



## Chapter 438

Violet

Day one was over.

We found ourselves back in our room, but the mood was down and had been like that for a while now. I still couldn't believe what had just happened. The accusations the king made against the queen, True, who was telling lies, and Jack, who was hurt by his mate's actions.

And as much as I didn't care for the woman, he even went as far as dragging Lady Mona to the dungeons.

The dungeons...

Kylan had told me what he had seen, how Kaelis hadn't left Nate's side until he asked her to, and I wished he hadn't told me because now I couldn't unsee it. Couldn't stop imagining it.

"I can't believe he's doing all of this for a box."

Kylan chuckled. "I can."

My hand curled into a fist. It was a lie. I actually could believe it. He had made it very clear what type of man he was. I just didn't want to accept it.

I didn't want to accept that this was his game and that he had forced me to play it.

"I knew the dungeons were harsh, and that they wouldn't be in the best condition, but at least that's it for now, right?" I tried to remain somewhat positive.



A small breath escaped from Kylan. His head tilted, eyes blinking as he looked at me. He held my gaze for a few seconds before they moved to Thorne, who was back in his cage. Jumpie lay on top of the cage, keeping him company.

"Right," he said, a faint smile pulling at his lips. I couldn't tell whether it was just nerves, but something about the way he said it felt off, and I hated that I noticed.

I hated that we were at the point where we knew each other well enough to see something was wrong with just a single glance, but if he wanted to keep it to himself, I would respect that too. Kylan didn't have bad intentions.

"How are you feeling?" I asked, sitting down beside him. Even though I was the one asking the question, I seemed to be definitely more nervous than he was. My hands rubbed over my arms as if that would somehow ground me.

"I think I've gotten quite used to this," Kylan answered. "He pushes the queen, she pushes back harder...and then has everyone behind her."

"And the adultery?" I wondered, not even bothering to ask about the part where he accused her of being a witch. "Was any of that—"

"Complicated," he said, his brown eyes staring into mine.

"I don't think she loves him. I think she was just trying to get on the king's nerves. Humiliate him the same way he has humiliated her," he said, chuckling. "Sure, there were rumors, moments...but nothing like what he's trying to make it."

Kylan exhaled through his nose. "And Jack...he loves True. Those two



love each other so much that I know she wouldn't do this, lie about some diary unless she had no other choice," he continued. "I'm sure he must've forced her into this, and she won't be the only one forced to say certain things."

"Yes, I know," I agreed. "Recovery is going to be impossible after this, and even if they prove their innocence, if they walk out of this...people heard it, and they'll remember. They will always remember."

Kylan didn't argue. "Yes, that's the point," he said. "He isn't doing any of this randomly, and neither is Kayden...though I'm still not sure just how much those two have been working together."

A chill went through my body as that name slipped past his lips. "I still don't get him. One moment he's apologizing, saying it wasn't him, and the next—"

"That's Kayden," Kylan cut me off. "He might've looked genuine when he said he wouldn't do anything to you, but that's exactly why you shouldn't trust him. He's good at pretending."

Kylan's gaze softened just a little, but there was still so much anger behind it. I knew he felt played by Kayden for years, and that he was a sensitive subject.

He had told me that Varius used the same words as Adelaide. We couldn't trust him. And I didn't want to trust him, but there was also a part of me that felt sorry for him. Sorry that he was so manipulative, pathetic, and that he couldn't change because it was in his bones.

I suddenly thought of Dylan and Trinity. They were still locked in their rooms, and likely would be until the third day. That was when I expected the king to finally summon them.



Trinity hated being inside. It wasn't like her to just sit still, wait, not do anything. She needed movement, noise, and I felt bad for doing this to her.

"She's probably losing her mind right now," I murmured.

Kylan glanced at me. "Sora or Trinity?"

"Trinity...and Dylan."

"They'll be fine," he reassured. "The king is not after them. Dylan is a future alpha, Trinity a future luna, Richard. They'll be fine."

I knew they would. I also knew Sora and Lian would be fine, and that the king had sent them to the dungeons just for the sake of showing me he was allowed to do this, and that was what made me nauseous.

"I'm nervous for tomorrow," I admitted. "I think he'll bring up Varius and the witches, and I worry for them."

Because while the others had some sort of status, those living in the mountains didn't. He could cut the trial short, suddenly decide he didn't like my lack of reaction, and just sentence them and the others to death instead, without even waiting for day three.

"I don't know what we'll do if it turns out we miscalculated how far he's willing to go."

Kylan gave me his full attention and listened.

"He's waiting for Nate," I explained. "I know he is. He is doing that because he wants to break both of us at the same time, but he is too unpredictable, and—"



"Breathe," Kylan instructed. His hand settled on my knee, his fingers pressing into it gently. "We'll figure it out, Violet."

His thumb brushed against my leg, and it was just enough to calm my stress.

I shot him a small smile. "You always say that."

"And I always mean it."

I studied his face for a second, leaning closer without even noticing. I stared into his deep brown eyes because I needed him to mean it. I wanted to believe it.

Kylan's hand moved from my knee to my waist, pulling me in closer. "You're overthinking again," he whispered.

I corrected him. "I'm just thinking—"

"Too much," he said. "You're thinking too much, and that isn't going to help anyone."

I let out a breathy laugh, my forehead brushing against his. "I am stuck in this room with nothing else to do. Of course I'm going to think!"

Kylan hummed, his lips curling into a smirk. "Yes...because what are we supposed to do in this room all day?"

His thumb brushed against my side, his touch making me jolt softly. "Just us."

I stared at him for a long second before letting out a laugh. "What?" I gasped. "You're unbelievable!"

"I'm serious," he shrugged. "Look, I'm trying to look at the positive side of this situation."

His gaze dropped to my lips before returning to my eyes.

And for some reason, mine did the same. I felt a flutter in my chest as I realized what was happening here and let out a breath. "I feel bad."

Kylan frowned. "I can make you feel better," he said.

Really?

I stared at him before grabbing the nearest pillow and smacking it straight against his head. "Is that the best you've got?"

A laugh escaped him. "Hey, I tried."

He reached for the pillow, but I yanked it away at the last second, pushing him back against the bed. When I swung again, he managed to catch it this time, making the pillow slip from my hands.

Our gazes met. "You're smiling," he pointed out, his eyes lifting to mine.

I let out an embarrassed laugh. "I guess I am."

But even as I said it, a thought slipped in.

Will I still be able to tomorrow?

Commented [Ma1]: