads or tails on what to do if you weren't here." Samuel said in a serious tone when Zolan spoke.

"Are you certain this is a common knowledge, Leon?" he asked, questions and curiosity brimming in his intelligent eyes. "None of us have ever heard about any of the herbs that could completely hide the scent of a bitten human. Because the princess is now bitten and her blood's no longer pure, she still supposed to emit a scent, though not that strong anymore, isn't it?" Zolan was only stating the facts that he knew.

Even Gavriel who was walking carefully because of Evie being in his arms, halted in his steps. He had the same question. Why?

"The truth is, even I don't know why." Leon replied after a short pause, making everyone speechless. "All the girls who were bitten that my mother and I helped previously still emitted a slight scent even after we have completely covered their wounds with the herb. The princess is the first and only one I have encountered who's not emitting any scent anymore." The expression on his face also showed his helplessness in answering their questions. He does not seem to understand what was happening any more than the rest of them.

Zolan glanced at Gavriel. Why? This means that once again, the princess is the one and only exception? But why was it so? What was it that is contained in her body... no, in her blood that made her so unique?

Everyone pondered over this mysterious condition of their princess as they continued walking. They had reached the chamber in silence, and it was obvious that everyone had the same question spinning around in their heads.

"Just bring her clean clothes and the things I need to wash her." Gavriel ordered as soon as the door closed and the butler immediately moved, understanding fully that the prince wanted him out – A.S.A.P.. The rest of the men were discreet enough and had long since disappeared after seeing both their prince and princess into their chambers.

After setting up everything that the prince needed, Elias quickly fled the room. Gavriel washed himself first before he started his task of gently cleaning up his beloved wife.

It took him a long time to finish his task because of his very slow and careful movements. It could be said that there was much enjoyment too on his part and not one iota of it was unwillingness. The only drawback was that his wife was unconscious due to being wounded. And that thought suddenly brought a shadow of a frown to crease his forehead that came and went swiftly.

When at last he was finished and Evie was now clad in her comfortable sleepwear, Gavriel called on Elias again.

The butler efficiently and quickly tidied everything up and in no time, he was gone, leaving Gavriel sitting at the side of the bed and staring quietly at his wife's peacefully sleeping face.

Gavriel never left their chambers that day.

The duchess had insisted to enter the prince's and princess' chambers as soon as the night came.

The men guarding the door had barred the duchess from barging into the room, but Zolan eventually allowed her to enter when the duchess claimed that she had something important to tell and give to Gavriel.

What welcomed the duchess' eyes as she stepped into the room was the prince sitting on the floor, his back against the bed and his head on his palm. The prince looked utterly distressed. When was the last time she had seen this powerful prince in this state?

The duchess remembered that he was in a similar state like this too after he had accidentally killed the human girl her daughter brought for him. Only this time, he looked a lot worse.

Her eyes fell to the sleeping princess who was lying on the huge bed and duchess Aurora sighed in relief to see that she was still alive. But if she is alive and this prince was already behaving like this, how much worse would the situation be if she had actually perished?

The thought made the old vampiress shudder and she slowly approached Gavriel.

Gavriel did not lift his face, but the duchess could see his eyes simply opened and they glimmered with a dangerous light through his dishevelled hair.

"Your Highness," the duchess took a deep breath. She remembered how her late daughter dealt with this prince back then. This prince was like a pleasing, soothing calm breath of fresh air most of the time. His presence alone could give hope and awaken faith even from the dead. He just had in him, that innate power fitted for a king that every citizen would love and care for from the bottom of their hearts. But ... the key word here was 'most of the time'.

Because, at the same time, deep within his calm and dazzling exterior, there was an endless and mysterious darkness hiding within him. He was still a mystery to everyone. In fact, the duchess thought that even the late empress herself actually did not have any idea about what exactly the prince was hiding, or what exactly was this thing hiding within him.

