

## CHAPTER 37

In the centre of the cave was a pedestal made out of a black rock merged with some bits of crystals. And what was resting upon this rock was the most exotic and unimaginable flower I had ever seen.

It was a flower made out of pure glass. Though it's glass shell was such a hard exterior, it looked so alive and so so. Inside was a bright glowing light that flickered. It seemed as though the glass was holding all of the energy inside together...and it formed the flower.

"It's real," I said out loud, "Esme's Flower is real."

I carefully made my way towards it, making sure I was not disturbing anything else in the cave. As I approached it, it's beauty only seemed to grow.

"I'm going to save you Esme," I whispered to the flower.

The flower glowed brighter which surprised me. It's as if...the flower understood me...like how a person would. Esme must really be in there. She has been trapped inside this glass flower for thousands upon thousands of years, waiting for her love to find her.

I needed to get this to the castle before the war began. I gently placed my hands under the flower and with a slight bit of pressure...I picked it o of it's resting place. I released a breath of relief when the flower was not disturbed by me.

I giggled to myself. I feel pretty awesome right now. The positive achievement was short lived when I felt a rumble beneath my feet. I frowned. A bad feeling crept into my chest. I quickly wrapped the flower in a thick and so cloth and placed it in the bag I brought.

I sprinted toward the tunnels. I ran through as fast as I could, but the ground shaking became more violent. It was hard to place my foot firmly on the ground without stumbling.

The cracking and grinding of rock echoed throughout the tunnel.

"No no no no!" I yelled in a panic. Rock began to fall. I pushed my legs to run as fast as they could, but a giant rock had crackled through the roof of the tunnel, dropping right in front of me. I fell to the ground as I was trying to stop.

More rocks tumbled upon one another, blocking my way to freedom.

"Maikoh!" I screamed, "Help! Somebody help me!"

The whole entrance was sealed shut my the rocks. I was trapped and Zeus doesn't know where I am. Shit!

You've really done it now, Lily. Look at what you've done! This is what I get for not telling Zeus anything. If he had come with me, everything would be okay, but no! The moon goddess only appointed me for this bloody task when she could've done like a couple quest where me AND Zeus could be a team and do TOGETHER! BUT NO! Now look at me!

Tears of frustration and panic formed in my eyes, I groaned in annoyance. "I am sick of crying!" I screamed! I was not paying attention to my surroundings when a loose rock from above fell. It struck my head hard, forcing me to fade into the darkness.

ZEUS

"If we had the battle away from here, in a place of our advantage it could give us a head start in the war." Sozin said from his chair.

I nodded my head, "We will need find an area where we know best."

Ozai comes forward, "But how will we draw them in?"

I sit forward and rest my elbows on the table while swirling my wine around my cup, "We will lead them into the woods."

Ozai frowns, "The woods? Why? They will expect that?"

"No werewolf would side with a werewolf turned vampired. Nikolai has defiled his werewolf blood, betraying it. He will obviously have other creatures of the dark, but none of them will know the woods like the wolves. We will have the advantage if we were to place it there."

STORY CONTINUES BELOW

Sozin raises his brows and nods his head in agreement, "That sounds about right. But, we cannot win this just by fighting. We have to use other means in order for us to have a full advantage. Nikolai will have a diverse army with all different strengths and weaknesses."

I lean back in my chair and sigh, "That is what we have to figure out. How to do more damage." I stand from my chair, "For now, we lock down this castle. No one gets in or out of this place without my saying so," I turn to Sozin, "Tell the armies to come closer into the territory past the river." Sozin nods and marches out.

I turn to Ozai, "In form the servants and other staff to not be out a er night falls." Ozai too bows his head and leaves.

I will have to tell Lily that she cannot be going into the gardens at night alone anymore. Me or one of the others will have to always be with her.

I stand from my chair and make my way downstairs to the guards. My mind drifts to Lily. I have not seen her for most of today. It feels like I haven't seen her in forever. I felt lucky that she gave me a chance. I will do everything in me to not fail. I wonder what we will do a er this, that is if we both come out of this alive. My mind doesn't even want to comprehend what would happen if I lost her. I shook my head, I will do everything in my power to protect her.

I came to the guards at the front door, "Close the gates. I want the amount of guards doubled walking through these halls as well as outside the castle. No one comes in or out anymore."

I turn to leave.

"Should we not wait for Lily?" One of the guards asked.

I froze in my steps, "Lily? What of Lily?" I turned around facing the guards.

"She left. She had told us she had informed you she was leaving."

My heart had stopped in my chest, "Where did she say she was going?" I snarled.

"I'm not sure...Sh-she went somewhere with her little sister, Genevieve."

I yelled in anger and worry as I punched the marble wall, causing it to crack.

Ozai, Sozin and Donny came running.

Donny saw my state, "What's wrong?"

"Lily has gone missing," I growled.

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I laid in my bed, hoping to find rest, but rest did not find me. I was lost in my thoughts. Thoughts of Esme. I had not gone to see her today because of our argument last night. I had tried once to convince her to come away with me, but she was strong in reasons to stay.

She was afraid and I understood why. I was confident that she would be okay leaving her sanctuary. But she did not share that confidence much.

It got my thinking. If that was her main concern, I could contribute. I am a powerful god. I could sacrifice a part of my power and embed it within her. I would be willing to do that if it meant her coming with me.

I got up from my bed and looked upon Esme's glass sanctuary. I could see her. She was standing on her glass bridge at the waterfall.

She is usually asleep at this time. I sighed. I cannot sleep while having our problem unsolved.

I made my way out of my territory and into hers. I stood behind the bush of plants. She stood there in her glistening white gown looking at the water falling over the rocks, reflecting the moonlight.

