

Chapter 460

Violet

'Either tell me what you mean or just shut up!' I snapped at Lumia.

Kylan's head whipped toward me, his eyes narrowing into a glare. I tensed.

Wrong link...

Rookie mistake.

I had used the mate bond instead of my internal one with Lumia. He had heard everything.

My heart dropped into my stomach as I stared back at him, frozen. His expression was hard, confused, and I could tell it had shaken him. Unfortunately, I had no explanation that wouldn't make things worse.

Rochwall frowned, glancing between us. "Everything alright?"

"Fine," Kylan said flatly, still looking at me. He wasn't fine. Neither was I.

I cleared my throat and awkwardly patted my hands against my uniform, desperate to break the tension. That's when I noticed something.

My gloves. They were different from everyone else's.

The standard ones had these wristbands with a boxy shape. Mine were smoother and more fitted at the top. I looked down at Kylan's gloves to confirm. "Why—"

"Because your hands are too small," Commander Jorm muttered in front

of me. A small breath of air slipped past his lips. "I had to request the right size. You are my weakest link, and I'm tired of hearing your excuses every training," he said. "I will not hear any more about why you're slacking, and that includes blaming your...gloves."

He shoved his hands into his pockets and walked away without another word, lowering his gaze to the ground.

I couldn't help but chuckle. "He's warming up to me," I said, sarcastically.

Rochwall muttered under his breath. "I think he is."

He didn't seem to get the joke, but it was whatever. Rochwall shifted his gaze to both of us. Kylan and me. He was beaming with joy.

"What?" Kylan asked.

Rochwall let out a long sigh, his smile growing wider. "I just feel like a proud dad right now, looking at you two," he said. "Not just because of this Elite team...but because I can't believe I'm looking at the future." He shook his head slowly. "It's a beautiful thing."

"Yes, exquisite!" Lumia purred.

My blood was slowly starting to boil, and I just wanted her to shut up.

Shut up or tell me what all of this was suddenly about, and why she had waited until now, when she had so many chances before.

"I know I'm not your dad," Rochwall said, rolling his eyes. "But I just feel like one sometimes."

Kylan chuckled. "The king is in the dungeons, so the position is open," he mumbled. "Though he has never been that much of a father anyway. I

think you know that better than anyone.”

I knew it was only supposed to be a lighthearted joke. Something to fill the silence. But it landed too heavily for that.

A silence followed, and no one said anything. I suppose even Kylan was aware of the impact. There was still a small smile on his lips, but it didn't reach his eyes anymore.

Rochwall broke the silence first. “Well,” he exhaled. “I'll leave you two to it.”

He stepped forward and placed a firm hand on Kylan's shoulder, squeezing once. Then he walked past us, toward another group to hand them their pins.

It was just Kylan and me now, and a strange, anxious feeling crept over me. It felt as if a rope had tightened below my chest as I waited for what was coming.

“What was that just now?” Kylan asked, his brows knitting. This was the thing that I was talking about.

I knew he would ask about the mindlink slip. Of course, he wouldn't just let it go.

“It was nothing.”

I took a sharp breath. Kylan shot me a weak nod, his hand immediately finding my lower back to rub slow circles. “I want to know why you're so tense.”

I let out a dry chuckle. “Do you really want to know?”

He squinted at me. “Yes.”

I opened my mouth, ready to finally say something, when arms wrapped around me from behind. "Vivi!"

I recognized the grip. It was Nate. He squeezed me tight, lifting me slightly off the ground. Dylan appeared beside us, and Mandy joined with a grin on her face. Then, soon after, all the others joined.

My eyes were still on Kylan, and his were on me. 'We were just fine this morning...and I think I know what's going on,' he said through the mind link. 'But I can't fix it if you won't tell me. You have to tell me first.'

I shut it down. Slammed the door closed before he could say anything else.

He thinks?

Goddess, I really wished for all of this to be a misunderstanding.

His jaw tightened as he realized I wasn't going to answer, but he didn't push.

"Great news!" Mandy announced. "Jane said since the weather is nice today, we're finished for the day, and we're free to go for a run!"

I smiled, though my eyes stayed on Kylan, whose expression was quite the opposite. "That is amazing news!" I shared her enthusiasm.

Suddenly, Dylan threw his arm over my shoulder and turned us around, steering me away. He leaned in close, his voice dropping to a whisper.

"Did something happen between you two?" he asked. "I'm a bit confused. You looked fine just now."

Yes...I felt just as confused.

"Nothing happened."

I pulled away from him and turned to the group again. "What are we still doing here, guys? Let's go!"

My legs were already moving before anyone could respond, taking the lead. I never took the front. I had barely raised my voice in front of these people. That wasn't me.

But right now, I needed to move. Kylan implying he might know what my problem was felt too direct, and I had the urge to get to the bottom of it. Because what if Lumia was right.

Footsteps picked up behind me as everyone joined in. The whole Elite team. We were all dressed in matching olive green jumpsuits and our boots as we made our way deeper into the woods.

'About time,' Lumia said.

There was too much laughter and chatter around me. They were loud, excited, and when someone howled playfully behind me, a few others joined in. We were all marching, only I was heading toward a different goal.

'Violet, calm down,' Lumia warned suddenly.

'Don't ask me to calm down,' I growled inside my head. 'You did this!'

I knew why Lumia was worried, and I could feel it too. That sudden rage within me that I just couldn't stop. I was letting my emotions get the better of me and risked using my eyes, but I wasn't doing it on purpose. I still hadn't figured that part out yet.

In such a short time, my mind had already started spinning. One moment, I trusted Kylan completely, and the next it was filled with the

seeds of doubt Lumia had planted.

I just needed to know the truth to stop myself from going completely insane.

'Violet?' Kylan's voice pushed through the bond again. I didn't answer.

'Violet, talk to me.'

Everything around us was getting darker now as we walked deeper into the woods.

"Violet!" Kylan had finally caught up to me, and this time he didn't use the link. However, it still didn't stop me from ignoring him. There was only one thing on my mind, and that was shifting.

A few already had their fingers around their belts, including Dylan and Nate, and I joined in. I wrapped my fingers around the clasp and pressed down. Right then, the lightning emblem on my chest began to glow gold. It had activated.

It didn't take long before I felt the shift. With the gear on, it felt different this time. Much lighter.

Though the satisfying feeling remained the same. The pull and stretch of bones rearranging, and my muscles tearing and reforming, was all still there, but the gear was absorbing the worst of it.

My uniform didn't rip or fall away. The magic melted into the magic until I stood on four legs. One by one, everyone shifted and revealed themselves, including Valerius.

'Lumia,' he called out. 'So you know...then you also know it's not time yet.'

Commented [Ma1]:



Know what?

Time for what?

'I don't care,' Lumia yawned. She stretched her body, finally free.

'Violet,' she said. 'Let's see if you can sense it too, and please pay attention this time.'

Commented [Ma2]: