



Chapter 448 PT. 2

Day 3

Violet

"Nate Wyrnsbane...he said if anyone interfered, they would be next."

The crowd reacted violently, many throwing offenses at Nate again. I looked at the others to see if they were just as disgusted as I was.

Dylan's lips were parted, Trinity's brows drew together, and Lian and Sora stood frozen. She was telling lies. Camille was telling lies, and nearly everyone believed her.

And the worst thing was that I wasn't sure how much longer I would be able to hold on. I couldn't even look at Kylan because I knew he was hurting.

I still believed in Kaelis, but time was ticking.

For all of this to be over...I just had to open that box.

"I wasn't supposed to be there that day," Camille said. "But I was fetching some herbs and found myself right in the middle of it."

"Was he on Lunaris at the time?" the king asked.

Camille blinked. "I believe so...yes."

She lowered her eyes like she was sad. "I know what such an addiction might do to someone, but it still doesn't make it right," she said. "Chrystal begged for her life. She cried and screamed, and he just..."

She wiped imaginary tears from her eyes, really getting into her role.



This girl was definitely something.

"Then what happened?"

"We were all forced to dig a hole and bury the body. I-I can lead you to it!" Her voice trembled. "The crown prince...he kicked me to the ground and forced me to dig so I would also be an accomplice...But I forgive him, of course."

She was mixing reality with fiction, and none of it was making sense.

Every head turned toward Kylan, who had taken a deep breath and lowered his head. He was also taking hit after hit. First with the Lyperian stone, now this...

"Why shouldn't I bring him down here as well?" the king asked.

"Because he was also forced," Camille said quickly. "B-by the royal mate. She wanted to protect Nate so badly. I saw it...how she influenced all of them."

My heart stopped.

Forced? What?

My head snapped to Kylan, and this time, his expression was stone cold. His eyes were shooting daggers, and he bit his tongue. I was glad he did because if we denied it right now, the king would start asking questions we wouldn't have the answers to.

It would be better to just let her finish.

But why was Camille doing this?

Was she really that desperate to become a mistress? Did she really think



Kylan had dick for brains like that father of his, and would forget about all the problems she had caused because she wore a white dress?

The most surprising part was that she chose to protect Kayden all the way to the end. We did not really have a choice, but she did. Kylan already believed that Kayden had told the king it was Nate who killed Chrystal. Camille knew that was not true, yet she went along with it.

Was she trying to stay on the king's good side, or was she afraid to go against Kayden?

Kayden's face was red. His hands were shaking, his chest rose and fell like he couldn't get enough air, and I suddenly just didn't care anymore. I wanted him to speak up, admit to his faults, and end it before I would seriously consider opening that box for the king.

In that split second, I didn't care anymore if anyone found out I was a witch. Not if it meant ruining my friends.

Ruining Kylan...

All he had to do was confess. Say he did it, and why he did it. No one would believe me or any of us at this point. But perhaps they would believe him.

I took a breath. Maybe I could find another solution with the box and still turn this around. Mom and Dad would be disappointed, at least Mom said she would be, but I couldn't do this to everyone...

I drew in one more breath and stepped forward. "Your Majesty, I—"

"I did it!"

Kylan's voice cut through the room. He ignored the commotion that followed and rushed down the stairs until he stood beside us. I looked at



him in full shock, but he couldn't look back.

The king let out a laugh. "Son—"

"I did it," Kylan repeated. "I didn't want Chrystal as a mistress, so I got rid of her. I forced them to help me cover it up, and that's the truth. They had nothing to do with this."

Camille's eyes softened as she looked at him, and something flickered across her face. Perhaps the realization of someone who began to understand she had no place in his life.

"Use the truth potion!" someone shouted from the crowd. "If there's no confession, the potion will tell us!"

The king raised his hand. "There will be no need for that."

Of course not.

If they used the potion, everything would come out. Including my identity, and he couldn't hold that over my head anymore. He had never really threatened to expose me, and it was all because he wanted to make use of my 'witchcraft' first. He still needed me to open that box for him.

"My son is so hopelessly in love he would say anything," the king chortled. "So I cannot accept this confession."

Sora stepped forward. "I did it!"

Lian grabbed her arm. "No," she said, panicking. "I killed her!"

My eyes widened. What were they all doing?

"And what reason would either of you have to ruin your comfortable lives?" the king spat.

Dylan stepped forward. "They don't. I do. I killed her." His eyes were confident. "I couldn't stand the way she treated my sister...so I stabbed her."

Goddess, I really wanted the old Dylan now. The Dylan that didn't desire to save the day.

Trinity raised her voice. "I did it," she said. "Dylan is only trying to protect me, but I did it. I did it to protect Violet after—"

"No!" The king squeezed his eyes shut.

"Stop this nonsense at once!"

It went silent.

"As far as I am concerned," he said slowly, "Nate Wyrmsbane did it. The next witness will confirm this." His eyes moved across the room. "True!"

The room fell quiet as True stepped forward.

"True, don't do this!" Jack called out. "You know our boy wouldn't do this!"

