

Defy The Alpha(s)

#Chapter 11: Moonsphere - Read Defy The Alpha(s)

Chapter 11: Moonsphere

Chapter 11: Moonsphere

Violet had never truly considered Nancy's trailer a home, and standing in this room made that painfully clear. She was left speechless by the sheer luxury surrounding her.

The expansive space boasted polished dark wooden floors that gleamed under the soft lighting. Four towering four-poster canopy beds, each fit for a princess, draped in crisp white sheets with plush pillows. Matching wardrobes and executive desks accompanied each bed, adding an air of sophistication.

Thankfully, the walls hadn't been painted a garish Barbie pink, otherwise, Violet would have thrown up on the spot. Instead, a dreamy blend of pastel pinks, blues, and purples washed over the room, evoking the whimsical sweetness of cotton candy.

A cozy bookshelf stood by the far end, but the true crown jewel of the space was the flat-screen TV mounted on the wall. At the sight of it, Violet nearly forgot any trespasses this school had committed against her. This was fucking paradise.

There was a door to the side, and Violet guessed it led to the bathroom. Mary had mentioned that while each room in the west house had its own private bathroom, there was also a coed communal one "just in case of emergencies."

Violet had shuddered at the thought, unable to imagine what kind of emergency would drive her to use a coed bathroom.

This school scared her more than she wanted to admit. There seemed to be less focus on learning and more on... activities, if you caught her drift.

Thank God the rooms weren't coed as well.

Violet couldn't help but wonder, If the room was this grand, the bathroom would no doubt be just as luxurious. She was tempted to check it out immediately but reminded herself she'd see it soon enough when she bathed later. No need to get too excited just yet.

It wasn't hard to find her bed—her roommates had already claimed the others, and her bag from earlier sat neatly on the unoccupied one. Violet set her satchel down and turned to face the trio, who were still staring at her, wide-eyed.

"Hi, I'm Violet. Also, could one of you tell me if there's something on my back? Because all the staring is starting to creep me out," she said, hands on her hips, meeting their gazes head-on.

A girl with short, choppy blonde hair suddenly hopped up from her bed and approached Violet. Her disarming smile caught Violet's attention immediately, and she couldn't help but notice the girl's petite frame and high cheekbones. She looked more like a delicate fairy than a human.

"Hi, I'm Lila Meadows," she introduced herself in a chirpy voice, extending her hand with far more enthusiasm than Violet expected. "It's so nice to meet you, Violet Purple," she added, as if they'd been friends for years.

Violet blinked, taken aback by the sudden familiarity. Before she could ask any questions, Lila had already thrown an arm around her, steering her towards the others. "And that's Daisy Fairchild over there."

"Hello," the brunette greeted with a wave and a welcoming smile.

Daisy was strikingly pretty, with a subtle nerdy vibe, glasses perched on her nose and a textbook clutched in her hand.

"And the grumpy one over there is Ivy Sinclair," Lila said, pointing to another blonde whose face seemed permanently fixed in a scowl.

Ivy was stunning, with long, wavy blonde hair that framed her heart-shaped face, piercing blue eyes, and plump lips. Her hourglass figure was enviable, the kind many women would dream of having. Yet, there was an undeniable air of arrogance around her, the kind that only seemed to come naturally to aristocrats.

When their eyes met, Violet instantly sensed the disdain in Ivy's gaze. It was clear that this girl didn't like her. And Violet's instincts had never been wrong. Ivy made no effort to introduce herself, instead returning to her phone, typing as though Violet wasn't even worth her attention.

Lila, however, wasn't fazed in the slightest. She cheerfully said, "Don't mind Ivy. She's standoffish at first, but when you get to know her, she's all sugar and spice."

Ivy glared from her spot on the bed. "Shut up, Lila," she snapped, her tone dripping with annoyance.

Lila rolled her eyes, clearly unimpressed by Ivy's scowl. She leaned in even closer to Violet, her voice far from subtle as she announced. "Ivy's just jealous of you."

"Lila!" Ivy practically screamed this time, sitting up with fire blazing in her blue eyes. "I said shut that loud mouth of yours!"

Lila chuckled at Ivy's frustration, but Violet was frowning, her curiosity now gnawing at her.

