

Chapter 385

Violet

As we stepped in, three heads snapped toward us and Sora immediately curtsied. Kylan stood near the center of the room, surrounded by his two oldest brothers.

Prince Eronis and Prince Eryas.

Kylan's expression shifted the second he saw me. Whatever had been on his face disappeared, replaced with a questioning look. I gave him a quick smile and tried to make it look real enough not to worry him.

"Well, if it isn't the royal mate!" Eronis grinned loudly, opening his arms wide. "To what do we owe the pleasure?"

He slung one arm over my shoulder and the other over Sora's, guiding us until he reached Kylan.

"I thought I heard Kylan," I said, looking at him, "so I thought—"

"You'd come see what all the noise was about," Eryas cut in with a smirk.

"Yes," I said. "Something like that."

I blinked at Kylan, hoping he would understand that I needed him to get rid of his brothers so I could explain what was going on. He tilted his head, confused.

A breath escaped me. "Can we—"

"You must've seen Kaelis already," Eryas cut me off. "Tell us. How's our little sister doing?"

Eronis burst out laughing and gave his brother a hard smack on the back before suddenly straightening and putting on a dramatic face. "If someone will ruin my hall there will be hell to pay," he said in a high voice, his hands fluttering as he perfectly mimicked Kaelis. "And there will be executions!"

They laughed even harder. Kylan clicked his tongue, his eyes shooting daggers. He looked torn between saying something and letting it go.

Standing between them felt like being caught in a storm. If there was one thing the king had done correctly, it was not leaving the kingdom in the hands of his firstborn sons. Compared to Kylan, they were simply too chaotic.

"Well?" Eronis urged. "Please, tell us. Did she say anything about Kayden?" He whispered the name like it was a curse.

My eyes shifted to Kylan, who shrugged his shoulders. "She was...really excited to hear the rumors about Prince Kayden turned out to be true."

I didn't even know what I was saying, but I didn't have any time for this. All I wanted was Kylan so I could give him a heads up.

The two gave me the same frown, then laughed again. "Royal mate, we are one of thirty-three siblings and out of everyone, Kaelis hates him the most," Eronis chuckled. "And we all hate him."

My smile stayed glued to my face.

But on the inside, I couldn't help wondering what it was Kayden had done over the years to earn that kind of hatred from so many people, including his family. It wasn't just a casual dislike. It ran so deep I could see the disdain in their eyes as they spoke about him.

Interesting was definitely one word for it.

Eryas placed a hand on Kylan's shoulder, his face serious. "Anyway, I already told Kylan he'll have to keep a close eye on you," he said, looking at me. "That kid, Kayden, is capable of anything."

Then his gaze slid to Sora. "You too, lady," he said. "Better watch out and try not to cross paths with him."

Well, it was already far too late for that.

Sora let out a small, high hum and nodded. My eyes were on Kylan again.

"Kylan, can we ta—"

My words were once again cut short as Eronis threw an arm over both mine and Kylan's shoulders, pulling us in closer. "As we all know, things tend to get pretty wild when the moon hits. Lots of pups are conceived, but don't worry," he spoke in a low tone. "I already told Kylan to keep it respectful and clean so you can both graduate first."

A surprised laugh came out before I could stop myself. "Wow...thanks!"

Kylan shook his head and lowered his gaze to the floor. He seemed seconds away from punching his brother.

"I am giving you a heads up because that's how the Moon Goddess blessed me with my first two. There's no need to thank me," Eronis smirked. "I also told him to be smart about it. Skip the ceremony, mark you now, seal the bond, and keep the pups off the table for a few more years—"

"That's enough," Kylan stopped him, his tone cold. Eronis stepped back in surrender, raising his hands.

Kylan had been quiet the entire time, letting his brothers run their mouths, but the second Eronis mentioned a potential mark, he shut it down hard.

My smile faded. Was he really that against it?

I tried not to read into it too much, but it still stung. We already knew we would spend our lifetime together, so what scared him away from marking me?

"You should both continue practicing your speeches for tonight," Kylan told them. "I'll catch up with you later."

Eronis raised his brows, amused, while Eryas's smirk widened. "Sure, little brother," Eryas said. "You don't want to keep your goddess waiting."

They turned and walked off, laughter trailing behind them.

Kylan kept his eyes on his brothers until the door finally closed. His jaw tightened with unease, his body stiff as a board as he turned to face us. "I'm sorry for...that," he said, his gaze shifting up and down. "Please don't take Eronis seriously. He is...annoying."

I blinked at him, completely ignoring Sora's presence in the room. "For what?" I asked, chuckling. "For saying you should mark me? Is that not what you want?"

"N-No!" Kylan denied. He let out an awkward laugh, rubbing the back of his neck. The air between us felt strange for a moment, and a slight blush crept onto his cheeks. He took a long breath. "It's not that I don't want to..."

His eyes shifted past me to Sora. I glanced over my shoulder and caught

her standing there awkwardly, like she was intruding on the conversation. Her hands twisted together as she sucked in her bottom lip.

Kylan narrowed his eyes just a little. "So what were the two of you doing here again?" he asked calmly. "Is there something I should know?"

Kayden.

"You're right," I said quickly. "Yes!"

Sora took the tiniest steps forward until her shoulders brushed against mine.

I inhaled, trying to say everything in one breath. "So Kayden cornered and then threatened us to give him back Thorne. One thing led to another, Sora hit him over the head with a wooden board, and now he's knocked out, tied up, and...gagged in the kitchen pantry."

Kylan just stared at me as if he were waiting for me to laugh, say I was kidding, or perhaps add just joking at the end.

When he realized that wasn't the case, his gaze drifted from me to Sora, then back to me, then to Sora again, like his brain was buffering.

"I'm sorry," he said slowly, rubbing his temple. "Sora did what?"



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