

Chapter 375

Violet

As we walked the same halls of the East Wing, the air suddenly became much colder. My steps slowed, but Kylan's never did.

Was he really going to do it?

Just walk in and take the raven?

My throat felt tight as I swallowed. Until now, no one had stopped him to ask what we were doing here, and not a single guard had questioned us. They had all stepped aside the moment they saw his face.

"Your Highness..." one tried as we reached the door, but Kylan cut his attempt short by calmly lifting his hand.

The guard went silent immediately and lowered his head as if he didn't want to test him.

Kylan looked over his shoulder and gave me a shrug. "Let's go."

He pushed the door open, and I followed right behind him. As the door shut behind us, chairs scraped loudly against the floor near Kayden's bed, and two girls shot to their feet, eyes wide and nervous.

It was Lady Mona's youngest daughters. Kiyenna and Kristina.

But Lady Mona herself was nowhere in sight. Kylan let out a quiet chuckle, looking at Kayden. Not a lot had changed, and he was still asleep.

The older girl bowed her head at him. "Mother will be here soon," she blurted.



"I don't care about that, Kiyenna," Kylan said.

He motioned for his sisters to sit back down, and they shot each other a hesitant look before they did. Kylan's attention was already elsewhere. It was on the black cage in the corner, and mine was too.

Thorne was also still peacefully asleep, curled up inside his cage. That raven looked way too peaceful for something that had a solid hand in killing my parents.

Kylan nudged my shoulder. "I'll take him."

He walked over and wrapped his fingers around the bail handle, lifting the cage with ease. Meanwhile, my heart jumped. He wasn't kidding.

I turned back to the girls, who looked at each other in full panic. The younger one hissed at Kiyenna to say something as she shook her head.

"I don't think that belongs to you," Kiyenna said after clearing her throat. She stood up and started stuttering. "I-I...you..."

"I, what?" Kylan hummed, raising his brows in question.

"Our mother gave strict instructions," she said in a rush. "No one is allowed to touch the cage."

"I do not care what your mother said. She is not my mother, is she?"

Kiyenna gulped. Her eyes flicked around the room like she was searching for help that was not coming.

"I will be taking it anyway," he added, lifting the cage even higher. He squinted as he gazed from the sleeping raven to his sister.

Something about the instructions Lady Mona had given her daughters

felt off. Her grief had felt real, and so had her accusations toward Kylan, but it would not surprise me if Kayden had told her to protect the raven at all costs.

Why else would she care about that thing?

Kristina stood up too. Even though she was younger, her eyes were much sharper and stronger. She stepped right in front of Kylan, holding his gaze, her chin lifted.

"My sister already told you that it doesn't belong to you," she snarled. "And if you want it, you will have to go through me."

I looked at Kylan, suddenly feeling nervous. I knew he wouldn't hurt his little sister, but that wicked smile on his face was worse than anger. He reached out with his free hand and ruffled her hair.

"That's cute," he muttered.

He pushed her aside gently, but that didn't stop her from stumbling backward.

He shot me a single glance, and I understood immediately. Kylan's sisters stood frozen, watching us leave as quickly as we had come, and unfortunately for them, with the cage.

I still did not trust that thing for one bit, even with its eyes closed, so I watched the raven like a hawk all the way until we were in our room again. Only then did I let out a breath I hadn't known I'd been holding.

"This took a turn," I breathed, leaning against the door. "Who would've thought we'd be sharing a room with Thorne?"

A laugh slipped past Kylan's lips as he tilted his head to look at the raven. I still could not believe that innocent-looking thing had turned into a

shadow beast, or that it had multiplied itself into thousands of ravens.

Just looking at it made my skin crawl. A shiver ran through me, and I felt the hairs on my arms lift.

“You can put it away now,” I urged him.

Kylan’s lips curled as he carefully placed the cage in the corner, away from everything else.

A heavy wave of guilt settled in my chest. We were stuck here with Thorne and had changed the whole plan because of me. I had finally been honest with myself and accepted that I could not fight and seal Baelor at the same time without losing control.

I knew Dylan was right, but Kylan was the only one who could make me admit it. I did not want to lie to him, not after everything we had been through. Lying had already caused enough damage, and the thought of repeating that mistake terrified me.

But still...

Perhaps if I had lied this time and pushed just a little harder, things might have turned out differently.

“Don’t you think this is too much of a risk?”

“Like everything else we’ve been doing so far?” Kylan arched a brow.

Good point.

“And what now?”

Kylan let out a long sigh. “Now nothing,” he said. “Now we wait.”

He stepped closer and wrapped his hands around my waist, pulling me gently against him. I lifted my gaze to his, my heart beating faster for no reason other than how close he was.

"And," he said softly, "you are going to tell me why you feel the need to push yourself so hard all the time."

I looked down, a small smile pulling at my lips.

"I don't."

It might seem like I was pushing myself, but I was only trying to do what I was supposed to do. Adelaide was amazing. So was Alaric, and even the parents they chose to raise me. Adelaide never said she was tired when she had to fight Baelor on top of protecting me and leading everyone to the Veil.

Never.

Kylan stepped back and let out a quiet chuckle, clearly not buying it. "Okay," he said, amused. "Whatever you say."

He sat down on the edge of the bed, and I joined him. We didn't speak right away, but just sat there with our shoulders touching. The room was quiet except for our breathing, and I was sure we both had a lot on our minds.

Everyone looked at Kylan for guidance, and even though Dylan had come up with a plan, he was the one who permitted it.

He had a lot on his shoulders, probably even more than I did. It was easy for things to go wrong, but being expected to be the one to fix them did not come as easily.

Kylan broke the silence.

"So...I spoke to the queen today."

I gaped at him, my eyes widening before I could stop myself. "You what?"

He gave a slow nod, and a small smile appeared on his lips. "It was... good. Surprisingly good."

"Really?"

He leaned back a little. "She's changed a lot," he said. "She apologized, we talked, and Kaelis and Kiora were there too. For once, everyone actually listened."

I stayed quiet, listening carefully. Something warm spread through my chest as he spoke. I could hear how much it mattered to him, even if he was trying to keep his feelings in check.

"I know four years isn't nothing," he continued, "but I really hope we can build something again."

"I'm sure you will," I said, confident, then leaned my head against his shoulder. "It must have been pretty emotional for you, especially after all those years."

"It was alright," he replied nonchalantly.

I tilted my head just enough to look at him. "So you didn't cry or anything?"

He scoffed, clearly offended. "You know I don't cry."

"Okay," I said with a hint of sarcasm, copying the exact tone he had used on me minutes earlier. "Whatever you say."

He definitely cried.



“Enough about me. Let's talk about you,” he said, glancing down at me. “Now that I've kept my end of the deal, I want to know when you are going to talk to your dad.”