

Chapter 420

Violet

A smile tugged at my lips as I anticipated the good news. Sonya laughed softly as she placed a hand over her stomach, glancing down for a moment.

"What do you want to tell us?" Dylan asked, his brows pulling together. I knew there was no way he would have any magic abilities, but the way he spoke made it clear he already suspected something. His eyes moved between Fergus and Sonya like he was trying to confirm his suspicions.

Sonya slipped her hand into Fergus's. He drew in a short breath.

"Your dad and I..." Sonya began.

They looked at each other, and the love between them was so beautiful my eyes refused to look away.

Fergus gave her a slight nod, then turned his head to look at us. First Dylan and Trinity, then me. "Your mom is pregnant."

For a moment, no one said anything. The silence stretched, and when there was still no sign of Dylan's reaction, not even a breath, I spun to look at him. Trinity was the first to respond, releasing a loud gasp.

"Oh my Goddess!"

She shot up from her seat and rushed around the table, throwing her arms around Sonya. "That's amazing! I can't wait!"

A warm expression crossed Sonya's face, and she stood up to hug her back.

"A sibling?" Dylan chuckled, though his face looked a bit stiff. His brain was still trying to catch up with the news. Mine already had. I followed Trinity's lead, making my way to Sonya.

She was kind enough to step aside and shot me a big grin to give me some space. I wasn't sure whether to hug her or even touch her, but that didn't take away from the joy I felt. I was genuinely happy for them.

I settled for a smile. "Congrat—"

"Come here, Violet."

A surprised stutter escaped me as she pulled me into a hug. I often froze when someone I didn't expect hugged me, but not this time. After the talk we had, I felt comfortable enough to wrap my arms around her too.

It didn't feel careful or distant.

Just warm.

"You're going to be a big sister," she whispered.

Something finally fluttered in my chest.

A big sister...

The words felt strange and beautiful at the same time. When she let go, I focused on Fergus and hugged him too.

"I can't wait, Dad!"

"I know."

He rested his hand on the back of my head and kissed the top of it. Dylan was still sitting, staring at the scene in front of him.

Fergus chuckled. "You're not excited?"

"I am...I am." Dylan rubbed the back of his neck.

"But I've got...so many questions."

Dylan being Dylan, I was certain it had to do with the state of the world at the moment. Because yes, we had sealed Baelor, things were okay for now but for how long? That was how Dylan's mind worked.

His eyes locked with mine for a beat. I shot him an angry frown, urging him not to ruin the moment. He responded with a huff, then plastered a smile on his face.

"Well," he said, shaking his head, "I guess I'm going to be a big brother!"

Both Sonya and Fergus released relieved breaths.

"I will most definitely babysit," Trinity decided, locking our arms. I stood there for a moment, looking at all of them. Because for the first time in a long time it felt like our family wasn't broken, but growing.

"Why are we celebrating?"

It was Kylan walking toward us, one brow slightly raised as if he had just missed out. I sprinted toward him and grabbed both of his hands.

He blinked down at me, caught off guard.

"What—"

"Because we have good news!" I said quickly.

His brow lifted.

"Kylan," I said, barely containing my excitement, "I'm going to be a big sister!"

He reacted exactly how I expected, and a light chuckle escaped him. "Dylan as a brother and Violet as a sister," he hummed, his smile never leaving. "I feel for the poor child already."

I shoved his shoulder. "Hey!"

Before I could protest more, he wrapped an arm around me and pulled me closer against his side. I wrapped my arms around his waist, feeling Jumpie in his pocket while the raven perched on his shoulder again.

"I'm happy for you," Kylan said, his attention on Sonya and Fergus. "Really."

There was no teasing in his voice that time.

Just sincerity.

Nate and Kaelis had also joined the group again, just in time for the good news. But there was a large space between them. Nate stood slightly back, hands in his pockets, and seemed quiet and withdrawn.

Kaelis had already moved over to Trinity and Dylan's side as she had been doing a lot today.

The distance between them was impossible to miss and so unfortunate.

"We should celebrate," Kylan suggested. "By doing something... anything."

A laugh escaped me, knowing he was looking for any excuse possible so we could leave the gardens he had suggested in the first place. Because if

we stayed here another ten minutes, he would probably start arguing with the flowers.

Trinity's eyes lit up. "What were you thinking?" she asked. "Nate told me the donuts here are amazing, right Nate?"

"They are," Nate admitted quietly.

"We could go to the market," Kylan said. "If everyone's up for it."

His eyes scanned the group, and when nobody protested, our next destination had been decided.

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The market didn't disappoint, and neither did the Lyperian donut, which tasted exactly like the one Nate had given me once.