Up until her daughter's death, she had never told anything, even to her own mother about what exactly had happened to Gavriel in the dungeon. And how and when did the empress even conceive a child of a real royalty. It still remained a mystery and now that the empress was gone, no one could answer that question anymore. But for some reason, the duchess felt that Gavriel, this

dangerous and mysterious prince, knew everything. He was just keeping it buried inside of him, watching, and waiting, just for the right time. But the question is, the right time for what? That was the thing that scares the duchess the most.

Will there ever be a day when the truth finally comes out? Or will this prince bury his secrets within him forever or until he brings it with him to the grave?

"I'd like to tell you that you don't need to worry about the princess' scent. Because the princess' blood will remain pure, Your Highness." The duchess quickly informed Gavriel about the matter that she had mentioned to get herself allowed into his chambers before he could lose his temper.

Chapter 88 - Wait

Gavriel finally lifted his face, his hard eyes looking at the duchess with questions.

"A royal vampire doesn't taint a human virgin's blood when they bite them. This explains why the princess's scent remained the way it was before you bit her."

The lines in Gavriel's forehead deepened. He wanted more explanation. "This is apparently one of the royal family's secret. Here is one of the books that your mother entrusted into my possession for safekeeping before she left Dacia. And now I am returning it to its rightful owner. She said she had found these hidden in one of the secret dungeons in the imperial palace. Unfortunately, these books are the only surviving books about the real royalties left in this world. All of the other books have been destroyed by the emperor." The duchess said as she set the few volumes of books on the table.

Seeing that Gavriel at least looked a little better at what he heard, the duchess sighed in relief. She knew that Gavriel was not just loathing himself right now for drinking his own wife's blood, but he was also thinking about what he would do now that his wife's blood was no longer pure. He must have been agonising over the fact that Dacia and anywhere else in this empire was no longer safe for his wife now that she had been bitten.

When the duchess bade her farewells and left, Gavriel ran his palm over his face. His complexion was a little better now. He could not even explain how glad he was. He would not know what he would do if his only choice now was to send Evie back to the human empire. Sending her away... he dreaded that more than anything, more than anyone. No... there was no way that he would be able to send her back. His entire being protested violently even just by thinking about it.

He finally rose from the floor and bent over Evie. Placing his forehead against hers, Gavriel clutched the blanket with his fists as he sighed deeply. Then a relieved smile curved at his lips as he kissed her. This was the very first time he felt utterly glad and thankful for this cursed royal blood that was running through his veins. Because ever since he could remember things, his blood had only brought nothing to him but darkness, death, and destruction.

...

The sun was streaming through the window when Evie's eyelashes fluttered, and her lids finally opened, revealing her eyes which were still heavy with sleep. After stretching, she looked around and was surprised that the curtain and windows were already opened. How long did she sleep?

Finally remembering everything that happened Evie forced herself to get up from the bed. But something was holding her down and not allowing her to move.

Evie turned and saw Gavriel on her side, his arms were curled protectively around her waist.

The sight of the gorgeous god sleeping next to her made her heart skip a beat. She reached out to brush his mussed-up hair back when her hand halted. She remembered Gavriel biting her, and her hand moved to her neck.

Feeling that her wound was almost already healed, Evie looked at Gavriel again. She was surprised that he was able to sleep with the windows open. Did he purposely keep the windows opened just for her?

Seeing his creased forehead, Evie decided to go and shut the curtain but as she tried to pull his hand off her, his eyes opened.

"Good... Morning... Gav..." Evie found herself having a hard time to speak. She was thirsty. And Gavriel's intense gaze on her was causing her to feel as if ants were crawling around in her heart and making it itch.

Without warning, Gavriel pulled her into his embrace and hugged her tight.

"You're finally awake... my wife," he said, his voice was emotional as she could detect a slight waver in it as he spoke.

Realizing that she must have had made him incredibly worried, Evie hugged him back, patting his back gently. "Mm. I feel bet..."

"Yes?" Gavriel worriedly pulled away and looked at her.

"Water... thirsty." She managed to choke out, and in an instant, Gavriel leapt off the bed and was already at the side table, pouring her a glass of water.

