

## Chapter 494

Violet

I was hunched over the floor with the paper in front of me, the pen shaking in my hand as I drew whatever I could remember of the unique rose. The others surrounded me so closely I could hear their breath.

When I finished, we all got up and I flipped the paper around to show them. "Do any of you recognize this flower?"

They all leaned in, squinting. My eyes were big as I waited, hopeful that one of them would. "The two of you," Nate pointed his finger back and forth between me and Dylan with a confused expression on his face. "Are you not supposed to be the flower experts here?"

My shoulders dropped, and just like that, all my hope had disappeared. Kylan shrugged his shoulders, agreeing, while Dylan gently took the drawing from my hands.

"He has a point," he said, tilting his head. "I do not recognize it...which is strange."

Kylan took the page out of Dylan's hand, then inspected the flower up close. He let out a hum. "I'm indeed no expert, but I do not believe this is a regular rose," he concluded. "It must have a purpose."

He lifted his head, his eyes meeting mine.

"Did you see anything else?"

Anything else?

My lips parted to speak, but a small chuckle came out of me instead.



I had seen something else. Well, someone else.

As I closed my eyes for a second, Kian's face appeared again. That sadness in his eyes, and that uncomfortable feeling in my chest. Most of all, that weak heart that had not even been mine and had still made me cry.

"Violet?"

I looked at Kylan. "Yes," I said quietly. "I saw...him."

I supposed it was best to ease him into it. Kian was still a sensitive subject. He had been carrying his brother around in his head for weeks already, and even Aelius described it as difficult. Seeing his reaction, it was a good thing I did.

A breath slipped past Kylan's lips, but he didn't crumble. Though I could see it was a bit forced, his gaze remained steady.

"When you say, him," Trinity addressed carefully, "do you mean—"

"Kian."

After the name had officially left my mouth, it felt as if the air itself had been sucked out of the room. No one dared speak a word.

"He did not see me," I quickly clarified. "I hid behind a tree before he could, and I do not think he knew I was ever there," I said. "But something was seriously off about him...his eyes were red, and he was crying blood."

My eyes pierced through Kylan's as I said the last part. I was waiting for him to tell me that I must've been mistaken or that all of it perhaps wasn't real, but he didn't.



"And..." I swallowed down my thoughts. This was the part where I was supposed to tell them that I had felt everything he had felt, but I wasn't sure. And for that reason, I simply didn't.

Kylan cleared his throat, breaking the silence first. "Anything else?" He asked again.

I shook my head. "No location, nothing. Just him," I breathed. "Though the cave seems to be at the top of a cliff."

"Are there?" Trinity asked. "I mean, cliffs around here?"

"There are in the Common Lands," Dylan exhaled. "Just not around here."

I took in their words, but my eyes were still on Kylan. He squeezed the paper in his hands so hard, it looked like he thought the rose might talk back if he tried hard enough. I knew he wanted to get to him. Kian.

"I was inside the cave at first," I shared. "Lumia told me she couldn't even sense me and that it was like our connection was gone completely," I continued. Then my thoughts went to Mom and Dad. I could only imagine how much strength it must've required for her to even reach me. She was desperate.

I dropped my gaze to the floor. "I really do believe we're running out of time," I said, my voice almost a whisper. "They have no powers in there, Alaric doesn't have Lumen, and seeing Kian like that...the way he looked, and knowing he is not working alone..."

I left the rest where it was. They knew what I meant.

If I got to them, who said they'd still be alive by then? Even Aelius was worried, and he could see into the future.



For all we knew, Gloria was draining Mom's powers as we spoke.

Dylan moved behind me, and not long after, I felt his hand on my shoulder. It was a bit awkward, but he meant well. As I glanced up at him, I noticed the apologetic smile on his lips.

"I think we should go back to Bloodstone Haven tonight," Kylan suddenly spoke. Surprised, I snapped my head toward him.

"Huh?"

"I think we should go back," he repeated. "Show Aelius the rose, and see what he thinks about it."

A sigh left me. Aelius had said he would call us in when he was ready, and by now I knew showing up unannounced was not the way it worked with him. Especially Kylan was familiar with his ways, so I hadn't expected him to say that.

"But Aelius—"

"I do not give a shit what he thinks, Violet," Kylan stated. He shifted uncomfortably. "He is going to take a look at this flower. Your parents are in danger, and I will not be sitting in a dorm waiting on his schedule while Kayden or Kian or whoever the fuck he is now..."

He cut himself off, then dragged both hands down his face. Then he breathed out hard through his nose.

So this was what all of this was about...

He felt responsible.

He dropped his hands and forced a smile onto his lips. "If the old man wants to nag you about it, lecture you about rules, I will take full



responsibility.”

I nodded eagerly because I did agree with him. Every single word, except the part where he said he would take full responsibility. If he hadn't offered it, I would've probably gone myself. That was how serious the situation had become.

Not even Lumia was trying to stop me.

“We should not all go,” Nate said. I spun my head to look at him as he walked over to his desk. Then he leaned against it. “He might think we're trying to intimidate him, send us right back home,” he said. “I think it is better that just the two of you go.”

Kylan and I exchanged a knowing glance. Nate was right. The odds were probably better with only the two of us.

“But...” Dylan started.

Trinity nudged his shoulder. “Nate is right,” she said, cutting him off. She knew, just like I did, that he was about to slip into overprotective big brother mode again. “And in the meantime, we'll head to the library and see what we can find on rare flowers, herbs, and anything that even resembles that rose.”

“Good plan,” Nate said without a second thought.

I couldn't help but feel bad about it. Sure, Aelius had somehow involved them too and had plans for them, but there always seemed to be... something. I opened my mouth to say something, but before I could get a sound out, Trinity was already shaking her head.

“Nope.”

I huffed in response.



"If there is anyone in this room who needs more rest than the rest of us tonight," she went on, "it is the person who is running that race tomorrow."

My eyes twitched at the mention of the race. Each time I forgot about it, someone would bring it up again. Who still cared about that stupid race when there were much bigger things at hand?

I rolled my eyes until they landed on Kylan. Apparently, he found all of this hilarious. He had completely forgotten about his brother and was staring at me with a smug little smirk.

"Don't worry," he chuckled. "Violet and I will head out now so we can get back early and make sure she gets some rest before tomorrow."

"Right," I said sarcastically. The others let out muffled laughs while I didn't bother to hide the annoyance on my face. "I guess we better get going then."

big sale: 100 bonus free fou you

get it