It was definitely a different vibe from the Common Lands, but those two kingdoms were so different it would've been bad to compare them. Colorful stalls lined the streets, with shops behind them, and fabric fluttered above our heads while vendors called out.

The smell of sweet pastries, meats, and spices filled the air. Even with all the guards and all the prying eyes, I knew I would treasure also this moment forever.

Fergus and Sonya had ended up at a merchant where they had been discussing seeds for quite some time, while Trinity and Dylan had left for another pastry stall.

Kaelis made her way to a cosmetic stall while Kylan and Nate exchanged a single look before Nate surprisingly followed behind her, making sure to stay near the back. Even now, he was still keeping an eye on her.

I spotted a small shop on the opposite side and almost jumped in excitement. "They have bracelets!" I pointed out. "I need to get some!"

I dragged him inside before he could protest, but not without hearing him groan. The moment we entered, the shop owner looked up and his smile stretched so wide I was slightly concerned his face might split.

"Your Highness!" he breathed, bowing his head. "And the Royal Mate. You are as beautiful as they say you are!"

"People say that about me?" I asked, flustered.

Kylan sighed under his breath. "Everyone says that about you," Kylan muttered, glancing around the antique-looking jewelry shop.

"Please," the man smiled, gesturing his hand. "These are all handmade. Have a look."

I took Kylan's hand and dragged him to one of the racks, filled with all sorts of pieces. Bracelets, rings, necklaces, and so much more.

"So," Kylan said. "What exactly did you drag me in here for?"

"I want to buy something for Commander Rochwall and Commander Jorn," I said, carefully inspecting the options.

Kylan leaned against a display beside me.

"Ah," he said. "Busy bootlicking, are we?"

I turned to him immediately. "No, I'm not!" I protested, folding my arms.

His brows creased slightly before he broke into laughter. He always enjoyed teasing me far too much, and I always fell for it.

"I just think it would be nice to bring them something back," I said, scanning the bracelets. "They could've easily complained about us leaving for Lyperia, but they didn't," I continued. "Better yet, they even allowed a few of Lyperian students to attend the feast. That's kind of them."

"Yes," Kylan said dryly. "They didn't really have much of a choice."

I let out a chortle. "Were you always this negative?"

"It's called being realistic," he replied. "But I love seeing you smile, so I usually spare you from it, so you must've forgotten what it's like."

A smile spread across my face before I could stop it. There was something about the way he would sneak in those small but meaningful signs of affection that almost managed to make my heart flutter.

"That's cute," I cooed, then stood on my toes to press a soft peck to his lips. When I lowered myself again, he looked down at me with an amused expression.

I looked back at the rack of bracelets. "There are so many," I said, picking up one after the other. "What do you think? Should I go for something simple or something flashy—"

"Violet," Kylan said slowly.

I groaned. "I think Rochwall is probably a dark green type of guy, and Jorm would go for something practical? Maybe I should—"

My words were cut short as Kylan rested his large hand on top of my head like I was a convenient table. "I'm falling asleep," he announced.

I slapped his arm. "You're not helping."

"Blue for Rochwall, green for Jorn...though with the way he has treated you, I personally believe you shouldn't get him anything," he said with a short laugh.

"Thank you!"

I kept looking through the bracelets, taking my time while trying to picture which one would suit each of them.

"How do you feel about the little Bloodrose?" Kyran asked after a moment.

"I think it's great!" I said, excited. "It hasn't fully clicked yet, but I do know that I will treat them right. Spoil them rotten, of course."

It felt strange to say it out loud, but the feeling was real. "I'm going to tell you something, and please don't ask how it was possible," I went on. "But I knew before Sonya told us."

He raised a brow. "You knew?"

"Yes. Whenever I looked into her eyes today, I could hear two heartbeats," I said quietly. "It was so strong, so clear. Terrifying...but also so beautiful."

Kyran tilted his head slightly. "That's...not that crazy," he stated. "Considering you've done a lot of incredible things these past days, it might just be another thing to add to the list."

I chuckled softly. "Perhaps."

"We should ask Aelius about it when we return."

He was right.

I could not imagine Aelius turning his back on me now. There was a lot I didn't even know I was capable of, and if someone could help me understand myself better, it was him.

"I'm a little nervous about being a big sister," I admitted. "I keep thinking...what if I'm bad at it?"

He hummed thoughtfully. "I suppose it became normal for me," he said. "With almost a thousand siblings and all that."

A laugh slipped past my lips. "Even when Lady Rheva announced her pregnancy," he continued, "it felt like another ordinary day."

I could definitely see where he was coming from. The king didn't waste any time and was on a mission to create his own army. "Do you feel connected to them?" I asked. "Obviously not Lady Mona's children, but the others?"



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