

Chapter 468

Violet

We gazed at each other. It felt strange. In front of me was still the same Kylan. The same person who could make my heart skip a beat, the same face I had memorized a thousand times, but there was still something underneath it.

Something I couldn't unsee.

'Say something!' Tamia urged.

I was just about to. But then Nate pulled away from Trinity and greeted me with a slight, playful push on the shoulder. "What's up with you two?" he asked, glancing between us. "You're being weird."

Kylan chuckled softly, his eyes never leaving mine. "Nate," Trinity smiled. I knew she had read the situation from a single glance. She grabbed his arm. "Let's go for a walk."

"Just the two of us?" Nate asked. He never got his answer, but the two of them started walking away together, leaving us behind.

Now the silence was really suffocating as both of us were cracking our brains, trying to find a place to start. There was a gap that had to be filled, and it was one that had never been there between us.

"Did you eat today?" Kylan began.

I was happy he did because I didn't know what else to say. I shook my head with a small smile.

"Can I get you something?"



I nodded. A moment later, we walked side by side, though there was still some space left between us. We were close enough to reach for each other if we wanted to, but whose hand would I be holding?

Swallowing the thought down, I stared ahead and kept walking.

Eventually, we ended up at the diner on campus. As if things couldn't get any worse, it was the same diner, the same seat where we had argued before after he gave me the cold shoulder. It was after we had spent our first night in his room.

The voices around us killed the awkwardness as I bit into my crispy chicken sandwich. My focus was half on my food and half on Kylan sitting across from me.

He wasn't eating. He was just watching me chew with this uneasy look in his eyes. I felt no pull to understand what he was feeling. My opinion had not shifted. The ability to see into someone's emotions meant little when those emotions were built on lies.

It wasn't his love that I doubted. I knew Lumia must've felt the same. She purred with relief. Just being near our mate seemed to calm her.

"Are you not going to eat?" I asked.

Kylan shook his head. "I'm not hungry."

My shoulders shrugged. "Then I'll eat yours," I said, sticking my fingers into his plate. "Can't let a good crispy chicken sandwich go to waste."

He let out a chuckle so short I had almost missed it, and then his face grew serious again. A jolt went through me as he reached across the table and placed his hand on top of mine. Flustered, I put down my sandwich and lifted my brows.

"I'm worried about you, Violet," he said, gently brushing his fingers across the back of my hand. His brown eyes softened as he continued. "I didn't have a good feeling after leaving yesterday..."

"Right," I cut in. "Because of my eyes?"

His face pulled slightly. "Yes," he said. "Your eyes. Tell me about them."

I let out a breath, thinking of the perfect way to explain without sounding too crazy. "It's like I have this strange heat inside my body," I began. "I don't know how to explain it, but it's trying to release itself. Through my eyes?"

"Tell me more."

I knew I sounded stupid, but he was willing to listen. His thumb kept stroking the back of my hand, patient and gentle. "It's like adrenaline, but worse," I continued. "I feel like if I don't get it out, even for just a second...I might explode," I said. "But I also feel like if I do use it, I might explode too."

Kylan nodded, listening to my every word.

"And then..." I gulped. "I've been having these dreams...or no, nightmares—"

"What nightmares?" His brows furrowed.

I leaned in closer, and for a moment I melted into his eyes. Those warm brown eyes that suddenly felt safe again.

"About the Veil," I explained. "I keep seeing it, hearing voices...I fall, everything goes white, and then I wake up."

A frustrated sigh left him. "How long has this been going on?"

"It started almost a week after we returned—"

"And you didn't tell me anything?"

His jaw tightened. I tilted my head slightly, trying to hold back my words.

"He's one to talk," Lumia scoffed. "I have been here for centuries, and if there's one thing I can tell you about men? It's that all they do is lie, lie, lie—"

Nope.

Not now.

"I have to see Aelius," I continued, my voice desperate. "As soon as possible, at the earliest opportunity. Tonight."

Kylan let out a soft hum. He squeezed my hand.

"I've actually been thinking," he said. "And I don't think you should do that."

"Why?"

My voice was calm as I was genuinely curious. For some reason, I had expected him to agree with me.

"Aelius gave you clear instructions for a reason," he explained. "We don't know what he's preparing. If he wanted you there, he would've called." He squeezed my hand again. "Showing up uninvited could anger him, and then I'll have to jump in to beat up the old man, and it'll become a disaster."

I let out a laugh. Even though it wasn't what I wanted to hear, the image of Kylan fighting Aelius for me was enough to crack through my frustration. He had already threatened Grandpa before, and he didn't have much of a reaction. But I was sure he wasn't going to let it pass a second time.

"So what am I supposed to do?" I asked. "Because I might not be able to hold it much longer."

"You need to learn how to control it for now," he said. "I know you can. You did so well in Lyperia."

I did...

And that was the confusing part.

I had managed to use my eyes without losing myself completely, and had fought to protect my friends. But maybe that was different. Using my eyes wasn't as much of a problem anymore because I knew what I was doing it for.

To protect.

Hiding them, especially at Starlight, was the difficult part.

"How do you control it?" I asked.

Kylan let go of my hand, and the warmth disappeared. I didn't even know why I had asked because I had promised myself not to ask about...the devil, but I supposed we were pretty much in the same situation.

As I looked into his eyes, I finally saw just how much my question hit him. It had become so clear that he didn't like having that thing inside him at all. That was also what had pissed me off.

Commented [Ma1]:

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Commented [Ma3R1]:



He had been fighting his own battles while pretending to be fine, and felt like he had to do that on his own instead of relying on me.

"I'm asking because I think it might help."

"Valerius has been helping me," he admitted. "Every day. He keeps it contained."

Lumia let out a loud scoff inside my head.

'Oh, so Valerius can help him, but he couldn't warn me?' she snapped.

'Lumia. If you're trying to rile me up again, you're doing great. Keep going.'

I pushed her down gently. Yet again.

This wasn't the time.

"So you don't feel anything?" I asked, my voice soft. Because if that was true, if he couldn't feel anything and he was still him...it would at least clear part of my problem.

Kylan breathed a laugh. "I'm still the same Kylan I was before," he said. "Nothing has changed."

Nothing has changed...

"Well," I said, taking a breath. "Good for you. But it's not as if I can push down my eyes, and Lumia can't help me either. We're both having a hard time."

"I know," he agreed. "But I also know Aelius wouldn't just leave you to your fate," he said. "He's difficult, cold, but he cares about you in his

own way. I've seen it."

Well, I did not.

"You need to hold on, trust your grandfather," Kylan encouraged. "And tomorrow, when you wake up, I promise it will be a better day."

He knew these past days had sucked for me. For both of us. So he was just trying to make me feel better. Perhaps trying to fix things between us, and it worked.

A smile slowly formed on my face. "I feel a bit better already," I admitted.

I meant it. The pressure behind my eyes suddenly felt less overwhelming.

"That's all I want," Kylan said softly. "For you to feel good."

He was trying to reach deeper, and I could hear it in his voice. He wasn't just talking about this, but about why he did what he had done. But maybe that was the step we both needed.

I had been so scared to talk to him just moments ago. Afraid of confrontation and more fights, but sitting here now...looking into his eyes, I saw that it wouldn't do any harm.

That maybe I needed this more than I wanted to admit.

"I don't hate you for what you did," I said, my voice small. "I'm just disappointed in you."