She turned to Lila and asked, "What do you mean she's jealous of me?" Then, looking directly at Ivy, she added politely, "No offense, but we've just met. Why would you be jealous of me? That doesn't make any sense."

"Offense is taken," Ivy spat, her words sharp. "If you're actually believing the nonsense that loudmouth is spewing."

"God, your pride is legendary, especially considering how you were talking about that video just moments ago," Daisy finally spoke up, her face tight with annoyance.

But Violet wasn't interested in whatever confrontation was brewing. Her attention snapped to the new piece of information she'd just overheard. She stepped away from the overly touchy Lila, her voice cold. "What video are we talking about?"

All three girls turned to her, looking at her as if she were a clueless novice. Violet felt her cheeks flush with embarrassment. What was she missing?

Daisy raised an eyebrow. "You haven't checked your Moonfeed?"

"Moonfeed?" Violet echoed, even more confused.

"Moonsphere," Daisy explained. "It's the site where both humans and werewolves at Lunar Academy get all the gossip, trending topics, and the latest campus news. It's not like LunarLink, the official academic network. Moonsphere's student-run. More fun, more entertaining. And yeah, you're currently trending."

What the hell? Violet's mind raced. This wasn't how she imagined finding out something important.

Before she could pull out her phone to search for this so-called Moonsphere, Lila had already whipped hers out. She moved closer to Violet, showing her the screen. "You might want to sit down for this one," she said, her voice almost gleeful.

Violet didn't need to be told twice. She sat on the edge of the bed, Lila settling in beside her. With a few quick taps, Lila searched for the video using her name, and there it was, front and center. Violet's eyes widened the moment it started playing.

The video circulating on Moonfeed was a clip of Griffin manhandling her. He lifted her off the ground as if she weighed nothing, letting her dangle helplessly before throwing her down like a ragdoll. Violet winced, her stomach twisting with humiliation as she watched herself hit the floor, ungraceful and vulnerable.

The thought that the entire school had seen her like that burned in her chest. She wanted to disappear, to sink into the floor and never be seen again.

Violet was still in utter disbelief when Lila grinned and said, "And now, for the highlight of the day." She tapped on the comment section.

By the gods.....

@WolfBro87: "Bruh, did you see how she dropped like a sack of potatoes? Griffin wasn't even trying! 😊 #GriffinRocks #VioletFalls"

@SilverClawGirl :" Ugh, Griffin is so hot when he's mad. Violet has no idea how lucky she was! I'd let him throw me down any day. 🐾 #griffinfanclub"

@AlphaKing23: "That fall was hilarious! She hit the ground like a damn rock. Someone teach her how to land at least. #GriffinCrushedIt #LunarisLife"

@SheWolfQueen: "Girl, do you see those muscles on Griffin's arm when he was choking her? Whew, I'd give anything to be in her place 😊 #GriffinGoals #LuckyViolet"

@FurryBeast99: "Bet she was hoping Griffin would 'throw' her in a different way, if you know what I mean. 😊 #IfOnly"

@FangLust:"Griffin manhandling her was the hottest thing I've seen all day. Where can I sign up to be next? 😊 #griffinrocks #LuckyViolet"

@WolfPackJock12: "Can't believe she got that close to Griffin. I'd 'drop' her too if she came near me. 😊 #GriffinTheBoss #NoMercy"

@NightHowlLover: "Bro, the way she hit the ground? Classic! Almost felt bad for a second... almost. 🐾 #GriffinKnowsBest #LunarisLOL "

@LunaLust666: "Let's be real... I wouldn't mind being lifted like that, especially if Griffin's hands are around my throat. ❤️ #GriffinFantasy #ChokedAndLovingIt"

@PackAlpha99: "She should know her place by now. No one cares if you're new—act right, or get put down. Just like Griffin did. #KnowYourRole #LunarisJustice"

@AlphaQueen10: "Lucky Violet? More like ungrateful. If Griffin ever laid his hands on me like that, I'd thank him. 🐾 #WishItWereMe #GriffinCrush"

@FangBro345: "Why couldn't she fall my way? Could've gotten a peek at what's under those clothes. 😊 #GriffinDidGood #WhatWasSheWearing"

@DarkMoonDiva: *"Griffin is such a beast, I'm jealous! I'd let him toss me around anytime. Violet doesn't know how lucky she is! #GriffinGoals #PickMeNext"*

@AlphaStarGal: *"Let's be real, Violet shouldn't even have come here if she wasn't ready to handle it. Griffin just set the bar for her welcome. 🖐️ #GriffinWins #LunarisPride"*

@AlphaBro: *"Lol Violet got wrecked! Griffin showing everyone how it's done! Should've seen her face when she hit the ground 😏 #griffindomination #LunarisSmackdown"*

"What the fuck....."

