

## Chapter 506

Violet

Classes had ended hours ago, and the sun was already setting by the time we had all met up again at a campus diner.

I sat beside Kylan. Kylan sat across from us, right in the middle of Nate and Dylan. As always, the two of them had been at it since the moment we sat down. Bickering about something I could hardly follow anymore.

Trinity caught my eye across the table and shrugged her shoulders. "Help," she mouthed.

A chuckle left me. My gaze shifted to Kylan and then slowly faded as I focused on him. While the other two were at it, he only had focus for his food.

"You look adorable," I said.

Kylan's head snapped toward me. "Adorable?"

I chuckled again. "Yes," I said. "Those have been my thoughts ever since I saw your legs shaking in that elevator."

He let out a scoff and stopped eating. I burst out laughing. Kylan bumped his shoulder against mine playfully, and I bumped him back, harder.

"Aww, look at the two of you!" Trinity said. "I don't know if it's because you won that race today, but seeing you like this almost makes me like him again."

"Almost," Kylan chuckled.

"I still can't believe you kicked Cassian's knee," Nate jumped in,



grinning. He had stopped arguing with Dylan to throw that one in there, meaning he must have found him truly insufferable. "I keep replaying that moment in my head, and each time it gets more embarrassing for him."

My smile softened. I genuinely hoped his knee was doing okay. Whatever Cassian had said or done to me, I had kicked his bad knee. Despite calling him a crybaby, the sound he made when he went down was too loud to be fake.

Dylan leaned forward across the table.

"I saw you guys follow Principal Sterling earlier," he said. "Did anything useful come out of it? Did he tell you about your parents or Baelor?"

"Are you serious?" Trinity sighed. "She is eating, Dylan. Do you really believe now is the time?"

"If not now," Dylan's brows pulled together, "when?"

I could understand where both were coming from. The conversation suddenly sounded way too serious to be held at a Starlight diner, but if not now...when?

I let out a small huff and turned my head to Kylan.

"You tell them," I decided. Kylan looked at me for a second, then turned back to the others. He gave them the recap of everything that had happened inside Sterling's office, and the theory about him regaining his memories.

By the time he was done, all three of them had stopped eating completely. They all listened attentively.

"Lumia might not be that huge, but she's way faster and more powerful



than any ordinary wolf," Nate said. "I doubt Sterling is the only one who knows there's more to you. Even Jorn was acting weird about it. Remember?"

I let out a sigh, thinking back to Jorn. He was indeed weird about it.

I think I get it now...

That's what he had told me.

"Do you think Aelius knows about Sterling?" Trinity asked.

"Who knows what he knows?" I muttered lazily. "He doesn't even know what he knows."

Trinity tilted her head. "And how are you feeling?" she asked, "now that the trip is final?"

I cleared my throat, feeling all eyes on me. I hadn't really thought about it yet.

"It is strange," I settled on the first word that came to mind. "I want to be excited about it because it's the palace my dad grew up in, but with everything going on, I don't really feel anything other than fear, honestly."

Kylan wrapped an arm around me, his hand rubbing my shoulder.

"I'm scared we'll get to that palace and I still won't find a single clue about where Kian might be holding my parents," I admitted. "I've just been hoping that once we get there, we'll finally learn more about where the cave is," I continued. "The longer we wait, the worse it gets. Time is running out for them, and we still know almost nothing."

The silence grew heavier. But not heavy enough to keep me from



speaking.

"And then on top of that," I went on, "Aelius told us he would get us ready to lead the battle, train my eyes, and find a way to teach Kylan how to control..." I let my eyes fall on him, and he quickly looked down.

I didn't finish the sentence. I didn't have to.

"Anyway," I continued my rant and turned my eyes back to the others. "Aelius hasn't even allowed the villagers to talk to me yet," I said, frustrated. "I know there is a reason for it because there always is with him, but sometimes I am scared that when the time comes, I won't know how to connect with them or lead them," I confessed. "They are my people, but I'm not like Adelaide. I don't know them."

It felt great to let it all out. I could have said I felt good or bad, but neither would have brought the same relief I felt now.

Dylan released a short laugh. He stretched his arm across the table and grabbed my hand. I let him hold it.

"I know you are worried about your parents." His thumb brushed slowly against my knuckles. "But I do genuinely believe that old man knows what he's doing. And whatever complaint you have, you can share all of it tomorrow. Because we are still going, right?"

He looked around the table for confirmation, and we all shared nods.

That was the plan. To go and visit Aelius to see if there was any more information before leaving for the palace.

Trinity gasped, her eyes widening.

"I completely forgot to tell you, but did you know that after you guys left earlier, Professor Hotwall ended up telling me to just go ahead and join



you all?" she said. "He said he would deal with Sterling."