She stopped walking for a few seconds, then continued. I could hardly believe it myself. Why would she do this to her own son?

And Nate...

His eyes were hollow as they followed his mother up the stairs. She didn't have the guts to look at him, and her eyes stayed glued to the floor.

"You can sit now, True," the king instructed.

But True didn't listen. She made her way forward, her body slightly



shaking, and looked down at everyone. "The king is right," she said. "I know what happened to my daughter."

Her eyes darted to the king. "Go on," he encouraged.

Then she turned again. "The king came to me with evidence about Nate killing Chrystal...and even though I have never doubted my son, the king had put me in a position where I had no choice but to accept his deal," she rambled. "He forced me to lie about a diary that doesn't exist, Jack's adultery. In return...he promised he wouldn't sentence my son to death."

A wave of shock moved through the room at True's sudden confession. A relieved breath escaped me, and I nudged Kylan on his side.

"Excuse me," the king fluttered his eyes. "Could you repeat that, please?"

"Gladly," True stated. "Queen Cecilia is a dignified woman, Jack is an honorable mate, Nate is a good son, and all of these kids..." Her voice cracked. "Nate talks about them all the time. They wouldn't hurt a fly."

I looked behind me. Jack and Cecilia both looked at each other with a breath of relief. This was good. There was still hope.

"Chrystal is difficult," True admitted. "She used to tell me how she wanted to torment the royal mate. How she wanted her gone." Tears filled her eyes. "She's my daughter. I still love her, but she..."

The room stirred with low murmurs and whispers.

"What I really want to say is that I have heard from my daughter," she said, her voice soft. "She has told me she decided to go on her own journey and will distance herself from the family. Chrystal has done this because she had just received a letter that she had been expelled from



Starlight for attacking the Royal Mate...and she couldn't deal with the consequences of her actions." A sad smile curled onto her lips. "My daughter is not dead. She is alive and well."

My chest tightened. She couldn't have spoken to Chrystal. That woman knew her daughter was no longer here, but still...

I hadn't expected her to do this, but it was all starting to make sense. True was indeed not the warmest woman in the room, but she loved her son. There was no doubt about that.

"While we're at it, Camille is no lady," True added. "She is nothing more than a maid who has been deceiving everyone in this room. I've heard whispers that she comes from a long line of criminals!"

Camille's face twisted with shock.

"Bullshit!" the king called out. "The girl is dead, Nate killed her, and we know where the body is!"

True didn't flinch. "Then dig it up...Your Majesty."

Dig it up?

That wasn't the smartest thing to say.

Kylan and I shot each other a nervous glance, then both looked back at Jack. His hands were over his mouth, and he seemed stressed because he knew how bad this was.

True was being impulsive and hadn't thought this through. Camille knew where the body was, which meant the king knew, and if they found it, it would be even worse.

The king scoffed. "I will start digging, and when I find it, your whole



family might hang. Mistresses included!"

He stepped closer to her, and True backed away as much as she could. "At the end of the day," he said slowly, "this court is in my hands. Matters such as these...I get to decide. That is Lyperian law."

His eyes found mine. "Unless someone wants to help me change that."

He was back at it again, attempting to make me open the box.

"You're not going to," Kylan whispered beside me. "You can't."

I slowly shook my head. He was right. Besides, nothing we did mattered at this point. He had made it clear that he would pull the strings no matter what, and we couldn't trust him.

There was still one more way to stop all of this, but the opportunity was closing. She wasn't here.

"I want all the accused to step forward!"

The guards led Varius and the witches to the front. Cecilia, Lady Mona, and Beta Jack followed. Day three had officially ended, too.

Kylan and I slowly looked at each other. "Where is she?" I mouthed.

"She will be here," he whispered. He still believed in his sister, and I wanted to do the same. I also believed it.

My nerves grew as everyone lined up. Even though Kylan didn't have to be there, he remained glued to my side. His hand found mine and squeezed hard.

"I have thought about this for a long time," the king started. "And I still don't know what to do with most of you...So I am extending the court for



three more days.”

The room turned so loud that he was forced to speak over the noise. Was he allowed to do that?

“However...there is one sentence I know clearly, and that is the one of the true murderer.”

My blood ran cold.

He would really let him be the first sacrifice.

“Out of respect for titles, I let some of you stay in your rooms, but now you will all go to the dungeons until I decide what to do with you.”

“I’ll kill him before he does that,” Kylan muttered, showing there was no chance that would happen.

“If you do that, you will be sorry!” Fergus shouted. “I will be taking my three children, and we will leave this kingdom!”

The king let out a cold laugh, his shoulders shaking. “The swamp king wants to challenge me? Challenge ancient Lyperian law?”

He gave a small shake of his head. “According to Article Twelve of the Royal Code, I am allowed to detain anyone who threatens the Lyperian crown or its people.”

No one spoke.

“And in Nate Wyrnsbane’s case...” The king smiled. “I have so much evidence. I am sorry, True, but I have no choice but to sentence him to death—”

The door slammed open.



“Stop!”