Chapter 12: Lunaboard

Disgust twisted low in Violet's belly, a sickening churn that made her want to throw up. She'd seen a lot in her old school, but this was on another level of twisted. Her anger zeroed in on one particular comment, the idiot who had moaned about not getting a peek under her clothes.

Her skin crawled. She noted his username with icy precision, already plotting a way to track him down. When she did, he would regret the day his mother hadn't used protection; his existence was a mistake she intended to fix.

For a moment, Violet wondered if Mary had been right when she'd warned her to keep her head down and avoid drawing attention. Maybe this place wasn't a real school after all, but some warped social experiment or a rehabilitation center for budding psychopaths, where scholarship kids were just thrown in as entertainment. The thought felt wild, but here... maybe it wasn't so far-fetched.

Regardless, there was no going back now. She'd have to ride out this storm that was Lunaris Academy.

Without a word, she snatched Lila's phone right out of her hand.

"Hey!" Lila shouted, trying to grab it back. Violet blocked her with her body and furiously swiped at the screen, her fingers clumsy but determined.

"What on earth are you even trying to do?" Lila demanded.

"Trying to delete the video!" Violet hissed, her frustration mounting. She wasn't tech-savvy, but she was determined to figure it out.

"You can't!" Lila cried out. "Even if you delete it from my feed, it's already gone viral all over Moonsphere."

Deep down, Violet knew it was too late. But she'd hoped, against all odds, that she could still undo the damage. It was a fool's hope, she realized bitterly.

Violet ran a hand through her hair with an annoyed groan before tossing the phone back to Lila, who caught it swiftly. Lila pouted as she cradled the device, petting it as though it were a wounded pet Violet had manhandled.

"Is this school really like this?" Violet burst out. "Just preying on people's weaknesses and mindlessly worshiping jerks like Griffin?"

Daisy's expression turned serious, and she warned, "Careful about badmouthing the cardinal alphas. The walls have ears here, and you don't want to find yourself in more trouble than you bargained for."

"And she's not even grateful," Ivy sneered from her bed, disdain dripping from her voice.

Anger flashed in Violet's eyes. She stomped over to Ivy, getting right in her face. "Well, excuse me for not being grateful to be choked by some entitled asshole. Though, it sounds like you'd enjoy that kind of foreplay. Too bad you didn't get lucky enough to take my place," she shot back, her voice laced with venom.

Ivy's blue eyes darkened, and her jaw clenched, but instead of lashing out with another insult, she simply muttered, "You don't get it, do you?"

"What's there to get?" Violet shot back, her patience wearing thin.

Ivy smirked. "Great. You're dense," she retorted, unkindly.

Violet's hands clenched, and her teeth bared in a silent warning. She had a lifetime of anger and violence to draw on if this stuck-up girl kept pushing her. But before she could react, Lila quickly slid between them, looping an arm around Violet's shoulders.

Violet wasn't fond of Lila's overly familiar touch, but she had to admit it cooled her anger by a degree. Lila gave Ivy a chastising look before turning to Violet with a bright smile.

"What Ivy's trying to say—if she could speak nicely for once—is that you've broken a school record."

Violet narrowed her eyes, not buying it. "What in the world are you talking about?"

"Okay, sit down, and I'll explain," Lila said, tugging Violet toward her bed. Violet followed, feeling almost robotic as she sank onto the mattress. She noticed Daisy shifting closer, her curiosity piqued, hinting that whatever Lila was about to say was bound to be interesting.

Lila stretched her hand, "your phone." she demanded.

Though distrust was clear in Violet's eyes, she still handed her phone to Lila, albeit reluctantly.

Lila took it and began typing, explaining, "I'm sure Mary mentioned that Lunaris has a points system for academic ranking. Well, socially, it's the same amongst the students. We have our own hierarchy. And logically speaking, as the last student to enroll here, you should be at the bottom as the omega, the runt of the pack. But here you are..." She shoved the phone back at Violet.