"You may be able to sneak on the gods, but not me Kyro Stormhold." Esme said without even looking my way.

I couldn't help, but chuckle a little as I merged out of the bush, "No. I could never get anything past you."

"No you can't," She said confidently, "I know you too well."

I approach her slowly until I stop right beside her. She still isn't looking at me.

"I'm sorry, love," I said so ly.

She silently shakes her head and looks down at her hands. I gently cover them with my own, "Esme."

"Stop." She said. She finally turns to me, unshed tears were glistening in her beautiful eyes. It pained me to see her like this. I raised my calloused hands and cupped her soft and fair cheek.

"Do you remember when we first met?" She asks so ly.

I smirked, "I thought I had strayed into a dream."

"It has been years since then," She raises her soft and delicate hand and brushes my hair out of face, "Maybe it is time for our end."

My brows pulled together, "End? An end to what?"

She looks at me, not saying anything. I shook my head, "No." I said firmly, "Why would you even suggest that."

"Because I will not let my fears hang over the both of us. I will not hold you back."

"You do not hold me back, Esme," I said with a determined voice, "You make a better person. You make me good. Do you remember what I said to you?"

She sniffs, "You said you would tie your life to mine, forsaking the life of an immortal God into one of a star." She looks down, but I do not let her.

Stars can live thousands upon thousands, possibly even millions of years, however, they do not live forever. There comes a point when a star cannot shine anymore and they die. If that is Esme's fate...then I will gladly die along side her.

I raise her gaze to my own, "I would rather live one lifetime of star with you, than go on for all eternity without you. I choose you, Esme. Your fears do not hang over me, neither they hang over you."

She stood there still. I think a part of her wants to hope for such things, but there is still doubt. I gently grab the sides of her arms, "Esme, look at me," She gulps, but slowly looks up. I wipe her tears away, "Your face is too beautiful for such painful tears, my love."

"I do not know what to do," She said with her voice beginning to break.

I sigh. She isn't ready to leave yet. I desperately wanted to make a life with her, however, I would have any kind of life with her as long as she was by my side. I tuck her beautiful silver hair behind her ear, "And that is okay, my love. It was wrong of me to push you on the subject. All I need in the world...all I will ever need in the world is your love. As long as I have that, we could be living in a tiny box for all I care."

"What about leaving here?" She asks.

I sigh and pull her closer to me, "That doesn't matter anymore. At the end, all I need is you."

She shook her head, "You are giving up too much for someone like me."

I growled, "Stop, Esme. You do not know your worth. Your love is priceless. You are the most precious thing to me."

She lays her head on my chest, "I love you, Kyro."

I smile down at her, "I love you, Esme."

Esme smiles, "You are a good man, Kyro."

I smirk, "It is not my doing. Your starlight can out shine any darkness."

My eyes snap out open as I gasped awake. Red eyes stare right at me. I stumble back onto my feet and backed away in a fright. I held the flower close to me.

"W-who are you?" I said breathlessly.

A man stood there with eyes as red as blood, "I have been cursed here for so long. So close to her and yet...so far. Almost complete and yet completely broken from the man I once was."

I took a stumbling step forward, "Kyro?"

He steps forward, his features were so similar to someone I once knew. He stepped right in front of me and cups my face, "Set me free so that I may be with her her once more." He leans in and presses his lips to my forehead.

The cracking and grinding of rock reached my ears. I spun around and saw small rays of sunshine coming through the rocks. They've found.

I turn back around, "Are you-"

But he was already gone.

Was that him? It had to be.

"Lily!?" An echoing shout of Donny's voice.

I turned back around and saw the rocks falling away until there was a big enough gap for me to squeeze through.

"Lily! Thank goodness!" Donny said in relief. He helped me out of the entrance where Ozai and Sozin stood with their arms crossed. They weren't happy.

I tried to smile innocently, but that obviously wouldn't work, "I'm sorry?"

Sozin growls, "Do you realise how worried we all were? How worried Zeus is?"

"Where is Zeus?" I asked cautiously.

"He was forced to stay back. He was too enraged to be on sacred ground," Ozai informed.

I sighed, "Look guys, I had to-"

"Save it," Sozin snarls, "It's not us you have explaining to do. You stressed out Zeus a lot. He was going out of his mind, thinking the worst had happened. He's already lost you so many times, why would you add to his pain?"

I tilted my head to the side, "I've never gone missing once, this is the first time, so don't lecture me about how reckless I am."

Sozin's eyes widened slightly, but he coughed and masked his emotions, "You've been wreckless enough for us to start talking to you about it."

I sighed, "I had to do this. It was the only-"

"Stop talking, Lily," Ozai said in his calm voice, "Like Sozin said, it's not us you have to explain to. Zeus is waiting for you. I suggest you go before he hurts anyone else."

My eyes widen. He's hurt someone? "Wouldn't seeing me make it worse?"

"For goodness sake Lily!" Donny shouts in frustration, "Stop being so fucking difficult and go to Zeus before he ends up murdering someone!"

I flinched from Donny's raised voice. I held my tongue back and didn't say anything as they guided my back to the village.

I had heard Zeus before I saw him, "Why the fuck is she here, Maikoh? Did you not think to inform me?"

"It was not my place to tell, the Moon Goddess had chosen her."

"What do you mean?" Zeus snarled.

"It seems your mate is keeping secrets from you."

The boys and I came into view. Zeus's attention was zoomed on me. He had a deep scowl that scared me as he snarled, "So it seems." With his deep gravelly voice that gave me chills...and not the good kind. I was in big trouble.