After Evie downed the water, she felt more refreshed.

"Is there anything else that you might be needing?" he asked, still looking at her with quite worried eyes.

Evie was about to smile when her eyes finally caught his magnificent naked torso on full display, and she could not help but look dazedly for a moment. How could this man so casually seduce a sick person such as herself in broad daylight like this? Her mind grumbled and grouched that it was unfair play.

Blushing, she cleared her throat and brought her eyes back up to his. "How long have I been sleeping?"

"Two days, wife."

Before Evie could even speak again, Gavriel gently gathered her up in his arms.

"You need to eat now, Evie. You must replenish your strength." He said as he headed towards the door with her.

"W-wait... Gavriel." She protested and at last Gavriel halted.

"What is it?" he looked at her, head cocking to one side adorably.

Oh, she could not stand this man! Evie gave herself an internal slap to jolt her back to her senses.

"Please..." Evie's cheeks were hot as she shifted her gaze from his eyes to his bare chiselled chest. "W-wear something first."

Gavriel blinked but after a few moments, his eyes glimmered wickedly. "Why? Is it because you don't want another woman seeing me half naked? Is that the case, wife?"

Evie looked away, feeling embarrassed that he was right. "Y-yes. I don't want them... to see you." She answered stubbornly, all the while her cheeks burning red. As she mumbled and muttered to herself, she had not yet realised that the man holding her had turned into a solid and hard statue.

Chapter 89 - First Time

Currently, the statue that was named Gavriel was frozen with shock and could not move for a while. When Evie was about to speak, he dropped his head a little lower, and he drew in a breath that was not quite steady. He inhaled in such a slow but greedy way like how addicts absorbed a narcotic smoke.

Evie creased her brows. But when she perceived that it must be because of her blood, her heartbeat raced. Oh no.

Suddenly losing her powers of speech, Evie just stared at him with anxious and worried eyes. Her nerves still seemed to still be asleep at the moment that her brain was slow to respond in telling her what she should be doing or saying. Those large, crystalline eyes trained themselves on Gavriel, silently observing his every move.

"Damn it," Gavriel whispered all of a sudden. And before she could register in her brain on what was happening, they were inside their chambers again.

Gavriel hastily but gently laid Evie down on their bed but instead of pulling away, he held himself fully still in that bent over position that was hovering so closely over her entire length. His face so close to hers. His body taut and especially intimate as they were only a hair's breadth from being plastered to each other.

"Gav- Gavriel?" Evie finally regained her wits and stammered out softly, "are you alright?" His sudden movement followed by that prolonged state of frozenness worried her slightly.

"Yes... no... gods, Evie..." He managed to groan out. Evie thought his voice sounded pained.

She lifted her hand to touch his face, searching his face. Her heartbeat was still racing, remembering the fresh memory of him having those flaming blue eyes that seemed to belong to Hades. As she stared deeper into his eyes, she could catch something that looked like hunger surging in his eyes. Oh no... could it be that?

Seeing the anxiety and worry suddenly flare out within the depths of Evie's eyes, Gavriel caught his lower lip between his teeth as he shut his eyes tightly and let out a heavy sigh. His nostrils flared slightly as he picked up the flowery and wonderful scent that was uniquely his wife. Gods! She was too tempting for her own good. She truly was going to be the death of him one day! And this was not the first time that this thought crossed his mind.

"W-what's wrong?" he heard her ask. "Are you..."

Gavriel opened his eyes slowly and held her hand. "Nothing's wrong, wife." He said as he kissed her knuckles. She could feel how gentle he was from that action alone. His brooding and seductive gaze peeked at her through his tussled dark hair. "It's just that..."

"J-just what?" Evie blinked and cocked her head to one side, curious at what he was trying to say.

"I just can't believe you're actually seducing me like this."

"Oh... wh- what?!!!" Evie squeaked out, her eyes popping open. That cute combination of actions only further served to tickle Gavriel's heart and endeared her to him.

