



Chapter 344

Violet

Her lips parted the same way mine did. She looked stunned, flustered, and in that split second, it felt like everything stopped moving.

Me, her, all of us...

I had thought about this moment way too many times, usually in my dreams and had been doing so for years. Now that it had finally arrived, there was nothing I could do.

I couldn't cry.

Hold her...

Nothing.

"H-Hi?" Mom blinked. Her hand rose slowly for the handle, and she took a step back, unsure of whether to actually talk to us or slam the door shut. Whatever it was, I could see it in her eyes.

I think we all could.

Whether it was Greg or Little Violet who had told her, she knew who we were.

"Hi, Ma'am," Kylan greeted, his grip tightening on my hand. It wasn't to pull me back, but to keep me steady, and if he hadn't—I might've actually fainted.

Mom gasped, looking at Kylan. "Holy shit," she muttered under her breath, then shook her head. "I mean...Can I help you?"

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Mom placed her hand over her heart, but that didn't stop the sound of her breathing. Her lips curled as she stared at each of them. Kylan first, then Dylan and Nate, before her gaze flicked to Trinity and Lian as if she was still trying to figure them out.

She knew who all the others were. She had made that much clear.

Kylan cleared his throat. "I don't know if you can help us," he said, chuckling lightly. "Can you?"

She let out a breath, snapping her head toward him so fast I feared her neck might snap. The way she looked at him...It was the same way Greg had looked at him.

It was a look that said, 'Is this one really Elyx's?'

Her gaze shifted between him and me, and her throat bobbed. When our eyes met for the third time, I quickly looked down with a soft smile. Why? Because one more look was all it would take before I would break down in tears.

I only dared to look up again when I saw her boots move toward Kylan until she stood directly in front of him. Her hand trembled as she lifted it toward his cheek, but before she could touch him, Kylan released my hand and caught her wrist, stopping her.

He had always been awkward with soft touch.

Especially from people he didn't know, and regardless of who she was... he unfortunately didn't really know her.

They held eye contact for several seconds, neither of them blinking. "Wow," Mom exhaled, lowering her hand with a shaky laugh. "It really is you..."



For some reason, she seemed really happy to see him, and I couldn't help but think it had to do with her possibly seeing him at the palace a while ago. A rude, cold little prince who was all she hoped for was that he wouldn't turn out like his father.

Another laugh escaped her as her eyes pierced through mine again, and this time I didn't look away. I knew it was Mom, but this time I tried a different approach. I tried looking at her like the woman I barely remember because that somehow eased the pain.

"Where are your gla..."

Her words faltered, and even though my face stayed calm, my fingers trembled against my sleeve. As she looked at the woman standing in front of her, the woman she believed she would raise, I already knew how her story would end.

"I'm sorry," Lian suddenly called out. She pushed herself forward until she came face-to-face with Mom. "But is your daughter here?"

As expected, she had no time for chit-chat.

Mom got out of whatever trance she was in and looked at her with an unsure expression. "Well..."

Many called Mom 'Sweet Claire' because she seemed like a soft marshmallow who could never hurt a soul, but if there was one thing I remembered, it was that those who called her 'Sweet Claire' never underestimated her sharp mind.

She was a smart woman, and she had probably already thought ahead, trying to piece together why we were here. She knew we wanted something.



Her eyes met mine again, and this time they were serious. “What do you want from her—?”

Before she could finish, we heard squeals from inside the house, followed by footsteps thundering from the stairs. Then the door flew wider open, and a little girl came rushing out.

“My friends!”

It was Little Violet.

We all followed her with our eyes as she glued herself to Trinity’s legs, squeezing with all her strength. “Hey, Vi!” Trinity let out a surprised laugh and bent down to hug her back.

Little Violet was quick to move on and wrapped her arms around Dylan’s legs next. His body stiffened as he was seconds away from pushing her off, but he settled for an awkward pat on the back instead.

Lian just stared at the scene with a blank, unbothered expression, like nothing in this world could surprise her anymore. Nate, meanwhile, let out a laugh and brushed a gentle hand over Little Violet’s head.

His eyes warmed in a way that brought a smile to my face because I knew now that he had met her...me, I would not hear the end of it.