My eyes lit up. "He did?"

It would be nice to have her there with me.

Kylan chuckled beside me, and I looked at him.

"I'm sorry," he said, lifting one brow. "But what exactly are you guys calling him?"

Dylan waved his hand dismissively. "Best to ignore."

"Maybe he will really let you on the team," I said, almost too hopeful. But Trinity scrunched her face into a look of pure disgust.

"And wear those hideous green suits?" she snorted. "No thanks, Vi. This is going to be a one-time thing."

A laugh escaped me and I shook my head at her.

"And besides," she went on, "you keep forgetting that the Elite Team is not something small. In case of a war, which we all know might be coming, they will have to be the ones protecting the school. Which means —"

"Giving your life to protect it," Dylan cut in. "Because from the moment you commit, your team becomes your family, and Starlight becomes your home. The ones on the Elite Team will be the first to die...actually, with what's waiting for us, I wouldn't be surprised if the whole team dies."

Dylan chuckled at the end like all of this was a joke, but we all went quiet. Even Nate wasn't laughing with it.

I had never thought about that before. The Elite Team was the school's



first line of defense, which meant they would be the first ones standing at the gates when those gates fell.

"Okay. That was definitely not what I was going to say," Trinity swallowed. "But yes."

Kylan let out a strained laugh. "Dylan, you mood killer."

A mood killer indeed.

Whatever he had been implying, I decided to push the thought to the back of my mind. There was already way too much to think about.

"If you don't want to come, you could always skip the trip to the palace and get some extra training in with Jason!" I suggested. "The thing with the apple and the poison?"

Trinity let out a displeased hum. "Someone has to keep an eye on all of you," she mumbled. "How is Jason doing, by the way?"

"Good. He asked about you!"

"Jason asked about me?" Trinity beamed.

The whole conversation, Dylan had been looking back and forth between us while Kylan had let out at least four sighs beside me already.

"What did he say?" Trinity asked, curious.

"Nothing much. He wanted to know where my pretty friend—"

Before I could finish, Dylan had already stood up.

Trinity giggled and gave him a teasing smile as she joined him.

"Jason, Jason, Jason," Dylan muttered, fumbling for his pocket. "We



were discussing serious things, Violet.”

Trinity let out a laugh with a small frown. Dylan looked completely ridiculous.

“What’s wrong?” she asked mockingly.

“Nothing.”

He dug into his pocket and threw some cash on the table.

“Dinner is on me,” he announced. “It was fun. But Trinity and I are leaving.”

The next second, the two walked off like they were in a hurry. Trinity managed to shoot me a glance over her shoulder before they completely disappeared.

“That was strange,” Nate exhaled.

A laugh escaped Kylan. He was just happy that someone agreed with him about Jason. It had become clear that both of them weren’t big fans of him.

“We should probably head out too,” Kylan said.

Nate let out a breath and leaned back like he had no intention of leaving anytime soon.

“You can come with us,” I offered. “There is plenty of room in Kylan’s room. You can squeeze in between us.”

Nate shook his head and held up both palms.

“Yeah, no thanks, Violet,” he said with a chuckle. “I would like my ears



to still be in working order by the time Kaelis gets here. I will pass.”

Heat rushed into my cheeks, and I shot Kylan a flustered look. He just kept looking at Nate, ignoring my gaze.

“You can come, Nate,” Kylan said unbothered. “Seriously. You do not have anything to worry about.”

Nate furrowed his brows. “Thanks, but no thanks. I don’t believe you.”

Kylan shook his head, a small smile displaying on his lips. Then he slung his arm around my shoulder and pulled me against him.

I looked up at him, and his brown eyes met mine. They were so warm and patient. Those were the eyes I trusted, and as I stared into them, a thought hit me.

I had not thought about Baelor being inside him until it was mentioned. I could stare into his eyes today without focusing on the why.

Why did you not tell me...

Why are you protecting me...

That was good, right?

That meant we weren’t in a bandaid phase and things could go back to the way they used to be.

A small smile pulled at my lips as I let out a slow breath.

“I will see you guys tomorrow, then,” Nate said.

We both looked back at him.

“You sure?” Kylan asked.



Nate bopped his head once.

“Yes. Go.”

Kylan's arm tightened around my shoulder, and the two of us turned and walked off together.

“At least now you can finally get some sleep after that race today,” Kylan said as we walked out. “I doubt either of us will be getting much rest after tomorrow.”

I tilted my head up to look at him. “Maybe.”

Kylan blinked down at me. “Are you still worried about the nightmares?” he asked. “I thought you wanted them.”

A light chuckle slipped out of me. “That is not it,” I said. “I just...might have other plans.”

His brow lifted. “What plans?”

I squinted up at him.

“You'll find out later.”

