

Chapter 373

Kylan

As soon as I finished talking, the table was full of confused faces. No one spoke right away.

Sora and Lian frowned at each other like they were trying to make sense of it. Trinity and Dylan stared at me as if I was crazy, and Nate chuckled like it was a laughing matter.

"So...what you're saying is," he frowned, "that your brother, who we are supposed to be fighting tomorrow, is asleep?"

"Yes," I answered. "And I just want to be clear. It really wasn't me."

I heard Violet let out a quiet sigh beside me.

She straightened a little and looked around the table, biting her lips nervously. "It was me," she said. "I know it was."

"No, you don't know that."

"It could've only been me," she interrupted. "It must've happened around the time Baelor...you know. That's the only explanation, and we both know it."

I shook my head. "Then it could've been me too."

I wasn't completely oblivious.

Just like her, I also knew what it felt like to have something that powerful inside me. It was overwhelming, dark, and strong enough to break through the box's barrier. But she wasn't taking the blame.

I wasn't letting her.

Dylan suddenly clapped his hands together. "Well, good riddance then," he said. "Makes life easier. I suggest one of us goes upstairs, wraps a hand around his throat, and chokes him to death while we're at it."

A surprised laugh escaped me. "We can't do that."

"I know. Relax," he added quickly. "I was just joking."

"Barely," Trinity said dryly.

"We can't kill him," I reminded them. "The old man was very clear at hinting that killing a vessel isn't smart, no matter how tempting."

Even if he would die, someone would have to answer for it publicly. There would be execution level consequences.

"Kayden will wake up tomorrow," I shared. "There's a reason why all of this is coincidentally happening right before the full moon, and he will wake up tomorrow."

I leaned back in my chair, waiting for anyone to challenge me, but it never happened.

"I agree with Kylan," Violet said. "I also think he'll wake up. All of this is very calculated, and if I had never —"

I slammed my hand over her mouth until there was nothing more than her muffled words. I didn't want to hear her taking the blame again, and I was very serious. I really wouldn't let her.

"So we still prepare for tomorrow?" Nate asked.

"Yes, we do."

"There are seven of us. We should be fine," Nate nodded.

There was no doubt Kayden was preparing for tomorrow, so we had to do the same. We had to be prepared as well.

"S-seven?" Sora whispered.

Nate chuckled. "Yes, you make it seven, right?"

She shifted in her chair, suddenly restless. Her fingers fidgeted in her lap as she glanced around the table until her eyes landed on me. They went wide instantly.

"Sorry!" she blurted out.

I opened my mouth to say something, but decided not to. I just looked away before she could read anything on my face.

"It's not her who I'm worried about," Dylan muttered, turning to Violet.

"Will you be able to seal Baelor away?"

"Yes," she answered quickly.

I heard an unmistakable tremble in her voice. It was small, but I knew her too well to miss it, and it ached my chest. I hated knowing she was scared and still forcing herself forward anyway.

"We checked the mark Aelius left, and everything should be just fine," Violet added. "As long as I don't make any mistakes."

Dylan furrowed his brows. "I'm worried about you," he said. "And honestly? Even though I know your wolf and Kylan's lycan are the only

ones who can take that thing on, I don't think you should be doing both."

"Why?" Violet scoffed. "You think I can't?"

Her voice shook again. She was supposed to sound confident, but she didn't. I looked back and forth between them.

Every instinct in me wanted to jump in and protect her, but I didn't. If she felt like she was up to it, it was also up to her to convince Dylan. Violet was good at speaking, and she could speak for herself.

I would only intervene when necessary, like I had done with Aelius.

I caught Trinity glaring at Dylan, and shook my head before she could say anything. I knew she would always stand beside Violet, but this was between them.

Dylan shrugged. "I'm just looking out for you. You don't have to get so defensive."

"I do, actually," Violet shot back. "And I don't need you worrying about me every second."

Dylan sighed. "You got pretty heated after the fight when things didn't go your way. Of course I'm worried."

Violet slammed her hands on the table. "I got heated because my parents died," she snapped, her voice breaking. "They died because of me. I lost control, and I know that. I acknowledge that, but it was just that one time."

The room went still.

Dylan's jaw tightened. "No," he said firmly. "They've been dead for

years, and they knew what they signed up for the second they took you in. But me not being able to protect you, almost losing you, that's on me," he shouted. "And I can't let that happen again. I won't lose you, Violet."

Violet's lips trembled, his words leaving her speechless until she let out a loud and frustrated groan.

Dylan shifted his attention to me. "There has to be another way. One that doesn't put her in danger again."

I felt everyone's eyes on me because for some reason that had become a thing. They expected me to have all the answers, but I didn't.

I didn't want to tell Dylan he was wrong because he wasn't. But I also didn't want to turn my back on Violet, especially when we were that close to almost succeeding.

What kind of mate would I be if I didn't have her back?

Nate cleared his throat. "What about the mountains? The Soothsayer? Maybe he'd know what to do."

"No," I said immediately. "From whatever bond Varius thought he shared with Baelor to that box he gave us, I'm not taking any chances."

"Your Highness is right," Lian agreed. "He knows we're down here, and if he wanted to help, he would've shown up by now."

My gaze shifted to Violet, who had gone awfully quiet. She fluttered her eyes at me, and in that moment all I wanted was to hold her, tell her that I knew she could do it. Because in my eyes, she was the strongest person I had ever seen. But that wouldn't be fair. Not to her, and not to anyone else.

"Are you able to fight at full strength tomorrow?" I asked carefully.

"I'm not weak," she said right away. "I can fight."

"You're not weak," I replied gently, shaking my head. "You just haven't been given the chance to learn yet. And until you do, it's easier for you to lose control," I said. "It's not an attack, it's a fact. We worry because we care about you and want you to be safe. We want everyone to be safe."

Her eyes softened a bit, and it seemed like my words had gotten through to her.

"So I'm asking you one last time, and you can be honest," I began. "Do you truly think you can fight and seal him tomorrow?"

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