

Chapter 500

Violet

I could not feel my hands or much of anything, actually. The crowd's voices faded away as all I could think about were the words Principal Sterling had just said.

The royal palace...

Dad's home.

The prize for this race was literally a door into the one place I had never let myself imagine, and all I had to do for it was beat three Lycans. Well, perhaps not all. That made it seem too easy.

They were still Lycans who had spent their whole lives faster and stronger than me.

My eyes carefully moved to Rochwall, and I caught him glancing at me from the side. A wide smile was on his face as he gave me a single nod. The expression was the same warm look he carried whenever he called us his children.

No wonder he said that I would want to win this race.

Would he have visited the palace with Dad back in the day? Perhaps with Jane?

I shot him a small smile, then faced the front again.

'Lumia?'

She hummed back, and I continued speaking.



'I am going to do my part. You are going to do your part, and we are going to win this,' I stated. 'We have to win this...Whatever it takes.'

'I know,' Lumia said.

Only two words, yet they lacked her usual cockiness. Also, she knew what was at stake.

"I wish you all the very best of luck," Principal Sterling said, pointing his stick in the air before setting it back down. "Run well, and show these students why you are the best team."

As soon as he stepped back, the others around me started moving. My body locked, and I could only turn around. Wes was walking toward the start of his path, Sienna was rolling her neck as she stepped toward hers, and Cassian, as confident as ever, jumped on both feet while shrugging his shoulders.

My eyes found Kylan's again, and only when he nudged his head toward my path did I dare move. I drew a breath in and joined the others.

My steps were not as confident, but I remained hopeful. The only plan was to eliminate them. I was not going to outrun them on two legs, but I was going to take them apart one at a time.

I looked to the right of me, and then to the left, deciding my game plan.

Cassian was my biggest problem. Perhaps I would deal with him first. Sienna, who was incredibly competitive and only had eyes for Cassian, was the least of my problems. I had already decided that.

She would not see me coming until it was already too late for her to do anything about it.

I looked past her to look at Wes again, and his lips curled into a smile.



A deep sigh escaped me. "On your mark," Jorm called out across the field.

I looked ahead.

"Get set."

The others went into position as I awkwardly stood by, suddenly forgetting how to move my legs. The whole field went quiet for half a second, waiting for the final go.

"Go!"

The crowd exploded into cheers, and I didn't know how I did it, but I ran. We all took off at the same time, straight into the woods. It only took seconds before the woods swallowed me whole, and I couldn't see any of them anymore.

Just trees on either side of me.

It didn't stop the nerves because I knew the paths would cross soon before the second half of the race.

The hardest part was giving it my all, knowing I couldn't. If I did, there would be nothing left for Lumia when it actually counted in the second half. She would feel it.

So I held my pace while staying steady and controlled.

But I didn't forget what I was doing it for.

And who I was doing it for.

Mom and Dad...

'Do you think Kian might be holding them there?' I asked Lumia. 'Near



the palace?’

‘Violet—’

‘What if the palace is close to the cave, and I—’

‘Bad timing, Witchey,’ Lumia sang.

I drew a breath.

Right.

I locked my eyes back on the path and kept my legs moving. We were only a few minutes in, but when I felt my legs starting to feel heavy, I knew it was time to do something.

Cassian’s path was only to the left of me. Close enough to cut over to.

I stopped running.

‘What are you doing?’ Lumia snapped. ‘Run!’

Shaking my head, I turned left and looked through the gaps in the trees. Without thinking too much, I went for it. Cutting across my own path, I shoved through the bush until I ended up back on Cassian’s trail.

I saw him immediately.

He ran about twenty feet ahead of me.

Cassian was capable of much more, but it was clear to me that he was also saving his energy and would depend on his Lycan.

My eyes narrowed as I kept running, just enough to keep up with him.

‘I see,’ Lumia chuckled. ‘We’re taking the strongest one out first.’



I did not answer her, but a small smile tugged at my lips. She wasn't objecting. That meant it was a good plan.

A scoff came from up ahead, and Cassian glanced over his shoulder. The moment he saw me on his path, his brows furrowed in annoyance.

"Hey," he called back. "Royal leech. This is not your trail."

Royal leech...

Well...

We had never been that close, but at least now I knew how he actually felt about me underneath all that winking.

He waited for a reaction, but I didn't give him anything. And when he slowed a little, half twisting to keep an eye on me, I pushed harder to close the gap. I gave a bit more than before. My lungs were burning, but I did not care.

I did what I had to do and caught up.

"Hey!" he said, now beside me. "Did you not hear me? Are you that stupid?"

'Excuse you,' Larnia gasped, offended. 'You'd better do something about him now before I shift and rip that ugly toad to shreds.'

That got a chuckle out of me. Of course Cassian thought it was for him and planted himself in front of me. Startled, I stumbled against his chest, then took a step back.

His shadow hovered over me. He was so much taller than me that I had to tip my head back to keep looking at him.



There was a smirk on his face as his brown eyes drilled into mine. I glared right back and did not give him the satisfaction.

"Why won't you just listen," he said, still smirking. "Your path is that way, sweetheart."

When I failed to react yet again, his smirk faltered. He shoved me by the shoulder, hard enough to make me stumble once more.

"You really get on my nerves, you know that?" He moved closer. "Always getting in the way and thinking you can do whatever you want because you are Kylan's little mate."

When I once again failed to give him a reaction, he pushed my shoulder again and again. He was daring me to push him back. Probably so he could take it a step further and put the blame on me as if to say, she started it.

He raised his hand to do it a third time, but this time, I didn't let him.

I dodged to the side and as his hand came at me again, I shut my eyes and kicked hard.

My feet connected with his weak knee. The right knee.

I couldn't bear to look. Despite everything, I felt bad about it. He was still my teammate.

But when I heard him scream, I knew it was over.

"What the fuck did you do!?"

I opened my eyes just in time to see him on the ground. His hands clamped around his knee, face twisting in pain.



"Fuck, my knee!"

'Good one,' Lumia encouraged. 'Now run!'

That was exactly what I did. I ran and left him behind. I looked back over my shoulder at him on the ground.

"Sorry!"

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