Violet took it, baffled. On the screen was a ranking feed with her name, her picture—how did they even get a recent photo?—and a large number twenty beside her profile. She lifted her head to find her roommates watching her with eyes wide with anticipation as if she were supposed to be awestruck or dropping to her knees in gratitude.

Violet remained unfazed, raising an eyebrow as she asked coolly, "This is what all the buzz is about?"

What followed was a chorus of disappointed groans. Lila actually facepalmed, Daisy buried her face in her pillow as though dying of secondhand embarrassment, while Ivy snorted, her expression clearly saying, *Told you so*.

However, Lila was not the one to give up and before Violet could even register, the girl snatched the phone from her grip with a bit more force than necessary, eyes gleaming with both annoyance and determination. Determination to make her see things from her view.

She held the phone up, gesturing at the screen as though presenting some grand revelation.

"This, Violet, is the Lunaboard," Lila declared now, her voice bubbling with excitement. "It's the ranking system for the females here, and it's huge. It's ranked by votes and are determined by a mix of factors, popularity, background, abilities, academic performance, you name it. Every student here lives by this ranking."

She tapped the screen, her face animated as she explained each detail. "And here you are, at number twenty, on your very first day after just one encounter with Griffin!" She shook her head in disbelief, her awe barely contained. "Do you even realize how impossible this is? No one has ever shot up the ranks this fast. Ever!"

Violet looked at the screen, still unimpressed, but Lila's excitement didn't falter. "Your name's going to make it into the Lunarecord! You're making history!" she added, as if she were personally handing Violet a crown. Meanwhile, Daisy watched in awe from her bed, while Ivy gave a begrudging expression.

While Lila was still riding high on excitement, Violet raised her hand to get her attention. "Quick question, though. So, what exactly do I get for making it to, uh... number twenty?"

"What does everyone here want most?" Lila asked, her eyes gleaming.

"Money?" Violet guessed with a smirk. She was nearly broke, and if this ranking system could somehow get her cash, she'd be all in.

Daisy chimed in with a somber expression, "Power. He who wields power rules all."

Violet snorted. "With great power comes great responsibility, which honestly, I don't have the patience or stamina for either. Hence if that's all, I'm sorely disappointed."

"A chance to mingle with the elites," Ivy said at last, her eyes gleaming with envy. Violet could practically see the longing, the torture on Ivy's face, as if she'd kill for a chance to be in her shoes.

"The elites?" Violet let out a mocking laugh.. "Please don't tell me you mean those pompous, aristocratic snobs who make up half this school."

Ivy glared so fiercely that, had she been able to shoot fire from her eyes, Violet would have been incinerated on the spot.

"As someone at the top of the hierarchy, you have the privilege of associating with the Cardinal Alphas."

"The Cardinal Alphas?" Violet asked, her curiosity piqued.

"The Terror Four," Daisy answered with a wry smile. "You've met one already, Griffin Hale."

"Oh, hell no," Violet's expression turned sour. "That's not happening. I'll pass."

Ivy sat up sharply, staring at her as if she'd committed a crime. "You'd reject an opportunity to mingle with a cardinal alpha? That's a chance most of us would kill for!"

"Then why don't you go mingle with them if you're so desperate?" Violet snapped.

"Because we can't! Ivy hissed, rising to her feet until they were standing nose-to-nose. She gestured toward Lila and Daisy, who had both gone silent, watching the confrontation. "Only those ranked between first and twentieth are even visible to them. For the rest of us, it's as if we don't exist."

Violet shook her head, exasperated. "Then forget about them and focus on your education. Isn't that why you're here? What's so special about the Terror Four that everyone's losing their minds? Heck, even their title screams trouble."

Silence fell, thick and suffocating. The room vibrated with tension until Ivy broke it with a sharp, hollow laugh that echoed off the walls, sending shivers down their spines.

"Who said they aren't special?" Ivy whispered, her eyes like shards of ice. "What other alphas have you seen possess the godly powers they do?"

You can check out what Violet's room looks like in the comment section.

Chapter 13: Choose An Alpha

"Who said they aren't special?" Ivy whispered, her eyes like shards of ice. "What other alphas have you seen possess the godly powers they do?"

"W-what?" Violet stammered.

