

Chapter 350

Violet

Kill her?

Kill me?

I stared at Aelius, searching his face for something. Anger, sadness, or maybe even regret, but there was nothing.

The worst thing was that he had said it as he had already come to terms with it. Like he had known this would always be the price. I suppose it was a good thing he could at least admit he didn't want to do that, right?

Mom straightened. "He will not get to her," she stated. "We will make sure of it. We will protect her."

Her eyes softened as she looked at her nephew. "You too, Dylan. I promise."

The corner of my mouth twitched while I looked at my parents. These two had made it clear they were prepared to die. My eyes shifted to Little Violet.

She was shaking her head, her eyes angry and glassy as she clutched onto Mom. She knew what would happen and had told me so herself. She knew exactly how tonight would go, and she was terrified.

Something inside me cracked. Knowing my parents would risk everything, the same way they were prepared to risk everything for Adelaide, hit me hard.

"And for you," Aelius called out, fixing his gaze on me. "As long as you listen to me and keep those eyes under control, the devil won't come for

you or the boy tonight. Not this time."

The boy...Kylan?

The relief I felt lasted only a second. It didn't really change anything because even if Baelor was not after me...it was still me.

Little Violet.

"The two of you will help us with Baelor, and your friends are strong enough to shift and face the raven."

Little Dylan cleared his throat. "I'm sorry, but did you just say you need all of them to shift to fight a bird?" He asked. "Can't we just snap his neck? I'll do it!"

"No, Dylan," Little Violet rolled her eyes. She let out a long breath. "He will not be coming as just a bird. You don't know what you're talking about."

Aelius let out a sigh. "Listen to your cousin, boy. Thorne is a very serious issue."

A chill went through me as I remembered Little Violet's words. Thorne could change into anything he wanted, and whatever form he arrived in would not be something easy. Just thinking about it made my stomach twist.

And I still had to face Baelor...

My fingers curled around Kylan's hand. I felt his eyes on me, and he did not need to speak, because I already knew. He hated this and simply thought I was not ready. He had been so protective that I was sure he would have loved for me to be inside that shield with the children to keep me far away from this fight.

But this fight with Baelor was why we came. To protect both the past and the future. Still, I wished there was another way, one that did not cost my parents' lives or put anyone else in danger.

Aelius stepped forward and began to pace. He inspected the house, taking in every angle. "We must prepare now," he said. Then he stopped walking and looked at all of us. "Are there any questions?"

No one spoke.

The silence was uncomfortable. Everyone knew what was coming and what tonight meant, and I was certain all of us wanted it to be over. It was already hard enough for me to pretend like Mom and Dad weren't even there, just for the sake of not crying.

"We will start with the manipulation spell now," Aelius announced.

Manipulation spell...

That had to be for the space he had spoken about earlier. The one to keep the battle inside the house and the innocent out of Baelor's reach.

All it took for Varius and Jason to join Aelius was one single look, and then the three of them joined hands. The moment they did, Little Violet came running and forced herself between Jason and Aelius, leaving one last space open in the circle.

All their eyes moved to me, and I pressed myself closer to Kylan.

"What...why are you all looking at me?"

"I think they want you to join," Kylan whispered back.

My breath hitched. "Me? I do not even know how to do anything."

My hands suddenly felt cold, and my heart started racing. Even if I wanted to help, I had no idea how to cast a spell, and the last thing I wanted was to slow them down.

Aelius exhaled. "Yes, Aelius, no Aelius, I want to help, but I don't know how, Aelius—speak up, and don't just stand there."

"I—"

Kylan gave me a gentle nudge, urging me to move closer. He was the last person I thought would do that, and maybe that was why I did not push back. I stumbled forward and took quick, rushed steps toward the circle.

I reached out for Little Violet's hand on one side and Aelius's cold hand on the other. The little girl beside me kicked my leg, forcing me to look at her. I waited for her to say something, but she just looked at me with those big blue eyes, as if that was her way of comforting me.

"So...what do we say?" I whispered.

Little Violet giggled, and Jason laughed under his breath. Even Varius, who had barely spoken a full sentence since arriving, let out a low chuckle.

My face heated. "Did I say something wrong?"

Aelius released an unimpressed scoff. "I do not know who you believe you are speaking to, but I am not your grandmother," he said. "My apprentices are better than that. They let the energy move through them rather than speak at it."

Shocked, I turned to Jason. He was already looking at me with a warm, proud smile. How nice it must be to hear those kinds of praises straight from Aelius's mouth.

"So he will lead the spell?" I asked softly.

"Yes," Aelius confirmed. "Jason is one of my best, and he is ready."

Jason's smile grew a little, and I could see it in his eyes. He had been ready for this moment long before I arrived. Aelius called him one of his best, and it just made me wonder...

How many apprentices did he have?

Before I got the time to think about it, everyone in the circle closed their eyes, and I did the same. As soon as I did, a soft vibration rose from the floor and grew until my legs were shaking.

That's how short it took for Jason to activate his powers.

The more everything began to shake, the more I could feel the energy in my veins, moving up my legs and into my stomach. It wasn't painful or scary. It actually felt good, really good, and it was all without the glow.

But just as fast as that feeling came, it suddenly stopped. All the warmth, all the trembling, that spark...

I felt a breeze brush past my cheek. One that felt impossible considering we were inside a house...or supposed to be.

My eyes snapped open, and I let out a gasp.

The floor, the ceiling, everything vanished and had been replaced with trees.

We were all standing in a forest.

What was happening?

"Kylan?" I called out. Just as I was about to look for him, I felt his hands on my shoulders from behind. "I'm here," he whispered. "Relax."

I gasped out a breath and nodded, slowly scanning my surroundings, and by the looks of it, I wasn't the only one weirded out.

Trinity was glued to Dylan's side, holding his arm with both hands. Nate and Lian made their way to Mom and Dad, who were holding Little Dylan close and Little Violet close.

The only ones who seemed to be completely at ease were Varius and Jason, who stood near Aelius.

"Where are we?" Kylan asked.

"When will you kids ever listen?" Aelius hummed. "Like I said. Manipulation spell."

Unbelievable...

A small laugh escaped me. "So we are...still inside the house?"

Aelius shrugged in response.

My eyes locked on Jason. "How are you able to do this?"

Jason furrowed his brows. "How are you not able to do this?" he said, confused.

"I...don't know."

I looked around again, amazed and overwhelmed. So this was what a child of blood was capable of. What my kind could do. No wonder Aelius wasn't all that interested in teaching me, if this young kid was capable of doing all of this.

He said Jason was one of his best?

Then what about the others?

How powerful had Jason become by now?

"Do we know when they will be here?" Nate asked.

Aelius folded his hands behind his back. "When it comes to Baelor and his entourage, there is much even I do not know."

Nate's throat bobbed, and Aelius released a light chuckle.

"Do not fear, Wyrnsbane," he said calmly. "You are strong enough to stand against darkness. You do not need to worry."

"Thank you...Sir," Nate mumbled.

I smiled a little. Even in a moment this scary, Nate still remembered to be polite.

"So what do we do now?" Kylan let out an annoyed breath. "How much longer do we have to wait?"

He really sounded done with all of this, and I could only feel his rage even more when Aelius lowered himself to the ground.

He sat down right there on the forest floor, his legs crossed and back straight with his hands resting in his lap, as if none of this was serious at all.

What the hell?

He closed his eyes, causing Kylan to let out a growl. "I thought you said we did not have a lot of time!" he snapped.



Aelius opened one eye and glared at him. "One hundred thirty seconds," he said. "Prepare yourselves."