"At the very moment you woke up too... and to think you chose the corridor of all places to do that." Gavriel could not resist teasing Evie to see more of her reactions.

Evie's lips parted in disbelief. And she blinked multiple times once again. Wait a minute here! Just exactly who was seducing who?

"H-huh? What did I do?" she said, blushing. "When did I seduce you? You... you were the one seducing me ever since the moment I woke up! Show casing your naked body like that... and now you tell me I'm the one..." Evie's voice died down before she could finish her sentence, because Gavriel chuckled so sensuously his features became so wickedly naughty. It was then she realised he was playing around and teasing her. She pouted her lips and gave a little adorable huff as she rolled her eyes at him.

"My love," Gavriel pinched Evie's chin and she could not help but swallow. His gaze becoming deeper and more intense as he hungrily stared at her lips, licking his own in response. "You might not believe it but this mouth of yours just spouted something deadly seductive just now."

Evie creased her brows again in confusion, thinking furiously on what exactly she had said for him to claim that she was the one to seduce him.

Gavriel's lips curved up into another wicked smile. "Alright, since you look so damn adorable right now, I'll tell you..." he said and then he bent even closer to whisper. "Yes, I don't want them... to see you." Came his hypnotic and hoarse whisper. Evie shivered at the touch of his breath against the sensitive inside of her ear. Her face flushed so hot not because of the words but because of the way he said it. However, she was still confused on what part of that phrase that was seductive? And why was it that she was the one being seduced when he was the one who said those same words to her? No, it was only because of his impossibly tempting voice! There was nothing seductive in those words themselves! At all! No matter how she thought about it!

"There is nothing seductive in those words. You are just... teasing me again... are you?" Evie pursed her lips, trying to stop blushing.

"Oh no, my love." Gavriel shook his head. "It's not a tease. I'm telling you the truth. You sounded so possessive when you said those words. It might not sound that... incredible to you, but that was the first time you have ever showed such possessiveness over me, love. And it seems I goddamned loved it when you're going all possessive of me that way." His breathing snagged as he caressed her cheek with his fingers and his breaths. "It's enough to arouse me damn bad, Evie."

Oh my... Evie's lips subconsciously parted once again.

"You might consider refraining doing that when we're outside, love. I almost pinned you against the wall just now. The corridors might look empty to you but they're actually not... but if we're in here..." he paused and moistened his dry lips with his tongue.

The way he did it as he stared at her was so inviting Evie felt entirely seduced.

"You can seduce me all you want." He whispered.

Chapter 90 - Persuade Me

"Seduce me all you want." His hot and moist whisper caressed her ears, causing goosebumps to travel over her skin.

"I... I don't know how..." Evie said dazedly. She could not help it. He has yet to kiss her, and she was already feeling drugged by his hypnotic gaze and everything he say or do. Everything about him was just so intoxicating. "I don't know how to seduce..." her voice trailed off in embarrassment.

"That's not true, love... you always know how to drive me insane. You get under my skin like no other does. You're an effortless seducer, Evie. Even right now..." his throat worked. "You don't even realise how ravishing you look right now... oh, gods... I want to..." he squeezed his eyes close tightly.

Gavriel was distracted by the sight of her luscious and plump lips. The whole time during the last two days were excruciating for him. He remembered when he parted with her before the battle started. She had told him that he had the permission to touch her once he returned and that he told her if he did not die waiting first. Well, he almost died. He gave a dry laugh as that thought ran through his mind again – and not for the first time.

Waiting for her to wake up so he could finally hear her voice again and see her smile was proving to be the longest days in his life. He was with her again at last and yet she was unconscious. And even if she was awake right now, it was not quite the right timing for some hanky-panky to be enjoyed. She still needed a lot of rest, and what he wanted to do to her was the complete opposite of that. So, his waiting time was far from over. He could only endure with a long-suffering smile.