Ivy groaned, pressing her palm to her face. "Please don't tell me you don't know about their abilities too. At this point, I'm starting to think you must be really dumb."

For the first time, Violet was speechless, an embarrassed flush spreading across her cheeks.

Lila turned to her, eyes wide in disbelief. "You really don't know the cardinal alphas have powers?"

"Who doesn't know the cardinal alphas have powers?" Daisy echoed.

Violet suddenly found herself in the spotlight, feeling foolish for her lack of knowledge. She didn't care about the cardinal alphas, but now it seemed like everything here revolved around them. Not knowing anything made her look like a clueless outsider, and Violet resolved to learn all she could to avoid looking like an idiot again.

Still, Violet's pride wouldn't let her back down. She tried to shrug it off with a smirk. "All right then, enlighten me. What amazing powers do they have that makes you want to practically throw yourselves at them?"

"You!" Ivy snapped, pointing a finger at her, nearly suffering an aneurysm.

Before the argument could spark up again, Lila, ever the peacemaker, stepped in with a cheerful smile. "That's where I come in. Since you missed the orientation, I'll give you the crash course."

The way Lila's eyes gleamed with excitement made it clear she'd been waiting for this moment to show off her storytelling skills. Before Violet knew it, Lila had gently but firmly guided her back to her bed, making her sit. Without wasting a second, Lila plopped down beside her, as if afraid Violet might change her mind if she hesitated even for a moment.

With lightning speed, Lila tapped away on her phone, then held up the screen with a gleam of excitement. "These are the four Cardinal Alphas."

The screen displayed a photo of the so-called Cardinal Alphas all together. It took Violet roughly thirty seconds to recognize each one, and when she did, a curse slipped from her lips. "You have got to be kidding me!"

"Why? What's wrong?" Lila straightened up, concern flickering across her face.

Violet's eyes were wide as she launched into a frantic explanation. "This guy," she jabbed her finger at the green-haired alpha, "he's the idiot who gave me Griffin's necklace, and the burly one nearly choked me..." Her gaze landed on the alpha wearing shades. "And then, this creep just stared at me..."

Lila looked down at the alpha Violet was pointing to. "You mean Alpha Asher?"

"Alpha Asher?" Violet's voice came out in a croak, dread knotting in her stomach. This can't be happening.

"Alpha Asher is the leader of the West House," Lila confirmed, solidifying her fears.

Damn. Violet's stomach dropped. She was under the guidance of this creepy guy. How could she have ended up in this situation?

Completely oblivious to the turmoil brewing inside Violet, Lila continued excitedly, pointing to another figure. "And here's Aldric. Isn't he so handsome?"

Even amid her anxiety, Violet's eyes fell on the picture, and her breath caught. It was him, the white-haired beauty she'd met at the infirmary.

Lila went on, "There are plenty of alphas at the academy, but none like the Cardinal Alphas. Each one is named after the region their packs hail from. What's even more fascinating is that all four were born at the exact same time, a birth said to be a great celestial event."

She leaned in closer, her voice dropping to a whisper, as though even the walls might be listening. "Rumor has it, this was the Moon Goddess's way of answering back after humans committed mass homicide against the she-wolves, wiping out nearly ninety percent of them. The Cardinals were given their powers so they could bring humanity to its knees, exacting revenge and reclaiming their rightful place as leaders."

Violet was supposed to call the stories bluff but for some reason, it sent shivers down her spine. If the humans knew these were the werewolves' intentions, then why give them that much power? Why pretend they were not aware of their intention? Why accept the wolves as equals when, honestly, they were no equals but predators?

Lila swiped her phone to reveal a solo picture of Griffin, and Violet's eyes narrowed in anger, the memory of his assault still fresh in her mind. But that didn't deter Lila, who grinned and said in a teasing tone, "Griffin Hale, your handsome brute."

Violet shot her a withering glare and Lila giggled.

"He is the alpha of the east, and his ability is his god-like strength that surpasses even the most formidable werewolves, making him a force to be reckoned with. His power allows him to lift and break through virtually any obstacle, and his combat skills are unmatched in direct confrontation. His senses are heightened, giving him an edge in tracking and hunting, and when enraged, he can channel his strength into devastating shockwaves that can incapacitate opponents with a single punch."