My chest throbbed as I watched her...me, hugging them so joyfully, so fearlessly. That was the same girl who now feared holding hands so much, she could only hold on to Kylan.

As if she felt me staring, Little Violet stepped back and pushed something which I hadn’t noticed until now up her nose. A gasp escaped from my lips.



It was the glasses...

"I knew you would come back," she said with a bright grin. "But I didn't know when!"

She tapped her glasses with a proud grin.

"I didn't know because of these!" she exclaimed. "Mommy got them for me from far away!"

So that was it...

The period during which the nightmares had stopped because Mom and Dad wanted me to live a normal life.

There was so much to take in, but before I could catch my breath, Little Violet had already skipped in front of me and blinked her eyes at me.

I shot her a nervous smile, trying not to burst into tears. That poor girl thought she would finally live a normal life but she hadn't had a normal day in her life, not even now. My heart hurt, and my throat tightened as if it refused to let itself breathe around her.

I just wanted to fall to my knees and hold her, tell her I was sorry for failing to protect her.

Little Violet moved her hands behind her back and slid toward Kylan. "And?" she asked. "How do they look?"

"What?" he muttered.

"My glasses! Do you think they're pretty?"

Kylan's mouth twitched. It appeared like he was going to give a serious

answer, but then a chuckle escaped him as he rolled his eyes.

"Pretty ugly," he spoke, gently nudging her aside with one hand.

I whipped my head toward him, offended, while he locked his lips, trying not to laugh. I suppose he wanted to get on both of our nerves. Little Violet's jaw dropped, and her eyebrows furrowed into a furious glare.

"Well," she snapped, "I think your shirt is pretty ugly!"

That's right.

Get him.

Kylan didn't pay much attention to her anymore as his eyes were now locked on Claire. She hadn't said much and just looked at the exchange with an unreadable expression.

"Where's your mate?" Kylan asked.

"Around," Claire said carefully. Her tone was much firmer than before, as if she were drawing a line.

"You're being very cautious," Kylan pointed out.

Claire laughed nervously, glancing at all of us. "Am I?"

"Yes, and it's a good thing," Kylan continued. "Because we were going to force some answers out of your daughter."

What...

What was he doing?

"Excuse me?" Claire spat. She instantly pulled Little Violet behind her

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and wrapped her arms around her tiny body, protecting her.

"Mommy?" Little Violet whispered, confused.

"Go back inside," Claire said. "Now."

Little Violet ran back inside with no protest and no questions. Because when it came to mom, I never had questions and just did whatever she told me to do. I trusted her, a lot.

My heart sank.

What was he getting at?

It wasn't just me who was confused. The others were too, because we had made a plan.

"We still need those answers," Kylan said, his eyes sharp. "But you are going to tell us everything we need to know because that way..." His gaze flicked to me. "No one we care about will be harmed."

So this was what he had decided.

He did not want to see me get hurt, no matter the version, no matter whether I agreed to it or not.

Claire narrowed her eyes at him, but a small smile appeared. "If it wasn't your face exposing you," she muttered, "it would be that mouth of yours."

The two exchanged a chuckle, now that it had been confirmed that they were equally aware of exactly who the other was.

"You know who I am," Kylan said. "You know who all of us are."



He tilted his chin toward me. "And you know who she is."

My breath caught as mom's gaze returned to mine. It felt as if my head was spinning, and even though I wanted to run into her arms, I just knew I couldn't.

It just wouldn't make sense for me to run into her arms, because then Mom would understand what would happen to her.

"Greg told me," she exhaled. "But I...he told me."

Just like that, it was confirmed that he also knew...

"I didn't come here with the intention to do any harm. I haven't changed, you can trust me, and I'm still Violet," I whispered, my voice trembling. "I'm just asking you to hear us out. We need your help... Mom."

Her brows frowned at the last word. My heart beat out of my chest as I waited for mom's reaction. She swallowed hard and repeatedly nodded her head. "Okay...okay..." she breathed. "I don't know what's happening or how this is even possible, but...okay."

She stepped back, opening the door fully.

"You kids better come in," she sighed. "Whatever all of this is...it must not be any good." 