

Chapter 378

Violet

We were still in our sleeping clothes when we rushed through the halls and didn't even bother changing. It felt much quieter than usual and even though I was sure it had something to do with the howl, that one thing kept going through my mind.

He walks...

Just that sentence left us so shocked that the only sound was our breathing.

Kylan was nearly running, and I struggled to keep up with him, my heart pounding harder with every step.

What was he going to do?

We thought we had everything planned out for tonight, but this news changed everything. We did expect him to wake up, but no one had expected this.

"Kylan!" I called as he quickened his pace. No matter what, he couldn't slow down and there was no telling what he would do. It was almost like a beast looking for its prey, and who knew?

Maybe now that Kayden could allegedly walk again, he would make it a fair fight and finish what they started a few days ago.

"Kylan, what are you doing?" I asked, worried.

"What do you think I'm doing?" Kylan snapped, his breathing uneven. It was like he wasn't even himself anymore, pushing himself not to think, not to feel.



I followed him as he took the narrow staircase that led up to the East Wing, and the moment we reached the top, countless whispers filled the air.

The East Wing was crowded.

More crowded than I had ever seen it.

The halls were filled with mistresses, their children, members of the court. Many faces I recognized, but also faces I didn't. Everyone was there, smiling, glowing, buzzing with excitement like this was really good news.

My stomach twisted with unease.

What now?

"Good morning, Ky!" a small voice called out.

It was Little Katerina who stood beside her mother, the seventh mistress, Lady Isolde. She had her arms wrapped tightly around her daughter's shoulders, whose eyes were bright and hopeful.

The voices stopped all at once, and every head turned. The tension hit harder than it was supposed to. People stepped aside, immediately creating a clear path for Kylan, and all eyes were on him.

As I looked over at Kylan, I caught his mouth twitch slightly. He looked sick. Sick of everything going on.

To anyone else, it would have been good news knowing the pain they thought they were responsible for had finally ended, but for Kylan it wasn't.

It was a nightmare.

For all of us.

"Where is he?"

Kylan's voice trembled as he spoke. He was barely holding it together. He didn't even look at Katerina, who he loved more than anything, and that scared me more than anything else.

He was so out of it.

Kayden...

I was certain that was all there was in his head. Kayden, Kayden, Kayden.

"Where—"

"There!"

One of the mistresses lifted a shaking hand and pointed toward the large doors straight ahead. Kylan exhaled sharply through his nose and started walking again, shooting me a quick glance.

I could literally hear my own pulse as I lowered my head and hurried after him. Once we reached the doors, he pushed them open with both hands, a bit harder than necessary.

The doors swung wide, revealing a large room. Warm light spilled out, and the space felt too bright for what it was supposed to be. It was too alive, and too loud with joy.

King Elyx stood near the center of the room, laughing loudly as one arm wrapped around Lady Mona's shoulders. She leaned into him, tittering.

All of her children were there too, standing close to each other, but none of them had smiles on their faces. Their expressions were filled with fear,

mouths tight, bodies stiff. They didn't seem all that excited for their brother.

But they weren't important at the moment. The only thing that mattered was him.

The figure standing with his back to us could only be one person. Kayden.

It had to be.

My head tilted in confusion as I looked at the back of his hair, and my breath stuttered. Thick strands of red threaded through his dark hair, which I was certain weren't there yesterday.

Still, the biggest shock remained that he was actually standing, with both feet planted firmly on the ground.

How?

"No way," I whispered.

The king's smile widened when he saw us. "Ah, Kylan, daughter in law!" he greeted. "I see the two of you have come to witness a miracle!"

Lady Mona giggled and rested her head against the king's shoulder. "They must have been so excited," she said, her eyes flicking over us. "They were far too excited to mind their appearance!"

I awkwardly tugged at my pants while Kylan didn't answer, his eyes stuck on Kayden. I saw his throat move as he swallowed.

Then the figure in front of us slowly turned, and even the room seemed to hold its breath.

Kayden's eyes were on us, a smirk spreading across his face. Seeing him

standing tall made me realize just how much he and Kylan looked alike. They had the same jaw, the same dark eyes, the same height, and watching them now, they could have been twins.

Almost.

The only difference was Kayden's pale complexion. So pale that even Kylan's face, drained from shock, couldn't compare.

And then there was that hair.

Those red streaks.

Kayden took a step forward, then another. His steps were uneven and careful. It looked like he was relearning how his body worked, and even though his jaw tightened with unease, the smirk never left his face.

"Kayden," Lady Mona shifted. She reached out her hand to help him, but the king stopped her before she could take a step.

"Leave him," he said. "Kayden is strong. He's always been strong."

Kayden kept walking. I glanced at Kylan, then back at Kayden, my heart hammering so hard I feared it might shatter.

"Kylan?"

I nudged his shoulder, but he was so frozen it was useless. His eyes were locked on Kayden, as if he were staring at a ghost that had decided to walk back into the world.

And when Kayden finally reached us and stopped in front of us, he released the smallest breath.

The two looked at each other for what seemed like the longest time.

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Kayden still had a smirk on his face, while Kylan just stared back.

"Kylan," Kayden said, bopping his head.

"Kayden," Kylan said, rolling the name off his tongue as he bopped his head once more.

Then Kayden's eyes shifted to me. A crooked grin appeared, and my stomach dropped. I didn't know if the smile was supposed to be friendly, but it certainly wasn't.

I was truly convinced that whatever miracle they were celebrating hadn't brought anything good back with him.

He took another step forward, closing the space between him and Kylan, and pulled him into an unexpected and sudden embrace.

Kylan stiffened for half a second, but then he hugged him back. The king and Lady Mona watched them from the corner, but I was too confused.

Confused that Kylan hadn't pushed him away.

"I can finally hug you properly again, brother," Kayden said.

Kylan let out a short chuckle, and I could tell he didn't believe a single word. Kayden pulled back just enough to look at me, then opened his arms wider.

His fingers moved, lips curving as he invited me into the hug. It didn't seem like he was asking, so I stepped in and accepted his tight embrace. He squeezed us both closer, his grip strong, like it had always been that way.

"There's something I've been meaning to tell you both," Kayden whispered so only we could hear. "I heard everything."

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My heart started racing as he pulled us even closer. He clicked his tongue, then his voice dropped.

"I don't know what the two of you think you're doing, but you sick fucks took something that was never yours. Something precious to me," he said. "And I will give you five fucking minutes," he growled softly. "If Thorne isn't back in my hands by then, I'll start stacking bodies and burn this whole fucking kingdom down with everyone in it."

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