

Chapter 469

Violet

Kylan's eyes lit up. Which was strange, considering I had just told him I was disappointed in him. He almost seemed relieved.

"Do you want to talk about it?" he asked. "About your disappointment?"

I suppose talking about it gave him a bit more hope. He had been pushing for this conversation.

My eyes scanned the busy diner. Students were walking past, laughing, eating, and these seats were a bit too light for a conversation that heavy. This wasn't the place.

I nodded my head. "I want to try," I said. "But it's probably best in your room. I don't know how intense it might get, and my eyes..."

"Intense?" Kylan repeated. "What do you think might happen?"

There was this confused look in his eyes.

"Like I said," I told him, "I'm afraid we might never agree on this. No matter what you tell me." I went on. "But I'd like for you to make me understand because I really want to."

He bobbed his head. "Yes, then we'll do that," he agreed. "Whatever you want."

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That's how we ended up in his room.

As he closed the door behind us, I saw Jumpie rushing toward me across



the floor. Her tiny paws scrambled against the wood as she climbed up my leg, and I scooped her into my hands.

"You're in a good mood," I whispered, pulling her against my chest. She made a sound and nuzzled into me while I scratched behind her ear.

Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Thorne watching us from his cage. He was quiet, still, and now I finally knew why. A weight had been lifted off that bird's shoulders and landed straight onto Kylan's. No wonder.

Kylan leaned against the door, watching us with a pleased smile.

"She missed you," he said.

I laughed softly. "Surprising. Half the time it feels like she wants to kill me." I looked down at her tiny face. "And all of that while I saved her life!"

I released her from my grip and made my way over to sit on Kylan's bed. He immediately pushed off the door and moved to his chair across from me. He sat down with folded arms and looked at me.

"So," I started, jumping right into it. "How did it happen?"

"Huh?"

I gestured vaguely at his body. Every part. Because I didn't know where exactly he had been hiding it.

"How did it happen?" I repeated. "How did you end up becoming...the vessel?"

It felt a lot like an interrogation. Kylan unfolded his arms and leaned forward. "Valerius told me to do it back in the dungeons," he said. "He said I would have to do it the night of the blood moon. That I would one



day have to face Kian, and that he will succeed in taking the other half of the vessel."

The night of the blood moon...

So he did leave that night?

"Let me guess," I scoffed. "He saw the different paths and figured it would come down to either you or me taking the shadow, and you decided it should be you?"

I had been thinking about it all night, and that was the only logical explanation I could come up with. He wouldn't just risk his precious royal body for no reason.

The fact that he didn't answer already told me everything I needed to know. "Without consulting me first," I added.

"Because you would've stopped me," he argued.

"Of course I would've stopped you, Kylan!" My voice rose despite myself. "You can't just decide to become a vessel when he has nearly killed you before."

"And he almost killed you too," Kylan nudged his head. "I did it to protect you—"

"That's not the point!" I threw my hands up, and Jumpie squeaked in the corner. I lowered my voice instantly. My voice was quite loud for someone who didn't like confrontations. But I was just so frustrated.

"If I had told you, you would've tried to take it yourself," he retorted. "You would've convinced yourself that you could handle it because of your eyes, because of your parents. I couldn't let that happen."



"So you decided for me?"

"I decided for us."

"There is no 'us' in this decision, Kylan." I shook my head. "This was about you, and what you thought was best. You didn't trust me enough to include me."

"That's not true. I trust you with my life."

"Then why didn't you trust me with this?"

Kylan went quiet. Silence settled over the room, and neither of us was in any rush to break it. Maybe it was his comforting words from earlier, but my eyes were still fine for now. Still, this intensity was exactly what I didn't want.

I drew in a long breath, preparing myself to speak again. "I do believe you did it to protect me. But you've still lied to me, and this entire time, I haven't felt any emotion of guilt from you," I said. "And it confuses me."

Kylan took a deep breath through his nose, then slowly let it out. "I do regret what I said to you," he said. "I told you that yesterday." He paused, his eyes meeting mine. "But I don't regret not telling you what I did, or going through with it. All of this only proves I made the right decision, and I would do it again even if you'd hate me for a lifetime."

I stared at him. "You would do it again?" I asked, in full disbelief.

"Yes," he said, his voice unapologetic. He was really serious about this. I could see it in his eyes. "We can keep arguing about it, or you can accept it and move on. It has already happened."

"Well, I won't ever accept this," I said quietly. "I might learn how to live with it...but I can't accept it."



He sounded so sure of himself. So unbothered.

"You can't see where you were wrong," I told him. "And that's where the issue is."

Kylan's jaw locked. "If that's what you think, that's your opinion," he said. "But I won't pretend to agree just to please you when I know in my heart I made the right choice."

It went quiet again as we both just stared at each other, and then I lost it. I let out a laugh, and so did he. All of this was ridiculous.

"You are so stubborn," I called him out.

"So are you, Pup."

Perhaps because I also wouldn't change my mind. We could sit here forever going back and forth, and neither of us would change our minds. That much was clear.

"I'm not trying to fight with you or break you any further, Violet," Kylan said, his gaze softening. "I just want you to know how I feel about all of this."

I reached out and grabbed his hand. His chair rolled closer until our knees were touching. "And how are you feeling?" I asked, curious. "Do you really not feel him inside you?"

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