

## Chapter 424

Violet

I sat on the bed with my eyes closed, trying to find my way to the Veil. Kylan's plan was great, but connecting with the one place you've been told to avoid, not to even think about, was easier said than done.

While I had connected with the Veil before, it had never been of my own will. This time it was supposed to be, and I felt the pressure.

Even so, I knew I could do it properly this time because I could control my powers. I just didn't know how.

My hands rested on my knees as I forced myself to focus, but every time I thought I was getting somewhere, my mind drifted.

It went to the trial, the dungeons, the missing box, the king...and we had been at it far too long that my legs were starting to tingle from sitting still.

Beside me, I could sense Kylan's presence. I didn't need to open my eyes to know he was watching me closely, giving me all the time I needed without interrupting.

What if I couldn't reach them?

What if the Veil was different now after everything that had happened?

What if...

"Lumen."

My eyes snapped open.



something together.

"You told me once," he said, "that Alaric said the two of you would always be connected through Lumen."

"Yes?"

"If you can't work out how to get to the Veil, you might be able to go through Lumen instead. I want to believe that's what he meant." 4

His words gave me a flicker of hope, and I wasted no time involving the one who must have known this already.

'Lumia?'

She let out a long, exaggerated sigh.

'So the prince has unfortunately figured it out, and decided to entertain all of us with another one of his bad ideas.' she yawned. 'How amazing.'

I couldn't stop the small laugh that escaped me, making Kylan lift a brow in response.

"Nothing," I said quickly, shaking my head before closing my eyes again.

Inside, Lumia was still grumbling.

'Lumen is not just someone I should casually call upon whenever you feel like it,' she said. 'He is—'

'I don't have time for this. It's important,' I interrupted.

The smallest whimper came from Lumia, and suddenly a strange thought crossed my mind. No wonder she wasn't all that excited about calling out to Lumen.

'You are afraid he's going to scold you,' I called her out.



Lumia scoffed before I could even finish.

'Afraid?' she said. 'Please. I have walked through more bodies than you could imagine, little girl. I do not fear anyone.'

I smiled faintly.

So even she had something that scared her...

'Just call him,' I instructed.

There was a silence that followed, then a soft purr.

'Activate your eyes.'

I frowned. "What...?"

'No questions. Just do it.'

I decided to listen to Lumia and allowed a familiar warmth to spread behind my eyes, immediately feeling a surge of power through my body. Kylan's lips parted slightly like he wanted to comment on it, but he didn't.

His entire focus was on my eyes now.

Lumia released another purr, almost defeated. Then her voice changed, turning more careful and respectful than it had ever been.

'Lumen...' she whispered. 'We need your help.'

Suddenly my body felt too heavy, my head tipped forward, and two strong arms caught me.

Kylan.

"I got you."

The room flickered, darkness rushed in, and cold air brushed against my



skin. For a moment, there was nothing. It was dark, silent...

But when a bright red light appeared, and with it two figures standing in the distance, I knew I was exactly where I was supposed to be.

I was finally inside the Veil.

My hand cupped above my eyes, and the two figures suddenly became clear. It felt as if my heart stopped beating for a second.

Mom?

And Dad?

But that was impossible. My legs wouldn't move. They felt glued to the ground beneath me, and it was for no other reason than me simply refusing to move.

Alaric and Adelaide weren't supposed to stand beside each other, let alone on the same level. The Veil was supposed to be layered for a reason, and that separation was what kept it stable. It kept Baelor from the Alpha King and werewolves, the werewolves from Gloria and the witches...

What was happening?

My breathing grew louder through the silence of the Veil as one thought repeated itself in my head.

Had I done this?

Had I somehow pulled them together?

Panic flickered through my body as I looked around quickly, scanning my surroundings. Seriously, where was everyone?

Where were the roars, the fighting, the chaos that I had somehow already mentally prepared myself for? The chaos I had heard in the woods.



Had they all escaped because of me?

As I looked down, I saw my chest rising and falling and didn't know what to do. When I lifted my eyes again, I took the smallest breath I could and gathered some courage to take a better look at the figures.

That red light...

It was coming from Alaric's eyes.

They burned brightly in the dark Veil, and even as their color faded and returned to blue, the Veil itself still held the glow of that beautiful red.

I could see everything clearly now. Those blue eyes, and golden blonde hair that resembled mine. That radiant presence Adelaide carried, something no one could ever compete with.

It really was them, but why weren't they moving?

Why were they just standing there?

I bet they were disappointed, and I could not blame them. After all, I had made quite the mess.

Lumia was right.

Maybe this was a bad idea.

"Violet..."

A strong, but shaky voice cut through the silence of the Veil.

My breath caught, hearing her voice.

Mom's voice.

Suddenly she moved. First she took a few steps, and I could hear them against whatever was beneath us. Then she ran toward me so quickly that



she nearly tripped over her own feet.

"Be careful!" Alaric warned, a laugh escaping him.

Why was he laughing?

Even if I wanted to, there was no time to think about it as Adelaide had already reached me. She wrapped her arms around me so tightly the air rushed out of my lungs, but that was okay. I didn't mind.

"Mom..."

My hands flew up instantly, clutching the back of her shoulders. I gripped her and didn't want to let go because I knew she could disappear if I didn't hold on tight enough. I didn't want that. I didn't want her to go when I needed her the most. Needed them the most.

She smelled like warmth, like home, and I wanted this feeling to last.

"Violet," she sniffed into my shoulder. Her body trembled as she held me, somehow managing to squeeze me even tighter. A burning sensation reached my chest, and I realized my own cheeks were wet too.

And when another pair of arms wrapped around us. Strong, warm, and safe...I lost it. I sobbed quietly, leaning into my parents' touch.

"Don't cry, my princess," Alaric chuckled. His hand reached up and ruffled my hair, making me laugh through my tears.

I couldn't believe this was real. I genuinely couldn't believe any of this was real.

Adelaide suddenly pulled back from the hug with a small gasp, her hands still gripping my shoulders. "Wait," she said. "Let me look at you again."

I laughed softly, wiping my cheeks with the back of my hand. We just stood there, staring at each other.



Her eyes moved across my face like she was memorizing every detail again. My hair, my eyes, the shape of my face. I realized I was doing the exact same thing, trying to take in everything about her all over again. I hadn't forgotten what she looked like. She was far too beautiful for that. But I just wanted to look at her, and admire her.

Behind her, Alaric was watching us with a wide grin spread across his face, his arms folded across his chest, enjoying the scene.

I glanced past Adelaide and smiled at him.

A small frown appeared on his face. "She looks just like me!"

"I think she looks like me now," Adelaide said at the same time.

Her brows knitted in disagreement as those words left his mouth, but then she focused on me again. Alaric pulled a face and shook his head behind her.

A giggle escaped me.

His lips were pressed together like he was trying very hard not to argue but clearly thought she was completely wrong. The look on his face said it all.

She looks more like me.

Then the realization hit me again. All of this was great and beautiful, but...

"Wait," I said, blinking between them. "How—"

"Lumen," Alaric answered immediately. "He said you needed us, and we got worried."

"I'm fine," I reassured. "I mean, no...I'm not fine, fine, but that's not important right now."

I took a slow breath in, then let it out again, trying to calm the racing



feeling inside my chest. A sound escaped from Adelaide as she looked over her shoulder at Alaric.

"That's what you do," she whispered.

Alaric nodded proudly. "I know."

I frowned slightly, my gaze moving between them again. "I just don't understand," I began. "How are you able to stand here in front of me... together?"



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