Violet unconsciously rubbed the spot on her neck where he had grabbed her, still feeling the phantom ache. If what Lila said was true, she was incredibly lucky he hadn't crushed her into a pulp.

"And next, Roman Draven, the alpha of the South, " Lila said, swiping to the next image, a photo of a half-naked Roman.

Violet couldn't help but stare, her eyes showing the tiniest flicker of admiration, despite her resentment towards him. Roman's toned torso took center stage, each muscle etched like it had been crafted by a sculptor's hand.

His six-pack looked impossibly defined, glistening under the light in the image as if he'd just stepped out of water. His tousled green hair framed his face in a disheveled, irresistible way, and with his eyes closed, he looked both mysterious and effortlessly enticing. To complete the look, his tongue playfully poked out as though he'd just woken up from a wild night.

Damn it, Violet hated to say this, but Roman Draven was downright magnetic.

"Roman's ability is his shapeshifting. He could transform into any animal. Like anything, from a swift hawk to a powerful lion, granting him unmatched versatility in battle and stealth. He's the most likable alpha and every woman's dream alpha, so if you could look beyond his manwhoring ways, then both of you would make a good couple."

"Eww, I'll pass." Violet scrunched her face in disgust.

However, her mind couldn't help but linger on the image..... if she and Roman were to mate, their kids would be quite beautiful.

Wait—what in the moon was she thinking? She shook her head, horrified. *Get out of my head, you ridiculous, immoral thoughts!*

"There's something else you should know," Lila continued. "While not all alphas get along, the rivalry between Roman and Griffin is legendary."

She leaned in conspiratorially. "Griffin might have unmatched strength, but Roman has his advantage, he can shape-shift into any animal he chooses, especially ones that can match Griffin's power. That's why there's always a heated debate over who's truly the strongest."

Lila gave a knowing smirk. "And Griffin? He hates that. He's always up for a fight, so the idea of anyone challenging his power drives him mad."

Violet tucked that tidbit of information into the back of her mind. Something told her it might just come in handy in the future especially when it came to dealing with Griffin and settling the score.

"The third is Asher Nightshade, alpha of the West and also our house captain," Lila announced, her finger swiping to reveal his solo image on the screen.

Violet's gaze locked on the photo, and the first thought that came to mind was: *Who hurt this guy?*

Asher's face was sharp and chiseled, with an intense, vacant look that sent chills up her spine. Dark sunglasses covered his eyes, giving him an air of mystery.

He wasn't smiling, in fact, his expression was cold, almost bored, as though he'd set the world on fire just to amuse himself. Though it was only a photo, it felt like Asher was staring right at her, his presence unnervingly vivid.

Violet fought back a shiver.

"Now, Asher is—"

"The last cardinal alpha you'd ever want to associate with," Ivy interrupted, her tone ice-cold. "The guy's a psychopath. Trust me, you'd be wise to steer clear."

For once, Violet found herself silently agreeing with Ivy.

Daisy was the one who said in a lowered tone, "Asher is a mind fucker. He's most feared because of his ability to control minds, which is why he's rarely seen without his glasses. He can plant thoughts, compel actions, and erase memories, making him the ultimate puppet master, as he's called. So yes, Ivy is right in telling you not to associate with him at all. Asher Nightshade is unpredictable and deadly."

Well, lucky her, Violet was not a masochist and would do well to avoid the guy like a plague.

"And last but not least, our charming prince Alaric." Lila practically shoved the picture in her face.

The image showed Alaric with a candid, almost unaware expression as if someone had caught him in a rare, unguarded moment. He exuded a calm, serene energy that radiated a quiet innocence, a purity that was disarming in someone of his stature.

Yet beneath that gentle exterior, there was something undeniably a hardened resilience that hinted at the darkness he possessed. The contrast was magnetic, leaving Violet curiously drawn to the duality he embodied, as though he were both peace and power wrapped into one.

Violet was somewhat intrigued by Alaric, at least for a few seconds, until she came back to her senses.

Lila chirped excitedly, cutting through her thoughts, "Alaric is the Alpha of the North and wields the raw power of lightning, capable of summoning storms with just a flick of his wrist. His power allows him to unleash bolts that can paralyze or incinerate enemies in an instant. When pushed to his limits, he can create massive electrical surges, and his control over electricity even extends to short-circuiting technology. He's basically a walking EMP."