Gavriel had tried his very best not to kiss her the moment she woke up. Because he knew it would only provoke his hunger for her. He was never very confident with his self-control whenever it comes to her, much so now that she had expressly given her agreement for him to touch her. Now even more so, he was determined not touch her until she was fully recovered. He knew that once he started, nothing short of a world crisis would be able to get him to stop.

But his dear Evie, had surprisingly showed such possessiveness over his person at the worst possible time. Why was his wife always... always ending up in a provocative situation with regards to him at the wrong place and the wrong time? Be it on purpose or not, Gavriel wanted to punish her with so much pleasure until she cries to him for mercy for putting him in this endless and increasing torture of only being able to see and scent her but not being able to have her the way it truly matters most.

Groaning, Gavriel suddenly straightened. The only thing that was keeping him from pinning her down right now and finally taking her was the dark thought that he was the main reason why she was in this state currently and that he was the one who had put her in grave danger. This reminder effectively cooled his boiling blood. Knowing that it was only a little more that he would have drained her dry of her life's blood just caused ice to flow in his veins.

The mere reminder of him biting down and drinking his precious woman's blood cleared Gavriel's thoughts in an instant. Nothing better to sober a person than to remember how he almost murdered his own wife. He still resented himself for putting Evie in danger and he would not be forgiving himself for doing that – forever. Because nothing would ever change the fact that he, of all creatures, nearly killed her.

Suddenly, the fiery air between them cooled significantly. As they stared mutely at each other, Evie saw the haze of lust quickly disappear from his eyes.

"Alright..." he smiled sweetly. "I'll listen to my little wife and be good and go put on some clothes. Give me a moment." He winked at her as he walked off to do what he said.

Evie was left blinking. Confused and disoriented. What just happened? She had really thought he was definitely going to kiss her and... he suddenly stopped? It felt as if she was taken up into a whirlwind, spun around crazily and then dropped to the ground – all in a matter of seconds.

"Now, let's go." He came back fast and scooped her up again. "You need to eat to regain your strength."

...

That afternoon, Gavriel took great care of Evie's every single need. He coaxed her to drink the incredibly awful tasting medicine Leon had brewed for her. It honestly tasted like it came from a witches' brewing cauldron. Evie could not help but stick her tongue out every time she took a mouthful, causing those looking on to chuckle at her making funny faces.

Evie felt a lot better when night-time came. She must say that Leon's medicine was incredible. She felt fully recovered now and even quite energetic too.

"Did Leon have some sort of magic?" Evie asked suddenly as Gavriel and her were taking a leisurely stroll in the garden. Gavriel was initially sceptical in letting her move around but Evie insisted that she was fine now.

"Why would you think that?"

"His medicine is incredibly effective. I swear I feel that I have fully recovered now. I even think I've become a little stronger than I was before this." She grinned happily.

Gavriel searched her face and then smiled. "Perhaps."

"Can we continue to take a stroll in the town? I don't want to be sitting and lying down after sleeping in bed for two days." she said when Gavriel paused. "I really feel like an invalid even if I am not." She pouted cutely, trying to push her point across.

"No, wife. You just woke up. And it's cold outside..." he trailed off at the sight of Evie's expression. "Alright, how about you try and persuade me?"

Evie stared at him. What was she doing all these while if not trying to persuade him? The reason why she had made that request and wanted to go out with him was because she somewhat felt that Gavriel seemed not to want them to return to their chambers for whatever reason it was. He had brought her to places where there were many vampires around.

Gavriel had previously always taken her somewhere where they could be alone, so now she was curious as to why he was suddenly bringing her to busier and bustling places now. She also wanted to talk to him privately but because vampires were around, they could not even have a decent private conversation for fear of having their talk being eavesdropped on – not that it was on purpose. Evie could not even consider whispering, knowing how sharp the ears of the vampires were. Vampire's hearing was superb and cannot be compared to mere human hearing. Could it be because Gavriel did not want her to ask about the things she saw in the dungeon?

Facing him, Evie stared deeply into his silvery moon-like eyes. And then suddenly, she tiptoed and reached out for his face and caught it between both her hands and brought her mouth against his decisively.