

Chapter 515

Violet

"They were close...at the start," Rochwall said. "But I don't know if they were really that close or could just relate to each other. But Elyx didn't visit much...he had his own duties," Rochwall told me.

That was one thing I had been curious about. Everything had shown me that this so-called 'bond' between them, which Mom had supposedly destroyed, had been mostly one-sided.

I couldn't help but wonder if dad just relied on him until he found his own voice, and figured out he didn't have to.

"But you did visit?"



"Me and Jane? We went plenty of times."

I listened to his every word. I had so much to ask that I didn't even know where to start. At least he was talking, and out of everyone, he was the only one willing to talk.

"Can you tell me something about the palace?" I asked desperately. "Anything?"

Rochwall opened his mouth.

"Wait, first!" I held my hand up before he could get a single word out.

"Have you ever seen a strange blue rose anywhere there?" I asked. It only took me a second to figure out the question was useless. Even if there was a rose, it wasn't like it had been there before. "Or caves? Do they have any caves where those kinds of flowers might be able to grow?"



Rochwall squinted. "Uh..." He scratched at the back of his neck.

"There are many rare flowers there," he said carefully. "But...I thought you might want to know more about the palace itself? Your people?"

I let out a breath through my nose. That was not a smart move. I now sounded like some flower-obsessed Bloodrose to him. Right when he was sitting here trying to tell me about my father.

"Yes, please." I gestured for him to go on.

Rochwall's eyes dropped to his lap, and his thoughts seemed to be elsewhere.

"The palace was one of a kind, Violet." He let out a slow breath. "The Common Lands are known for their beautiful nature. Everywhere you turn out there, you are looking at something green."

That was true. Unless you found yourself at one of the packs in the corners, all there really was to it was green.

"But inside the palace?" Rochwall went on, awestruck. "It looked like something carved out of ice. The ceilings were so tall it looked like they might reach the sky. The place was just massive. No wonder Al was lonely growing up there."

"So it's kind of like Lyperia?"

Rochwall pulled a face. "Kind of, but it is different. I feel like he was always a bit more isolated."

My heart broke for Dad. I tried to picture it. Him being all alone in a place that probably did not really feel like a home anymore. I often complained about the Bloodrose, but at the same time, I loved my home.



There hadn't been much that pointed to Dad loving his.

"What about the people?" I wondered.

Rochwall let out a soft laugh. "That depends who you mean."

"Just..." I sighed. I didn't know the people. I couldn't know because I wasn't around to experience it. "Just everyone."

"If you're asking about King Eamon and the elders? Cold most of the time," Rochwall shared with a dismissive wave. "But the people who lived inside the citadel were warm and kind. The place was full of markets, street performers, people from the kingdoms, and it was always alive," he said. "Your dad...he was the best. He always took the time to shake hands with whoever walked up to greet him."

He laughed slightly. "But he'd hate it and nearly run away when they would bow. He hated it so much."

A weak smile crept onto my lips. At least I now knew who I had gotten it from. Worry took over as I caught Rochwall's face shifting again. It had happened too many times in a span of minutes. He went from sad to happy, back to sad.

"That was obviously before the tragedy," he added. "After it happened, most of them went back to their packs, but luckily, a lot came from the inner ring, so not too far from the palace," he clarified. "While those of noble blood scattered to wherever they could disappear. Desperate to get rid of the name...for obvious reasons."

Right.

The obvious reasons being the cause of the spell which led to the rumors of King Eamon slaughtering every soul inside the palace before ending



himself.

The odd thing was that the truth was not all that far from that, in the end. Him and Elyx had both been responsible for the mess that had occurred, and Eamon had been the bigger monster of the two. By far.

The thought of him being one of the people held in that cave with Mom and Dad...it terrified me just as much as Gloria or Kian. One thing that eased the situation was knowing he was also a prisoner.

A short laugh escaped me.

Horrible grandmother...

Horrible grandfather...

What more could a girl wish for?

"Are you okay?" Rochwall asked.

"Yes, it's...nothing."

I turned my head to look into his eyes. They were kind now. Quite different from the immature, loud, and pushy kid who was determined to land himself a witch, even if it meant pushing his mate away over and over.

He was not that man anymore, and hadn't been for a long time.

"Do you miss them?" I asked softly. "My parents."

"Every day." He let out a long breath. "I told you a while back how much I regret the way it all played out, Violet. There has not been a single day since then that I have not thought about them."



We both went quiet for a moment.

"I wish that you and I could be closer," he said after a while. "But I understand if you might not want that."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that if that is the case, I know you would never say it to my face. You are too good a person for it," he said. "So I have been telling myself that I can support you from a distance instead...that works for me too."

I shook my head before he had even finished.

"It is not like that."

My eyes locked onto his. "I do not resent you, and I am positive my parents do not either."

Not once had they told me to 'stay away from Rochwall.' Sure, Mom might have been disappointed in him at one point, but I do not believe either of them ever hated him.

Rochwall did not look entirely convinced. He let out a soft scoff as he rubbed his jaw in unease.

"Maybe you can tell them yourself sometime," I suggested.

He shot me a curious look, and I knew I had messed up. I had said too much. This was the exact reason why I hated talking.

I cleared my throat and changed the subject as quickly as possible. "Do you have any more personal stories you could share with me? Something about my mom...or dad?"

