



Chapter 443

Violet

Everyone had left the courtroom. The council, the nobles, the guards.

It was only us now. The king stood at the top of the stairs, looking down at us with a smirk plastered across his face. I was still hiding behind Kylan, my fingers practically buried in his arm at this point.

The king cleared his throat. "You can leave, too, Kylan."

"I'm not going anywhere."

The king huffed through his nose. "Well," he said, annoyed. "Then I'm afraid we have nothing to discuss."

Nothing to discuss?

"Kylan?"

I turned and looked up to meet his eyes, my hands flat on his chest. I didn't want to be alone with that man, not even for a second, but I also wanted to hear whatever nonsense he was about to say.

Kylan chuckled. "I'm not leaving, Violet."

"Go," I whispered.

Something changed in his eyes. "Violet..."

"Go," I repeated, smiling at him. "I'll be quick."

He didn't like me telling him to leave. I could tell. But I also knew he wouldn't argue with me. He grabbed my face with both hands, his



thumbs moving softly across my cheeks. "If anything happens...I'll be right outside."

"I know."

He released me slowly, then turned and walked away. As soon as the door closed behind him, the sound of the thud made me jolt. My heart jumped, but I kept my face neutral.

Anything so the king wouldn't be able to read me.

"Violet!"

I still wasn't a fan of the way he said my name, and I liked it so much better when he couldn't bring it past his lips. He lifted his hand and waved me down, already walking.

Breathe, Violet...

I put my hands together in front of me because I knew they would start doing something weird if I didn't. Then I walked down the stairs, matching his steps from the other side.

Our gazes met, and we both walked until we met in the center. I lifted my eyes to take a better look at him, and that's when I saw it clearly. He had seen the doubt on my face and thought I would crumble.

I chuckled in his face, and he hummed at the same time.

"The situation with the witches," he started. "Very unfortunate."

I bobbed my head. "Very."

He squinted his eyes as he looked at me, and I did the same, mimicking his actions. I sucked on my bottom lip and scrunched my brows together.



"Unfortunately, you can't really help people who do not want help," I shrugged. "Evil is evil."

It was not a joke.

Yet somehow, he had managed to laugh so loud his head went all the way back.

"Those are wise words, Royal Mate," he said, still laughing. "I'll have to remember those for Kayden."

So he was implying Kayden was evil?

"Anyway," I clicked my tongue. "Did you need me for anything else or am I free to go?"

His face grew serious, and he coughed twice. "Have you changed your mind yet?" he asked, lifting his chin. "About...helping me bring your parents back—"

"There's nothing to think about," I said, not giving him the chance to finish. "I have the same thoughts I had yesterday, and it will still be the same tomorrow."

His mouth opened as if he wanted to gasp, his brows raised, and then he released a sigh. "Okay," he smiled. "That was all. I suppose I'll see you tomorrow," he said. "I must say...I think day three might be my favorite."

He waved his hand dismissively, and though I wanted to smack it down, I took the opportunity to leave. I had no intention of looking back and just focused on the door, knowing Kylan would be behind it.

"Oh, and Violet?"

I rolled my shoulders as I came to a halt and turned my head.



"Tell Kylan to put on his prettiest suit." His grin stretched wider. "It's been delayed for far too long, but tomorrow is going to be a special day."

My heart sank. There was no explanation needed for me to understand what he was hinting at. The mate ceremony will take place tomorrow. Camille would make her appearance.

I suppose this was his final attempt for today to get me to give in. He wanted me to react, wanted to see me lose it...But I trusted Kylan. If anything, this was the last thing I was worried about.

I gave him a small smile. "I'll tell him that."

Then I walked out.

I barely made it through the door before Kylan grabbed my arms. "Violet!"

"Y-Yes?" I replied, startled.

His eyes moved all over my face, trying to figure out whether I was still in one piece or if the king had somehow broken me in the few minutes we were apart.

I wanted to tell him I was fine, still breathing, but I barely got the chance as several guards started closing in on us. There were too many of them, and they were standing way too close.

A look of fury crossed Kylan's eyes, causing the guards to step back. One of them nervously cleared his throat. "The pr..."

The prisoner?

"I mean, the Royal Mate should return to her room, Your Highness."



"We know," Kylan growled. His voice was so cold it almost made me flinch.

I reached for his hand and laced my fingers through his. He squeezed back, and we started walking. The halls were still as quiet and empty as they had been these past days.

Neither of us spoke for a while, and my mind kept going back to the king's face. The way he smiled when he told me about tomorrow, and the way he looked at me like he had high hopes he would eventually get his way.

"The thing with the witches..." Kylan's voice pulled me back.

I shook my head, shooting him a reassuring glance. "It's okay, really," I said. "If they were really involved in what they were involved in...if it was enough for even Varius to throw them under the bus to the point he was willing to sacrifice himself..."

I swallowed hard because the truth still hurt, but after seeing Kayden's reaction, it had suddenly become the harsh truth. "Then what else can we do?"

Kylan closed his eyes for a moment.

"What did he want?"

"Just as I suspected," I said, leaning closer. "He wanted to know if I changed my mind."

A chuckle left him.

I bit my lip. "And..."

Our footsteps came to a stop as we reached the room. He opened the door



and guided me inside first, then closed it behind us.

"And?" he asked, picking up where we left off.

I let out a breath. "He told me to tell you that at last...after some delay..." I swallowed. "You should wear something nice tomorrow."

Kylan laughed, dragging his hand through his hair, and shook his head like he already knew.

"The ceremony?"

I gave him a single nod. My chest felt tight. It was definitely not because of Camille, because I trusted Kylan. If anything, that was the last thing on my mind right now.

I just wasn't looking forward to day three...

I had no idea what else the king had planned, but I had an awful feeling it would be worse than the first two days.

It would also be the day we would learn everyone's fate, and it would really be a shame if we had underestimated the situation.

"I'm more worried about the trial," I admitted, my voice small. "Nate... Varius...I keep thinking about what he's planning. What if we're wrong about all of this? What if someone gets hurt because I didn't just give him what he wanted?"

My throat burned. "What if I'm being...selfish?"

"Don't say that."

Kylan stepped closer to me. His hands wrapped around my waist, and I looked up at him. His brown eyes were calm, confident, everything I



wasn't at the moment.

"Tomorrow this will all be over," he said. "And before you know it, we'll be back at Starlight." A small smile pulled at his lips. "And you'll hate me again when I start pushing you in training."

A laugh escaped me. He leaned forward and pressed a warm kiss to my forehead.

It lasted only a second, but it was warm enough to feel it in every part of my body. Just as I was about to lean in closer, he let go of my waist and walked past me.

"Wait." I spun around. "Where are you going?"

He stopped at the door. His hand rested on the handle, but he didn't look back.

"To make sure I don't end up with some mistress tomorrow," he said. "It's finally time to act."

My brows pulled together. "What does that mean?"

"I need to find Kayden."

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