Finally, it all made sense to Violet why it had felt like lightning when he brushed past her. It was his power, after all.

Daisy chimed in, "Alaric is highly intelligent, with a deep interest in science, making him a genius. A mad one if I'm to say."

Violet liked science too, and no, she definitely wasn't thinking of anything foolish.

Lila continued, "Though he prefers solitude, Alaric has the most dangerous temper. It's as quick as lightning and deadly. People say he's the most dangerous alpha among them. There's even a rumor that he's running some kind of private experiment to stop the heart by manipulating its electrical charges."

Any fleeting thoughts Violet had of befriending Alaric vanished at once. These cardinal alphas were clearly in a league of their own, and perhaps out of their minds.

"So, now that you've met them, who do you like? Any alpha you want to pursue?" Lila asked with a curious tilt of her head.

"What?" Violet blinked, caught off guard.

Daisy said. "You're in the top twenty; they'll see you as an equal."

Ivy, on the other hand, sneered. "All of the cardinal alphas are taken!"

Lila countered, "Not officially. No one's truly a Luna until graduation."

Ivy scoffed. "You fool! Don't you know this is all prearranged? The one who becomes the Alpha King's successor will probably marry Lyka, the pure-blooded she-wolf. The rest of the cardinal alphas would probably be paired with the females at the top through their families' influence. What chance do you think Violet has here? She's just a nobody in comparison!"

Violet's patience snapped, her frustration showing. "All right, that's enough!" She locked eyes with each of them, saying firmly, "I'm so sick of the foolish games at this school!"

Lila gasped, indignant. "Foolish games? Do you know how lucky you'd be if you managed to catch the eye of a cardinal alpha—"

"Enough!" Violet's sharp tone made Lila flinch. Violet felt a pang of guilt for startling her, but she had no choice. Not if they were to take her seriously.

"While I appreciate you guys filling me in on campus news, that's all it is to me—news. I didn't come to this school to be part of some useless tradition but to study and make a better future for myself. And I won't tolerate anyone trying to pressure me into joining or entertaining it."

With that, Violet successfully rendered her roommates astonished, a heavy silence filling the room.

Violet didn't wait for anyone to comment or cast more judgment. Instead, she turned sharply on her heel and entered the bathroom, the walls shielding her from their prying eyes and harsh words.

Though the cool water washed over her, it didn't quiet the thoughts that raced through her mind, replaying what happened over and over again.

Thanks to the argument, she had forgotten to take a change of clothes. So when she was done, she wrapped herself in a towel, unbothered and unapologetic, her bare skin still damp as she crossed to her bed.

Her bag was on the bed, so she pulled out sleeping wear and dressed quickly. Her roommates' gazes bore into her, but she remained aloof, ignoring them.

With her back turned to them, she lay down and closed her eyes, shutting them out. Sleep claimed her swiftly, her body heavy and her mind fogged by the day's strangeness.

That night, the dreams began.

And in the depths of her sleep, a certain Alpha awaited, ready to extend a "private" welcome into his pack.

Chapter 14: His Special Prison

Violet stirred in her sleep, strong arms wrapped around her. It felt so good that she instinctively leaned into the warmth, mumbling small incomprehensible words. She had never felt this safe and protected.

Not to mention, his scent was darkly intoxicating, a complex, layered blend that seemed to wrap around her with an undeniable pull.

It was a dangerously alluring mix of smoked cedar and dark spice, laced with a sharp hint of ozone. There was an edge of iron, raw and unsettling, yet softened by a faint sweetness like night-blooming jasmine.

It wrapped around her, compelling her to breathe him in, even when she instinctively knew she shouldn't.

He let out a low, rich laugh as she nuzzled against his neck, her nose brushing his skin. The sound reverberated through her, igniting a spark that raced through her veins and settled deep in her core, arousing her. She moaned softly, leaning in closer, and his laughter rang again, deeper this time.

"You're a possessive one, aren't you?" he whispered, his voice warm against her ear.

At the same time, his hand traced down her spine, sending shivers along her back.

He must've noticed the effect of his touch because he did it again, slower this time, dragging it out to prolong every bit of the sweet torture.

His voice dropped to a low, husky murmur. "Cling all you want, because I might already be obsessed with you, my purple flower."

Violet, who had been savoring the whole moment, suddenly went rigid as something clicked in her mind at the mention of "purple flower."

No, it couldn't be—this was just a dream. And yet, the sensation of his hands moving down her spine felt almost painfully real. And why did it feel like she was naked?

Her eyes snapped open, connecting immediately with none other than Asher Nightshade himself. Rather than anger, a gasp of astonishment escaped her lips, and not because of the shocking intimacy of their bodies pressed together, but because

Asher Nightshade wasn't wearing his shades, leaving her face-to-face with his uncovered eyes.

Beyond his notorious ability to captivate anyone with a single look, Violet finally understood why he hid them. Asher's eyes were unlike any she'd seen before. They were a haunting gray, but more strikingly, they were vertically slitted.

They reminded her of those mythical creatures she had read about in stories. Asher looked at her with a lazy, almost predatory gaze, perfectly embodying a passage she'd once read: *"He gazed upon her like a slumbering dragon, that he was."*

For a moment, Violet was caught in the hypnotic allure of his unusual eyes, until he ruined it by speaking. "You're finally awake, my purple flower."

Fuck. It all dawned on her. She was in bed with Asher fucking Nightshade. Her gaze dropped down to her body. Double fuck. She was practically naked, only in her bra and underwear.

The last thing she remembered was going to bed, so how she was now half-naked and in Asher's bed was beyond her understanding.

As if he could somehow sense her thoughts, Asher flashed a predator's smile and murmured, "How did you know black was my favorite?"

Oh no, please tell her he wasn't reading her mind right now. Filled with fury, Violet swung her hand back and punched him square in the face, completely catching him off guard.

For a second, it felt like her awareness was slipping, that she was waking up from this nightmare, but then the sensation abruptly stopped. She was still here.

There was no time to think; she had to get out. Violet spotted the door and bolted. She didn't care if others might see her leaving Asher's room half-dressed. She knew exactly how it looked, and rumors would surely spread, but she'd risk it all to escape that psychopath who dared to snatch her from her bed.

Who in the world does that? Anger coursed through her, but there was nothing she could do now except run.

She had to escape now, think later. There'd be plenty of time to add his name to the list of Alphas she intended to seek revenge on. With Griffin and Roman already claiming the first two spots, Asher had just made number three.

But as Violet strode through the door, something bizarre happened. A second later, she found herself back in the same room.

What. The. Actual. Hell.

This had to be some kind of trick. Violet was stubborn, so she marched right back to the door and went through it again, only to find herself back in the room. Again.

No, no, this couldn't be real.

She turned and left again.

Meanwhile, Asher, reclined against the headboard, arms folded behind his head, watching his "purple flower" stumble through her futile escape attempts.

She hadn't met his gaze with terror or screamed in fear, which was an impressive reaction, as most girls would have filled the room with whiny pleas until he was forced to let them go.

And for a moment, she'd almost seemed intrigued by his eyes. That alone made him want to preen, to flaunt, like a peacock, that is, if he'd had feathers to flaunt. People always called his eyes cursed, but not her. The look in her eyes had been pure fascination. And for that, he would keep her. She belonged to him.

Violet's frustration grew with each failed attempt to leave through the door. Her face was etched with irritation, her frame taut with tension.

At least he got to enjoy the sight of her bare cheeks peeking out from her black panties each time she turned her back to try the door. Again and again.

Then, as if inspired, her eyes landed on the open window. Without hesitation, she bolted for it and leaped through.

Asher's brows rose in amusement. Smart thinking, as he'd expect from his queen. Did she believe that an injury would release her from this special prison he'd crafted?

His control had nearly slipped when she'd punched him, but he'd mastered his abilities for years. The only reason he'd faltered was the sheer surprise of the blow; otherwise, his grip was unbreakable.

As expected, seconds later, she reappeared in his room, looking momentarily disoriented, her hair tousled from her leap. She was uninjured, of course. He'd made sure of that.

When Violet realized she was right back where she'd started, fury flashed across her face. A low growl rumbled in her throat as she stormed toward him like a bull, eyes blazing.

Asher grinned, thoroughly entertained, even as she wrapped her hands around his throat and snarled, "What in the mother-fucking world have you done to me?!"

His grin widened. Just as he'd expected of his fierce Purple Queen.